

## Health Situation Report # 37

30 March-12 April 2006

### Highlights

- In Battagram district, the return of the earthquake-affected population back to their home villages was completed by 31 March 2006. Camps like Meira, Maidan and Kund with a population of around 20,000 people, have been emptied. In Mansehra, around 150,000 people returned to their villages.
- In Battagram, Lady Health Workers equipped with delivery kits accompanied all pregnant women in their last month. WHO also arranged for the transportation of full term pregnant women from Maidan camp.
- As part of the return package, more than 700 children were screened and 200 were vaccinated by the Ministry of Health immunization teams, who were located at police checkpoints on the way from Balakot to Kaghan valley and to Muzaffarabad.
- The Pakistani government declared an area of 600 hectare of Balakot Town as red zone. Although the Tehsil Headquarter hospital in Balakot is in its final stage of reconstruction, its future is insecure as it is located in the red zone. The hospital is currently providing Out Patient Department, pharmacy, and emergency services.
- The WHO Field office in Balakot will be closed and merged with the office in Mansehra.
- An earthquake measuring 4.8 measured on the Richter scale with epicenter 160 kilometres north of Battagram caused two houses to collapse and 26 injured, of which three serious. The UN office at the Battagram View Hotel was evacuated until further assessment of the building is conducted.
- During the Polio National Immunization Days (NID), about 1.5 million children below five years of age were vaccinated in the earthquake affected districts.
- The main causes for consultations this week are Acute Respiratory Infection (23%), Acute Watery Diarrhoea (7%), Fever of Unexplained Origin (5%) and (3%) injuries.



*Ministry of Health teams screen the returning population to ensure all children are vaccinated against diseases such as measles.*

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### Revitalization of primary health care services

#### Bagh

- An additional 33 lady health workers were trained on mother and child health care.

#### Balakot

- In Balakot, approximately 20 health workers from the Ministry of Health, Pakistani Red Crescent, IFRC, and IMC were trained on Integrated Management of Childhood Illness (IMCI) standard case management of Acute Respiratory Tract Infection in children under 5, as ARI is still the major cause of morbidity.

### **Battagram**

- With the population returning to their home villages, the focus on ensuring health services provision and implementation of package of essential facilities in the places of origin of the earthquake-affected population. In this respect, WHO Battagram carried out assessments for 7 health facilities in Shangla District.

### **Mansehra**

- To get a complete picture of all Basic Health Units in Mansehra district, 50 health facilities were visited as part of an in-depth health facilities survey. A special assessment tool was developed; data are currently being compiled and analyzed.
- WHO, UNFPA and other health partners are looking into an increased reporting in the number of neonatal deaths due to asphyxia, hypothermia or sepsis at the DHQ Hospital. Investigation into the possible causes is planned. Recommendation on how to prevent or minimize these deaths will follow soon.

### **Rawalakot**

- The district-wide community hygiene campaign jointly organized by WHO, Med Air, UNICEF, and the Ministry of Health is still ongoing.

## **Revitalization of hospital care services**

### **Balakot**

- To improve storage of medicines, WHO donated shelves to the THQ hospital pharmacy.
- The Pakistani Red Crescent at Bamphora Camp and Markazi Jamait Ahle Hadis at Apni Basti camp have terminated their Outpatient Department activities, and the Narah Cuban Hospital has been officially handed over to the army.

### **Rawalakot**

- The Jordan Field hospital and the Cuban team from Banguin departed Rawalakot.
- The Combined Military Hospital (CMH) requested the health cluster for support to be able to cope with the increasing patient load after the closure of three field hospitals.

## **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, 99% of these sent their epidemiological findings to WHO in the past two weeks, totalling almost 89,472 consultations per week, for a population of almost 4 million people in the earthquake affected areas.
- The number of ARI cases is gradually decreasing since week 6 of 2006, while the number of AWD cases is expected to increase due to changing weather conditions.
- Micro plans from the different field offices are under preparation as part of the overall Cholera outbreak preparedness plan
- A total of 227 cases of bloody diarrhoea were reported; 27% were from Bagh district.

### **Bagh**

- One case of suspected measles was reported by the Qatar Red Crescent. Patient was a 18 year old male from Chak Mung in Dhulli. Although a blood sample was collected and sent to the National Institute of Health (NIH) laboratory in Islamabad, case investigation revealed it was not a measles case. Vaccination status of the patient was unknown.
- One case of bloody diarrhoea from Seri Mung village was reported by the Qatar Red Crescent. Environmental assessment and water quality testing reveals poor sanitation and absence of latrines.

