

Health Situation Report # 32

22-29 January 2006

Highlights

- The transition from relief to recovery is currently discussed by the Health Cluster, chaired by the Ministry of Health and WHO, and including all other health organizations. The main goal is to ensure the continuation of an adequate level of health services in the earthquake affected areas after many temporary health facilities run by NGOs and country medical teams are expected to close down.
- Acute Respiratory Infections (ARI) continues to contribute significantly to the overall consultations in the earthquake affected districts. A total of 24,134 ARI cases and six related deaths were reported. A total of 4,772 acute diarrhoea (AWD) cases were reported with an increase in the number of reported cases compared to the previous week. Fifteen cases of clinically diagnosed measles were reported.



A boy listening to a radio at Thory Park camp in Muzaffarabad. WHO and UNICEF have distributed over 15,000 radios since October 2005 to disseminate health-related messages to the earthquake-affected population.

WHO Response

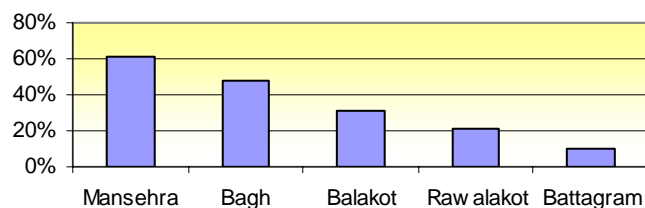
Project 1: Revitalization of primary health care services.

- The National Polio Immunization Days were carried out from 24-26 January in all of the earthquake affected areas, except for two districts of North West Frontier Province (NWFP). Final results are still awaited.

Project 2: Revitalization of hospital care services.

- When comparing the bed occupancy rates between the different earthquake affected districts, a large variance is shown. Bed occupancy rates in Bagh and Mansehra are much higher than in the other districts, due to the presence of District Headquarters (DHQ) hospitals. The bed occupancy rate in field hospitals remains low and seems therefore not be a good indicator for health coverage.

Figure 1: Bed occupancy rate in earthquake affected areas from 22- 29 January 2006



Balakot

- Field hospitals in Balakot are decreasing the number of beds to adjust to the demand. Therefore, the bed occupancy rate increased this week to 60%, compared to 24% in week 2 and 40% in the previous week.

Project 3: Increased access to health care for affected communities.

Balakot

- Construction works for the prefabricated basic health units in Sangar, Ganool, Jaraid, Hungarai and Paras are ongoing. In Jaraid and Paras the slab and pipes are in place.

Bagh

- The construction of the prefabricated Basic Health Unit (BHU) in Bhir Pani, supported by MSF Belgium is completed, a labour room is operational. Another BHU is built in Julgari.

Project 4: Emergency health coordination and information management.

Mansehra

- Ten persons were trained in the Logistics Support System (LSS), the official UN software programme that promotes transparency among organizations managing humanitarian supplies for the earthquake affected population. Eight stock managers from the District Headquarters (DHQ) hospital will be operating the LSS system from the main hospital warehouse in Mansehra.



Project 5: Disease Surveillance and Early Warning System (DEWS).

- Due to the increase in reported number of alerts that turn out to be false, WHO is looking into how to improve the case definition of all health events under surveillance, as well as training of local medical staff in the case definition of the diseases.

Abbotabad

- Two suspected cases of **Meningitis** were reported from the Army regimental housing. Case investigation was carried out, samples were taken and laboratory confirmation is pending. Other residents from the regimental housing were recommended to take antibiotic prophylaxis to prevent further transmission of the disease.

Bagh

- A case of acute **Hepatitis** was reported from Cola Noshair Ali Khan by the Qatar Red Crescent field clinic in Dhulli area. The 10 year old male patient had a history of 10 days constipation, yellowish skin and sclera. The patient was treated with IV fluids and laxative and sent for further investigation to the DHQ hospital in Bagh.
- Four cases of **Bloody Diarrhoea** were reported from village Jandala by the Rural Health Centre Arja. Stool samples were taken and sent to the National Institute for Health (NIH) laboratory. Active case finding was carried out and four new cases detected. Sanitation and hygienic conditions are poor. WHO will be supporting urgent health education and hygienic promotion activities in this area.

Balakot

- One suspected case of **Acute Flaccid Paralysis** was reported at the Spanish Red Cross clinic, in Bamphora Camp on 25 January 2006. Investigation revealed that none of the 7 children in the family had received an Oral Polio Vaccine (OPV). Vaccination is underway.
- A total of 54 cases of **Bloody Diarrhoea** were reported by the NGO IMC in Bassian. Investigation revealed that the cases were falsely reported.

Battagram

- Two suspected cases of **Measles** were reported in Meira camp on January 24. One case could be clinically confirmed. On 25 January, 4 more cases were reported: 2 of the cases were not vaccinated. UNICEF has started a vaccination campaign in the camp.
- Forty cases of **Bloody Diarrhoea** were reported in Meira camp. Investigation revealed only 1-2 cases per day. Water quality was tested and found to be satisfactory.
- One **suspected Meningitis** case (10 year-old boy), was reported from Meira camp and referred to Abbotabad Hospital.
- A WHO medical team reported 11 suspected cases of **Tuberculosis (TB)** during a screening in Maidan Camp. As a result, the National TB Program will increase their activities in Maidan and Meira camps.

Muzaffarabad

- Rumour investigation was carried out into a large number of cases and deaths due to suspected Hemorrhagic fever reported from Jabba Bharia near Chilehana Neelam valley.

A WHO medical team visited the area by helicopter and could confirm seven deaths in the past 10 days, and four cases. Verbal autopsy revealed that the dead had not shown symptoms of hemorrhagic fever nor did the patients have signs of hemorrhagic fever, like rash, profuse bleeding, headaches or body aches. There was no report of mosquitoes in the villages. Blood samples were taken from the patients and sent to the NIH in Islamabad for laboratory confirmation. Water samples were also taken from the drinking water sources near the villages. All residents do have livestock in their homes.

A medical team from the Ministry of Health with support of WHO and the Pakistani Army has been mobilized to the village to monitor the situation during at least one week.

Project 6: Environmental Health.

- Water testing laboratory kits have been sent to all of the six WHO field offices and are focusing on faecal contamination of drinking water.

Bagh

- A water quality check in the villages of Lariyan and Kharal Abassian concluded that the four water sources tested are unfit for drinking purposes. WHO has recommended urgent interventions, such as the distribution of chlorine tablets and the increase in hygiene activities. WHO has provided over 100,000 chlorine tablets to the area.

Mansehra

- The construction of the incinerator will be initiated soon, and is expected to be completed in three weeks.

Project 7: Mental health and psychosocial actions.

Balakot

- A new WHO mental health team has been deployed to Balakot. A total of 455 cases were seen this week and for the first time more women (147) than men (100) were attended. The leading cause of consultation were mood disorders (48%) followed by anxiety and stress related disorders (41%).

Mansehra

- The total number of consultations in Mansehra this week was 136: male (44), female (72) and children (20).