

Health Situation Report # 38

13-30 April 2006

This is the last WHO situation report on the response for the Pakistan earthquake.

As of 1 June 2006, WHO will be issuing monthly health overviews following the early recovery covering all health related activities.



Health worker registering children before vaccination at Naumanpura health unit in Bagh

Highlights

- From six sub offices at district level in the earthquake affected areas, WHO is downsizing its operation to two provincial sub offices in Muzaffarabad and Mansehra. The Balakot office has already been merged with Mansehra, while the Battagram office has opened a field office in Besham for continuation of the Disease Early Warning System (DEWS).
- While the return process of the displaced earthquake affected population is practically completed in Battagram and Mansehra (NWFP province), in Muzaffarabad and Bagh (AJK province) less than 32% of the population has started to return home. In Muzaffarabad district, landslides and snow are preventing major return movements to Neelum, Jhelum and Leepa valleys.
- Over 1,200 Lady Health Workers, their supervisors and other health care professionals have been trained so far in mental health issues for the earthquake-affected population.
- WHO in cooperation with partners are focusing on the integration of the current early warning and outbreak response program into the National Disease Surveillance System, with a strong focus on improvement of water and sanitation, to ensure prevention, control and rapid response of emerging water borne disease outbreaks.
- The health cluster will continue to exist, guided by the Earthquake Rehabilitation and Reconstruction Authority (ERRA).
- The main causes for consultations remain Acute Respiratory Infection (21%), Acute Watery Diarrhoea (7%), Fever of Unexplained Origin (5%) and (4%) injuries.

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Revitalization of primary health care services

Bagh

- Four training workshops on reproductive health were conducted for more than 100 Lady Health Workers in Rerra, Kahutta and Sule.

Balakot

- Reproductive health training workshop focusing on first level care providers was carried out for those health partners working in Balakot.
- A joint plan for the revitalization of health facilities in Balakot is under development. The importance of the continuation of mobile teams to support the health facilities and to serve remote areas emphasizes the equal access to health services for equal need.

Battagram, Shangla and Kohistan

- Reproductive health assessments of Basic Health Units (BHUs) and Rural Health Centres (RHCs) are currently being carried out in Kohistan, Shangla and Battagram district. The Hayat Foundation has been appointed as the potential national counterpart for strengthening reproductive health services in remote areas.

Mansehra

- The in-depth survey into 50 health facilities in Mansehra was completed in close collaboration with the Ministry of Health, UNFPA and the NGO Mercy Corps. The results are available at http://www.whopak.org/disaster/informationcentre.htm#man_report
- Meningitis vaccination campaign for governmental primary and secondary schools is currently ongoing, targeting 182,858 children between 5 and 16 years. WHO provided the Expanded Programme of Immunization with 15,000 immunization cards.
- UNFPA conducted a one-day seminar on the prevention of neonatal deaths, discussing Neonatal Resuscitation and how to cope with hypothermia.

Muzaffarabad

- Almost 30,000 children between 12-59 months of age so far have received the Hepatitis A vaccine, and almost 75,000 children under 5 have been vaccinated against Haemophilus influenzae type B (Hib).
- The NGO Merlin will be conducting all training for Lady Health Workers related to Reproductive Health and Mother and Child health. WHO provides technical support and training materials where necessary.
- Anti-scabies campaign continues to increase awareness in of hygiene among those people still living in tents.
- As a continuation of the in-depth health facilities survey carried out in Mansehra, assessment is currently ongoing into the 61 BHUs and RHCs in Muzaffarabad district.
- Training on Basic Emergency Obstetric and Neonatal Care for Lady Health Supervisors was carried out at AIMS Hospital in coordination with UNICEF. At the same time, Lady Health Workers were trained in Mother and Child health care issues at AIMS.

Revitalization of hospital care services

- Health Partners International Canada donated medicines complementing the New Emergency Health Kit (NEHK) with a value of over 2 million USD.
- WHO has purchased 10 surgery operation equipment sets and 40 clinical laboratory kits to strengthen laboratories and hospitals in the earthquake affected areas.

Balakot

- As the Tehsil Headquarter (THQ) hospital in Balakot is located in the red zone, the hospital will only be used as outpatient department, providing Mother and Child Health Care and Expanded Programme for Immunization services.
- WHO donated one NEHK to the THQ Hospital.
- All Cubans field hospitals have now been handed over to the army.

Emergency health coordination and information management

- A Training of Trainers workshop for all logisticians working with the Logistics Support System (LSS) at district level was organized in Islamabad to ensure the continuation of the system after the merging of the six sub offices into two.

Muzaffarabad

- Training on the implementation of LSS was carried out at the Combined Military Hospital to promote information exchange on medical supplies between different health facilities.

Disease Surveillance and Early Warning System (DEWS)

- A total of 215 health facilities are now participating in the Disease Early Warning System (DEWS). On average, 95% of these sent their epidemiological findings to WHO in the past two weeks, resulting in 79,725 consultations in the last week, for a population of over 3.7 million people in the earthquake affected areas.
- As expected due to changing weather conditions, the number of consultations due to Acute Respiratory Infection is slightly decreasing, while the number of Acute Watery Diarrhoea cases shows an increase from 4,297 last week to 5,185 this week.
- Preparedness activities for Cholera prevention are ongoing in all the sub offices. Interagency task forces have been set up and are currently finalizing micro plans.

