Situation report - 2  
Floods – May 2017

Date 28.05 2017

1. General overview and weather

With the establishment of the South West monsoon the heavy rainfall received mainly in the South West parts of the country has caused much destruction. Though the daily rainfall has reduced by the 28 May 2017 to less than 100 mm in most parts, the water levels of the main rivers still remain high. In contrast, the water levels in the lower plains across Kalutara and Galle are increasing with the rains received in the upper catchment areas. Last night, in the district of Matara, people were requested to evacuate from the river basin area due to the risk of breach in the flood barriers.

2. Weather forecast

Though the rainfall reduced notably on Saturday (27.05.2017) onwards, the Department of Metrology predicts yet another increase on Monday and Tuesday with the depression culminating in the Bay of Bengal.

3. Current disaster situation

The government declared a total of 423,068 persons affected across fifteen districts due to the adverse weather conditions as of 28.05.2017. One hundred thousand nine hundred and twenty-four are displaced in 304 safe locations in nine districts. The highest number of people affected is reported from the district of Galle where a total of 142,149 people from 36,314 families are affected. The district of Kalutara reports 43 confirmed deaths, 26 injured and 68 missing to-date. The highest death toll is reported from Ratnapura, with a total of 51 deaths. The total death toll currently stand at 126, with another 97 reported as missing.

The search and rescue operations are still ongoing with the assistance of the tri-forces.

Effect on the healthcare network

The healthcare institution network is also affected by the current inclement weather conditions. The Ministry of Health reports over ten hospitals are affected adversely and are being evacuated partially / fully. Among the inundated hospitals is the Provincial General Hospital of Ratnapura which caters to a large draining area in Ratnapura district and the main referral unit
of the district. In addition, Base Hospitals Kalawana, Deniyaya and Kamburupitiya are also affected creating challenges.

One of the challenges posed in the current emergency context is the disruption of electricity supply further impeding health service provision.

4. **WCO support to the government**

WCO is liaising closely with the MoH and assisting the government to provide critical healthcare services for the survivors keeping the healthcare institution network operational.

The South East Asia Regional Health Emergency Fund has been mobilized with immediate effect to provide assistance to the government. Six million LKR is provided as immediate operational support for medical team deployment, strengthening surveillance of communicable diseases, provision of mental health and psychosocial support for survivors and support for health promotion.

The inundated and affected facilities which continue to provide lifesaving care requires urgent reestablishment of power supply to remain operational. Recognizing the priority need to maintain the network of hospital operational to the highest possible level, WHO is supporting the government to reestablish power supply to affected healthcare facilities.

At the same time, provision of emergency/ temporary facilities to care for the survivors becomes mandatory and makes deployment and surge capacity more meaningful. WHO is strengthening the government’s efforts by providing emergency/ temporary facilities for the maintenance of life-saving health services.

In the background of experiencing an increased caseload of Dengue patients in the current year, yet another area where assistance is provided would be for vector control activities. Early interventions for vector control would be instrumental in preventing this situation from further deteriorating and is indeed a priority at the moment.

The WHO Country Office has also joined hands with the UN country team in an effort to synergize the relief assistance to the government.