



World Health Organization

Health Action in Crises Situation Report #3

South Asia: Earthquake and Tsunami - December 2004

Period Covered 30th to the 31th December, 2004

Date of transmission: 31th December, 2004 20:00 hrs

Key Developments

- WHO has mobilized 190 New Emergency Health Kits to cover essential medicine needs of 2 million people for three months – delivery will be complete by mid-January
- Nine kits are being distributed in the region
- 140 other kits (diarrhoea, surgical) have been mobilized
- WHO first 100 days strategy to meet requirements for health assistance, costed at 37 million USD

Situation Update

- The death toll has risen to more than 125,000. Death rates will rise due to communicable diseases unless humanitarian assistance is provided promptly and is well coordinated

Indonesia

- Nearly 80,000 dead, 719,000 affected and 109,000 Internally Displaced Persons (IDP)
- The government is sending 600-800 people to expedite burials
- Large groups of IDP are leaving Banda Aceh, camps for the homeless are being set up in mosques, schools, and university grounds
- Six field hospitals have been established, three in Banda Aceh, one in Sigli, one in Meulaboh and one in Aceh Timur
- WHO staff have been mobilized to Banda Aceh along with medical supplies (antibiotics, paracetamol, emergency medicines, IV sets, masks)

Sri Lanka

- Total death toll 41,000
- 888,000 are estimated to be homeless, with two thirds living in 700 camps. Sanitation is a key issue here
- Much of the public health infrastructure in coastal areas is reportedly damaged and functional units are overwhelmed. The MOH has announced the risk of a cholera outbreak
- About 300 foreign medical doctors are now present in country and coordinated efforts are required. Transportation and logistics need to improve
- WHO teams are going to the districts and leading health coordination processes

India

- The latest figures report that 13,268 are dead and the capital of the Andaman Islands is short of clean water. WHO is collaborating with MOH in southern India, and a situation report is expected shortly

Thailand

- A total of 4,500 people have died in Thailand of which at least 2,230 are foreigners. Foreign aid is arriving

Other Countries

- Maldives: At least 54 people are dead, and approximately 223,957 have been affected. WHO is assisting the government on water purification, ORS and antibiotics provision
- Malaysia: There are now at least 65 people killed and roughly 8,000 displaced. The Penang state was the most severely hit. The Ministry of Health is providing medical treatment, safe water and sanitation facilities.



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Nine medical and eight health teams are visiting 23 disaster relief centres, WHO is monitoring the health situation together with the MOH and the UN country team

- Myanmar, there is approximately 90 dead people. The Government has set up five temporary shelters/distribution points and is distributing essential items to households. UN Country Team is assessing the situation
- Somalia: There are at least 120 dead. There are reports of potential cholera outbreaks in a number of towns and villages. WHO kits have been deployed and disease surveillance teams are monitoring the situation
- There are ten reported deaths in Tanzania. Bangladesh, Seychelles and Kenya were also affected

Health Priorities

- **First:** Finalize assessments and establish disease surveillance
- **Second:** Provide medical and surgical care to the injured
- **Third:** Ensure that survivors have access to clean water in adequate quantity is available. Ensure that survivors who have lost their homes do not live in conditions that are overcrowded, unhygienic and/or dangerous
- **Fourth:** Prepare for possible outbreaks of malaria and dengue fever that are endemic in South East Asia
- **Fifth:** Assess the environmental risks posed by contamination from toxic chemicals as we know that hazardous industries, pesticide warehouses for agriculture, gasoline tanks, oil pipelines and/or waste disposal sites are flooded and destroyed

WHO Action

- WHO is supporting national capacities for disease investigation and verification in Sri Lanka, Indonesia, Thailand and India. Epidemic intelligence will be extended on the ground through local health authorities, NGOs, and UN Agencies
- Assessments are being carried out on health infrastructure, and requirements for medical care and supplies in collaboration with local authorities and the wider UN system
- WHO's 24 hour crisis rooms continue to operate in Geneva and New Delhi. Emergency management units (EMUs) have been set up in strategic locations and additional logisticians have been moved to the field
- Teams of health experts have also been deployed to Indonesia, Sri Lanka and the Maldives
- WHO has mobilized 190 New Emergency Health Kits to cover essential medicine needs of 2 million people for three months – delivery will be complete by mid-January
- Nine kits are being distributed in the region
- 140 other kits (diarrhoea, surgical) have been mobilized
- WHO has circulated an Emergency Health Action Program for South-East Asia, identifying the immediate needs for the next three months. The financial requirements for WHO's action over this period is US \$40 million. For recent and early contributions, WHO thanks the governments of the United Kingdom (DFID for cash and in-kind), France (cash), Italy (in-kind), Switzerland (in-kind), and Norway (in-kind)

Contributions

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