

SOUTH ASIA EARTHQUAKE

Situation Report (4) 11 October 2005

Highlights

- Search and rescue efforts are continuing under difficult conditions. New expatriate teams have reached the affected area and started working. Use of helicopters is still crucial for the distribution of medical supplies but they are far from being sufficient. Clearing roads remains a high priority in order to move rescue teams and vital supplies.
- The weather is deteriorating, with rains and hailstones. Access to some areas has been ensured. WHO teams have arrived in Abbotabad, Mansehra and Muzaffarabad and established a field operation cell
- A flash appeal has been launched in order to mobilize critically needed resources for the relief operations.
- WHO Regional Director for the Eastern Mediterranean Region and the Representative of the Director General for Health Action in Crises are currently in Pakistan. More information on the result of their visits will be issued in the next Situation report.

Health impact:

- The major hospitals in the affected provinces are non-functional. At this stage there are several field hospitals donated by various countries that have arrived and started supporting trauma and medical care. More field hospitals are reported to be in the pipeline.
- WHO is advising the MoH for the management of the dead bodies, especially regarding disposal and spraying. With the onset of cold weather, concern with decomposition is less, but the main problems are psychological, with survivors mixing with wounded and dead bodies. It has started raining abundantly in Islamabad. Thus, fears of acute respiratory infections have been raised for the hundreds of thousands who are in the open air and who have lost homes,.
- Concerns about the lack of safe water and proper sanitation have been raised.

WHO Response:

- In addition to the WHO teams already in Islamabad, 3 teams have been dispatched to establish field operation cells in Abbotabad, Manseral and Muzaffarabad. A fourth cell is considered. Their responsibilities are to support field operations, coordination and inter-agency assessments.
- A joint MoH / WHO coordination cell has been established and is responsible for information management, compilation, analysis, mapping of health-related information as well as support and facilitation of coordination. It will provide also a forum for all health actors and donors to interact in order to avoid duplication and cover gaps.
- WHO has supported several teams of national medical staff both financially and with equipment and supplies. The team are composed of surgeons, an anaesthetist and operation room technicians and have been sent to the areas where the hospital have been destroyed in order to ensure the provision of urgent trauma care.
- WHO assessment teams consisting of public health, epidemiology, health systems, logistic and water/sanitation specialists have arrived in the field.

Urgent needs:

- Safe water, adequate shelter and clean food, trauma and basic health care services are most urgent priorities
- WHO is actively recruiting staff for deployment to Pakistan to establish five teams consisting of specialists in public health, epidemiology, water and sanitation and logistics.
- Ten to fifteen trauma kits are required, in addition to the assembly locally of trauma kits.
- Vehicles and ambulances are required with left-hand drive.

- The Pakistani authorities are reporting no needs for additional, external manpower to be despatched to Pakistan. Instead they emphasize the need for medical supplies, water/sanitation supplies and cash donations.
- Ambulances are required as roads get rehabilitated.
- Vaccines need to be made available in order to start vaccination campaigns.

A Flash Appeal has been published with WHO included in the Health Sector Response to which there are three strategic objectives:

1. To support the assessment of the health sector in order to track the evolution of health needs and the impact of the earthquake on affected populations in order to ensure that the immediate health needs and critical gaps in the health response are identified and met accordingly
2. To support the Ministry of Health and local health authorities in coordinating the health component of the response including relief supplies and human resources
3. To support the establishment of urgent public health interventions including an early warning communicable disease surveillance and response for the early detection and control of outbreaks in the affected population and access and availability of secondary and tertiary health care.

In addition, WHO will concentrate on re-establishing primary and referral services to ensure that basic medical and emergency surgical care are restored, and that access to secondary and tertiary health care including mental health and counselling is ensured.

Projects planned to be implemented by WHO with Ministry of Health and other partners:

1. Assessment and Coordination / Disaster management unit.
2. Surveillance and Disease Early Warning System
3. Support essential health services with supplies, kits, equipment.
(jointly with UNICEF)
4. Essential vaccines, syringes, logistics - DTP, Td (measles is available)
(jointly with UNICEF)
5. Mental Health and Psychosocial Support
6. Human resources mobilization: combination teams for surgery, communicable disease control and mental health services
7. Health Education and counselling (jointly with UNICEF)
8. Re-establishment of primary and secondary level health care services

Total requirement: \$21,700,000

Donations:

- The British Government has donated USD 252,000 for WHO support to the disaster response.
- The Swiss Government has donated USD 100,000 for WHO support to the disaster response.
- The Norwegian Government has donated USD 250,000 for WHO support to the disaster response.
- The Principality of Monaco has donated EURO 25,000 for WHO support to the disaster response.
- The Government of Italy has donated EURO 250,000 for WHO support to the disaster response plus in-kind donation of 5 Trauma kits A, 5 Trauma kits B, 5 New Emergency Health Kits and transport.
- The Government of Australia has donated USD 1,899,696