

HIGHLIGHTS

- 1. The early warning disease surveillance system, involving both informal and formal reporting, is now running. The first reports are expected next week.**
- 2. Remote areas are being accessed. Relief work is being intensified while early recovery is starting.**
- 3. The Flash Appeal is being revised and will include revitalization of health facilities at township level and strengthening disease surveillance.**

HEALTH ASSESSMENT AND SITUATION UPDATE

- Cases of severe diarrhoea and dengue haemorrhagic fever are being investigated.
- Along with water-borne diseases, vector-borne diseases and acute respiratory infections (ARIs) remain a concern as these cases are expected to increase in the rainy season.
- More than 170 000 people are in 310 informal shelters and government-run settlements in the 15 priority townships, according to the UN. The government is preparing to provide longer-term services.
- In addition to the Government, over 95 civil society groups are operating in the worst affected townships.
- According to State media, shelters in Labutta have adequate health services, and clean water with the main source regularly chlorinated.
- The UN reports that nearly a million people have been reached through the combined efforts of the Myanmar Red Cross, UN, international and national NGOs as of 20 May 2008. However regular supply lines have been difficult to establish as access is limited by broken bridges and blocked roads.
- Pun Hlaing International Hospital is providing relief in the delta areas of Ngapudaw and Hain-Gyi, where damage has been extensive. A Medical Team of eight doctors, four nurses, one pharmacist and four volunteers left on 21st May to set up a mini hospital and mobile medical units at Thyin-Ka-Gon. This team was reinforced by a second team on 24 May. Some areas are accessible only by boat, making operations difficult.

HEALTH CLUSTER RESPONSE

1. Funding

- The Flash Appeal will be revised in view of the increase in the estimates of the affected population. Preliminary estimates are that the Health Cluster will need US\$28 million. The revised Flash Appeal will include revitalization of health facilities at township level and strengthening disease surveillance.

2. Health Action

- Medical teams from more than 70 countries are expected to arrive in Myanmar in the next 3-6 months.
- WHO has briefed medical teams that have already arrived, and is exploring the possibility of establishing induction training for them in collaboration with the Ministry of Health and partner agencies.
- WHO, IFRC and MRCS are conducting one day refresher training of Red Cross volunteers to be deployed in the affected areas. The first batch, with 38 participants, was trained today, and nine more batches will be trained on 30 May to 10 June 2008. WHO will focus on training for malaria and dengue prevention and control.
- IOM mobile medical teams continue to work from Bogale. One team focuses on displaced people hosted in temples and other temporary urban shelters. The other three teams reach out to communities in the south of Bogale and in Mawlamyinegyun, often by boat. IOM have been visiting 220 temporary shelters with a population of 1100 people in three different locations in the Township of Mawlamyinegyun.
- The WHO Country Office is being strengthened with five more experts who are expected to join the team within the next few days.

3. Disease Surveillance

- WHO presented the Early Warning Disease Surveillance System. The system will have two tracks:
 - The informal system will collect information and rumours on possible outbreaks through daily telephone contact with every concerned agency.
 - The formal system will involve reporting forms and agreed case definitions, and a system of weekly reporting (Sunday to Saturday).
 - Agencies are to provide reports to WHO by Sunday. The bulletin will be available by Tuesday. The system is flexible and can additional sites or agencies, including MoH, as needed.
 - The first reporting period is Sunday 1 June to Saturday 7 June with the first bulletin slated for Tuesday 10 June.
- Laboratory support for specimen collecting will be established in each township, with Yangon Central Reference Laboratory providing support.
- On a related but different note, WHO and concerned agencies are taking measures to re-establish TB surveillance.

4. Supplies

- Seven WHO interagency health kits have arrived in Myanmar.
- WHO has developed a comprehensive logistics tracking database and has requested all partners to feed into it.

HEALTH COORDINATION

- In response to the request from MOH, WHO will provide drugs, insecticides, fogging machines, rapid diagnostic tests, and bednets for Malaria and Dengue prevention to a total of around USD 1 million.
- In Bogale successful local coordination involving UNICEF, IOM, WFP, UNHCR, ACF, MSF and a local NGO has led to a Joint Emergency Response Mobile Operation. The objectives are to provide multi-sectoral services while minimizing cost and maximizing the impact of services.
- Health Cluster participation is increasing with almost 70 people from 30-40 organization attending the meeting on 27 May.
- Cluster sub-groups have been formed on HIV/AIDS, Early Recovery and psychosocial support.

NEXT STEPS

- An Early Recovery Strategy is being finalized. This will be incorporated into the Health Cluster Joint Action Plan.
- The revised UN Flash Appeal is likely to be launched around 10 June.