



## HIGHLIGHTS

- **The early warning disease surveillance system is working well with health-related NGOs providing daily reports. The weekly bulletin will be produced every Monday. No outbreaks have been reported.**
- **The Ministry of Health has instructed townships to immunize children aged nine months to five years and unvaccinated children aged 5-10 years for measles, in the IDP settlements.**
- **There is a high demand for reproductive health services. A Code of Conduct has been developed to protect the rights of women and children during emergencies.**

## HEALTH ASSESSMENT AND SITUATION UPDATE

- Current disease reports received from the cyclone-affected areas are within normal limits. There are no outbreaks. Reported rumors are being investigated regularly.
- The ASEAN emergency relief team will begin assessments of Yangon and affected areas on 1 June. The preliminary rapid assessment report is expected by 15 June.
- The Government is developing the health response plan. NGO activities in the affected areas should follow national treatment guidelines.
- The priority in the affected areas is to restore the health system to a normal level of functioning and to ensure services in every area. In order to mobilize additional manpower for this, local organizations such as the Myanmar Nurses and Midwives Association have been contacted. At township level, partners are encouraged to coordinate with Township Medical Officers.
- Nine international medical teams from Asia are operating in the affected areas and more are expected. A Filipino team was prevented by bad weather from going to Hine Gyi island and is currently conducting disaster management training. They will assist at the hospitals and shelters in Pathein and then return to Yangon. Other international teams are in the following places: China-Kungyangon; Laos –Kyauktan; Thailand – Mawlamyinegyun; Bangladesh – Wakema; India – Bogale and Pyapon; Singapore- Twantay; Phillipines- Pathein; Japan- Labutta.
- Some agencies have reported sending international staff to the delta area.

- NGOs with MOUs are granted permission to work in the affected areas. All NGOs are expected to update the MOH on where they are working, their activities and available supplies.
- Access to the field for expatriate staff follows the normal procedure in place before the cyclone, namely application to MOFA and MOH. This system has been modified so that a response will be given to each application within days.
- Township Medical Officers are working to ensure effective delivery of maternal and child health services.
- Supplies are reaching the affected areas. Bogota Hub received 360 tonnes, Labutta Hub received 470 tonnes and Payapong Hub received 153 tonnes in the last two days.
- The plan to rebuild the health system includes emergency renovation of health facilities and ensures service provision. The long term plan for reconstruction is being developed.
- UNDP Integrated Community Development Project has an MOU with the MOH for the renovation and rebuilding of Community health facilities including Rural Health Centres (for midwives and Health Assistants) and sub-health centres in five affected townships. The total number of villages is 4000 and UNDP is targeting 1700 under this project.
- The port in Yangon is operational but has no container handling equipment.
- With the approaching monsoon season, and therefore flooding risks, storage may become an issue.

## **HEALTH CLUSTER RESPONSE**

### **1. Disease Surveillance**

- Diarrhoeal diseases and acute respiratory infections (ARIs) remain the highest health concerns. Water and sanitation are the most urgent needs according to a WHO meeting of Regional Surveillance Officers in Yangon.
- MOH is working closely with WHO and UNICEF to strengthen the surveillance system and response.
- The EWAR system will be fully operative from Sunday 1st June.
- All NGOs in the field have been briefed about SOPs of the system and have received the standard record form. The computer application has been installed in WHO and a data manager appointed.
- The daily outbreak zero reporting is working well and almost all health-related NGOs are participating. The WHO data manager is in charge of the active daily check, supported by Merlin following up eventual rumors.
- A weekly bulletin will be produced every Monday and distributed to partners every Tuesday at the health cluster meeting.
- WHO is working with MOH to strengthen Rapid Response Team capacities at the Township level.

- The capacity of the Central Laboratory in Yangon is being strengthened.
- Kits for specimen collection have been ordered and will be distributed in each township.

## 2. Health Action

- The Ministry of Health has instructed townships to immunize children aged nine months to five years and previously unvaccinated children between five and ten years, for measles, in the IDP settlements.

## 3. Supplies

- WHO and the health cluster have sent more than 500 metric tonnes of supplies and equipment since the beginning of the emergency.
- MERLIN sent 18 tonnes of medicine in the last two days.

## 4. Funding

- WHO and its Health Cluster partners in Myanmar have approved a six-month US\$28 million action plan to provide immediate health care for cyclone survivors, and to support longer-term efforts to rebuild the country's ravaged health care system.

## HEALTH COORDINATION

- In the cyclone-affected areas, sub-national hubs have been established to facilitate and coordinate the relief and rehabilitation measures. Health partners expressed a need for a health focal point in each of these hubs to facilitate local coordination as well as to keep the health cluster informed about the progress of activities. UNICEF has already identified its focal persons in Labutta and Bogale. The NGOs active in the remaining areas have been invited to nominate focal points to work as the health sector focal points.
- Almost 50 INGOs, UN agencies, bilateral agencies and local NGOs as well as senior health officials attended the Health Cluster meeting.
- The Health Cluster has developed several working groups that focus on specific issues:
  - Disease Surveillance: The established system is working well. Analysis based on the formal reporting system will roll out next week.
  - Early recovery/health systems: the working group has agreed to adopt an integrated approach by the cluster to early recovery plan in close consultation with the MOH. This implies that implementation of this plan would require effective coordination with township authorities.
  - HIV and AIDS/Reproductive Health (UNAIDS): A number of organizations reported a high demand for reproductive health services. Ante-natal care is one of the top three demands. Organizations providing clinical care have been urged to consider giving high priority to address issues relating to reproductive health services. UNFPA are providing a number of resources and training support

- There is a high demand for condoms. Organizations providing clinical care have been requested to ensure condoms are properly distributed in the affected areas. Free condoms are provided through PSI and UNFPA
    - The sub group will conduct a short telephone survey to assess the extent to which HIV and reproductive health is integrated into emergency services; whether clinical teams need further training; whether reproductive health commodities are available; whether teams are aware of potential for organizations who can integrate this into their service.
    - The Women and Child Protection Cluster has developed the Code of Conduct for agencies to protect the rights of women and children in emergencies.
  - Psychosocial support: A WHO national expert on psychosocial support conducted a field assessment. World Concern reported 27 trauma counselors working in the field with a data bank of 200 who could be called upon.
  - Tuberculosis: The priority of the working group and the National TB Programme is to track existing patients and ensure that they are referred back to the DOTS programme rather than focusing on new patients. The National Tuberculosis Programme and WHO will conduct an assessment to establish the status of sputum smear microscopy; chest X ray facilities; availability of TB drugs and TB registers in all affected townships.
  - Joint Plan of Action. The joint plan of action was prepared by the international agencies in close consultation with the MOH with the intention of adopting a unified approach to support the health delivery system in the affected areas. The four agreed outputs of this plan are:
    - Effective Coordination of Health Activities
    - Health needs and health threats assessed and monitored
    - Gaps identified and responded to
    - Systems strengthened and revitalized and capacities built
- The Health Cluster in Bangkok will have its last meeting next week.

## **NEXT STEPS**

- The Health Cluster Joint Action plan and the Early Recovery plan should be developed in line with the Government's Health sector Plan, based on the following broad principles:
  - Assessment and identification of the health needs of the affected population.
  - Strengthen early warning and disease surveillance systems to jointly respond to outbreaks and address other health needs by filling critical gaps to the health care delivery system.
  - Initiate follow-up action to support the revised UN Flash Appeal which is likely to be launched on 23 June.