Bagh

- One suspected case of measles was reported from Fatehpura village in Dhirkot Tehsil. Active case finding revealed several more cases in the same area. Blood samples were sent for laboratory confirmation to the National Institute of Health (NIH) in Islamabad.

Battagram, Shangla and Kohistan

- Case investigation was carried out into 12 cases of bloody diarrhoea reported from the Civil Hospital in Thakot. Samples were taken of the patients, as well as water samples of the main water sources.
- The International Federation of the Red Cross (IFRC) reported one suspected case of tuberculosis from those residents remaining in Maira camp.

Mansehra

- One case of suspected Acute Flaccid Paralysis (AFP) was reported by the Civil Hospital Garhi Habibullah. The patient was fully vaccinated and referred to the District Headquarters (DHQ) hospital in Mansehra. WHO sent an investigation team and samples were collected for laboratory confirmation. Another case of suspected AFP was reported in the previous week from the children's ward of the DHQ hospital. The patient was also fully vaccinated. The polio surveillance team from the Ministry of Health investigated the case and collected a stool sample. The paediatrician diagnosed Guillaine Barre Syndrome (GBS) and sent the patient home after vast improvement.
- The NGO Mercy Corps reported two suspected cases of measles from the Civil Hospital Battalion in Mansehra. A mop vaccination campaign will be carried out soon in the area.
- One case of acute jaundice was reported by Kohsar Children Academy in Mansehra. Investigation team found an 8-year-old boy from Gandhian village, Inyatabad with suspected acute viral hepatitis. Health education sessions for parents will be conducted. Two other cases of acute viral hepatitis were reported from Garhi Habibullah. Blood sample was taken, as well as water samples for further analysis.

Muzaffarabad

- Four suspected measles cases were reported by IOM from Herein IDP camp, Chela Bandi, in spite of a recent immunization campaign carried out by the Ministry of Health, including for measles. Blood samples were taken and sent to NIH. Another suspected measles case was reported from Ambor by MSF. MSF had recently immunized 150 children between 6 months and 12 years of age.
- Case investigation was carried out into one suspected case of hemorrhagic fever, reported by the MSF clinic in Hattian Tehsil. Case definition of hemorrhagic fever was discussed with the health staff of the clinic, as the child may not have been infected with hemorrhagic fever as was suggested.

Rawalakot

- Investigation into two Hepatitis E cases was carried out in Rawalakot. Inspection of the water sources and the water collection trailer was done, and water samples were taken.

Environmental Health

Bagh

- Another six water sources in and around Bagh were found to be contaminated after drinking water quality testing. One of the main issues is the improper location of latrines.
- To improve solid waste management in Bagh town, WHO is supporting the municipality in the selection of a site for garbage disposal.
- WHO is ensuring safe water supply for all prefabricated BHUs constructed in the district.
- Environmental assessment was carried out in response to an increased number of bloody diarrhoea cases from SeriMong village, as was reported by the Qatar Red Crescent in Dhulli. UNICEF mobilized a Wegtech water testing kit. WHO, UNICEF and Islamic Relief conducted hygiene promotion activities in the area.

Balakot

- WHO provided five drum incinerators to Action Against Hunger and monitors their use.
- Water samples were collected from consumer end and source points at Garri Civil Hospital and Guldheri Village in Balakot, where jaundice cases were reported.

Battagram, Shangla and Kohistan

- IFRC reported several cases of leishmaniasis from Jambera village. Leishmaniasis has different forms, and can be fatal when not treated. Infection can be prevented by avoiding sandfly bites through repellents or insecticides. Immediate intervention to improve the sanitation in the village is carried out co-ordinately between WHO and UNICEF.
- WHO and UNICEF are installing a water treatment plant in the Civil Hospital in Besham.

Mansehra

- A water quality assessment at Kohsar Children Academy in response to acute hepatitis cases revealed that the water is contaminated. Actions will be taken to improve the drinking water quality and supply system. The DHQ hospital Mansehra in the distribution of over 50,000 water purification sachets for those the villages affected by hepatitis E.

Muzaffarabad

- The water supply schemes for eight prefabricated BHUs have been finalized. WHO is assessing the water supply and waste management of the remaining BHUs.
- Initial medical waste assessments at PIMA and CMH hospitals were conducted.
- WHO and UNICEF will be supporting the Municipality of Muzaffarabad city with solid waste management and environmental health response to a possible cholera outbreak.

Mental health and psychosocial actions

Bagh

- A total of 250 Lady Health Workers (LHW) and other health care professionals of First Level Care Facilities were trained on mental health issues in Bagh, Dhirkot and Kahouta.

Muzaffarabad

- As part of the 16 training sessions for approximately 480 health care professionals, a group of LHW was trained on mental health issues at AIMS Hospital.

Rawalakot

- The training program on mental health for 418 LHW, Lady Health Supervisors, dispensers, and health technicians from Rawalakot, Hajeera, and Abbaspur is ongoing.