

HIGHLIGHTS

- The Ministry of Health has placed emphasis on greater local-level coordination to improve the early warning and disease surveillance system.
- Breastfeeding Day was observed in all delta townships.
- The Health Cluster will collaborate with the Shelter cluster on blueprints for rebuilding health facilities.

HEALTH ASSESSMENT AND SITUATION UPDATE

- Since the beginning of the emergency, the Ministry of Health has regularly sent medical teams to the worst-affected areas to provide health care services to storm victims. Accordingly, a team of physicians, specialists, assistant surgeons and nurses left Yangon General Hospital on July 31, 2008.
- Another Ministry of Health team of medical specialists have been working aboard Teinkhoe floating hospital to treatment to patients in the affected areas since July 30, 2008.

HEALTH CLUSTER RESPONSE

1. Disease Surveillance

- Between 27 July to 2 August (week31), 119 confirmed cases of malaria, 30 cases of dengue haemorrhagic fever, four suspected cases of measles and one suspected meningitis case have been reported in Yangon and Ayeyarwady division. These cases are in
 - Labutta (Measles).
 - Ngaputaw and Dedaye (Malaria).
 - Pathein and few cases in Labutta (DHF).

Formatted: Bullets and Numbering

- The Ministry of Health has taken Action for Acute Jaundice Syndrome, Measles, Malaria and DHF. MOH is monitoring the events and outcomes of the surveillance situation.
- To improve early warning and surveillance MoH has put emphasis on local-level co-operation and coordination. Local health authorities are asked to provide immediate information to the central authorities. It is possible that there are still duplication of data reported therefore, immediate feedback mechanisms are being developed. MoH also put emphasis on collaborative response activities from all the partners.

2. Health Action .

- WHO circulated CDs with guidelines for public health and communicable diseases in emergencies including national guidelines, for use in Cyclone Nargis affected areas.
- WHO field office staff at Labutta, Pathein and Bogale are assisting in improving health cluster coordination, technical assistance and liaison with Ministry of Health.
- MOH in partnership with WHO have carried out training on psychosocial support in the last two weeks.
- MOH has requested UNICEF to focus their activities through volunteers within the community, who should be trained to a certain minimum standard.
- MoH its health partners including UNICEF have been working in the delta region to promote exclusive breastfeeding for the children. It observed breastfeeding day all over the delta townships.
- MoH is also focusing on increasing community awareness to prevent dengue haemorrhagic fever.
- UNICEF has organized 18 training workshops on improving communication skills to various health stakeholders, using different methods including role play, discussion and presentation skills. So far 720 participants have been trained.

- Mentor Initiative, an NGO working on malaria control, is working to provide both training and material support for health workers in the affected areas.
- World Vision has donated 70 water purifiers worth US\$123 900 to storm victims at the temporary control office of the Ministry of Health being run at the Emergency and Outpatient Department of Yangon General Hospital.

3. Funds

- The Health Cluster Coordinator will distribute the financial tracking system template to those NGOs who will receive funds from the Flash Appeal.
- OCHA has requested all agencies using Flash Appeal funds to send the completed financial tracking system (FTS) template to the Health Cluster Coordinator by the 23rd of every month.
- The information from the templates will be consolidated and sent to the Government as per their request.

HEALTH COORDINATION

- Representatives of the Health Cluster Early Recovery working group met with the shelter cluster technical working group to discuss collaborating on design of community facilities including health facilities. A health facility blue print will be further discussed. Another issue to be addressed is the number of INGOs interested in constructing facilities but lacking the expertise to do so.
- Township Level Coordination
 - In Bogale, the MoH Deputy Director General, met all UN agencies and NGOs to learn about their latest activities. All agencies agreed to assist the MoH health staff in transportation arrangements. MoH will investigate reported measles cases. Merlin will provide training for health workers in two selected areas (Hlaing Bone and A Le Ain). NGOs will be provided information on where to immunize children.

- In Patheingyi, senior-level Ministry of Health officials will be hold a meeting with all TMOs and INGO focal points from the affected township on 16th August to discuss Township coordination.
- In Kyaiklat, the issue of double reporting to the diseases surveillance system was discussed in a meeting chaired by the Township Medical Officer.

GAPS AND NEXT STEPS

- Health Cluster partners are continuing to organize and work on strengthening the field level coordination through regular meetings to enhance immunization, identify unreached areas and fill gaps in health services.
- WHO will assist the Government of Myanmar to revitalize the healthcare system and monitor and evaluate health programmes. It will also support Government in providing essential health and medical services.