### Balakot

- Two case of acute jaundice syndrome were reported from the field hospital in Garhi Habibulla and the IMC clinic in Kashtara camp. WHO sent a team for further case investigation and active case finding. Four more cases were identified in Brarkot village, Garhi Habibulla by the Lady Health Worker. Blood samples were collected and sent to NIH. Water samples were taken for testing on bacteriological contamination. Health education messages were shared with the community regarding hygiene, safe drinking water and treatment of the disease.
- Laboratory tests from NIH Islamabad confirmed six cases of viral hepatitis E from previous acute jaundice syndrome cases in week 11 and 12. Four of these cases were originated from Dhamkacha village, where active case finding resulted in an additional 11 cases, totalling 17 cases of acute viral hepatitis. Public health measures were taken by improving the quality of the drinking water, dissemination of health education messages about hygiene and safe drinking water, as well as on food safety.
- Outbreak investigation into five suspected cases of acute viral hepatitis in Mori, Brarkot Village, Ghari Habibullah was also conducted, concluding the disease was transmitted by contamination in the drinking water. The water network is damaged and exposed and since Hepatitis E is very difficult to eliminate from the water even with very high levels of chlorine, the approach is to ensure appropriate safe supply systems combined with extensive health information and education.
  - ➔ *Hepatitis E can be fatal in pregnant women thus it is an imperative that any suspected case of jaundice in a pregnant woman is referred to a hospital.*

### Battagram

- Three cases of suspected measles were reported from Meira camp and Allai valley. The suspected case from Meira camp-which was closed on 31 March 2006 after all the residents had returned back to their home villages- was tested negative.
- WHO donated 100 anti-rabies vaccines to the District Health Officer in Battagram in support of an Anti Rabies Campaign.

### Mansehra

- Six cases of suspected measles were reported this week: two from the MDM field clinic in Jaba camp, three from the Basic Health Unit Sandesar and one from the Rural Health Centre Shinkhari. Two of the children were fully vaccinated, while one 12 year old girl from Jaba camp had not been vaccinated. Blood sample was taken and sent to NIH for verification. From three other children the vaccination status was unknown. Further investigation is currently being carried out.

### Muzaffarabad

- Two cases of suspected measles were reported by the ICRC in Pattika. Vaccination status of both patients is unknown, further investigation is going on.
- Three cases of acute jaundice syndrome were reported by the ICRC in Pattika. Case investigation was carried out, but only one blood sample was taken and sent to NIH.

### Rawalakot

- Four cases of acute jaundice syndrome were reported from Rawalakot, Hajeera and Abbaspur. One patient was a 31 year old army official working in Hajeera. Sporadic cases of jaundice have been reported from this same army camp. Sample was sent to NIH. Of four samples of acute jaundice syndrome sent to NIH, two were confirmed for hepatitis.
- A total of 18 new cases of bloody diarrhoea were reported this week from Rawalakot and Hajeera. No samples were taken, as personal information on patients was not available.
- Another fifteen cases of suspected malaria were reported from Rawalakot and Hajeera, out of which nine were tested positive for *falciparum* malaria with a rapid test. Four of the diagnosed malaria patients during the previous week were army officials from Hajeera and Rawalakot. All samples will be cross checked by the Roll Back Malaria team.

## Environmental Health

### Balakot

- With WHO support, UNICEF provided a 1500 l bladder tank to solve a serious shortage of water in Ganhool Cuban Hospital.
- After the construction and distribution of incinerators to improve appropriate medical waste disposal in health facilities, WHO now focuses on the provision of garbage cans. Of the 120, 50 have been distributed in the past week in Balakot and Battagram. Construction work of the burial pits in Sangar Basic Health Unit and PIMA hospital was completed. The proper use of the waste bins and burial pits will be monitored.
- Two outbreak investigations into acute viral hepatitis cases in Dhamkatcha village and Mori, Brarkot Village in Ghari Habibullah revealed the water was unfit for drinking due to fecal contamination. The population of the two villages was made aware of the risks of crossing of animals through water sources, and broken and leaking water pipes. Further health education was provided to the population on the importance of hygiene and safe drinking water, while health care providers were trained on Hepatitis A and E. Together with other agencies working in the area, public health measures will be implemented in the community.
- WHO will conduct hygiene promotion sessions using PHAST (Participatory Hygiene and Sanitation Transformation) methodology for 192 families in spontaneous settlements.



### Battagram

- IFRC will be providing the DHQ hospital in Battagram with a 4m<sup>3</sup> water treatment plant as the German Red Cross is leaving half April. This water treatment plant receives water through the urban water supply network.
- WHO provided two water tanks for the new Mother and Child Health Care centre, while OXFAM is going to construct latrines and water supplies system.
- WHO distributed 100 water-testing kits and started making the database for water quality surveillance and monitoring for Battagram District.

### Rawalakot

- WHO will be providing new water pipelines and will be implementing a new water quality testing program of the main water sources in the district. For sanitation purposes, WHO will be supporting the Combined Military Hospital with the installation of 12 toilets, 7 washbasins, and 4 mobile garbage bins.

## Mental health and psychosocial actions

- Although there is an ongoing need for mental health and psychosocial support, the mental health teams have started to phase out. Activities now focus on the integration of mental health in Primary Health Care and the strengthening of the district health system.

### Mansehra

- The first of series of Mental Health and Psychosocial Support workshops was conducted for health staff of First Level Care Facilities (FLCF). Fifteen doctors, lady health workers, and others were trained by local mental health professionals.



### Rawalakot

- An extensive training program on mental health for over 400 paramedical staff from Rawalakot, Hajeera and Abbaspur has been initiated. Among the participants are lady health workers.