

HIGHLIGHTS

- 1. The priority is to bring to the affected population what they need, and health is high in the list. As of today, the Health Cluster has made available more than 350 metric tonnes of medical supplies and equipment for the cyclone-affected areas. These include three million water purification sachets, 90 000 water containers, more than 50 000 insecticide-treated mosquito nets, shelter equipment, emergency health kits and essential medicines as requested by the national and local health authorities.**
- 2. The Myanmar health authorities are striving to provide daily reports on disease cases from the affected townships. These are being shared by the Divisional Health Director office with the Central Epidemiological Unit (CEU).**
- 3. UNAIDS reports that in spite of the cyclone, all anti-retroviral therapy (ART) services are functioning and providing the necessary services to the HIV-positive community in the affected areas. Most service points delivering ART are taking special measures to track and assess patients' needs and drug supplies.**

HEALTH ASSESSMENT & SITUATION UPDATE

- The latest report from Myanmar state media inform that the numbers of those dead or missing after Cyclone Nargis have exceeded 132 000.
- The Health Cluster is supporting, with medical supplies, 200 extended first-aid posts run by doctors from the Myanmar Ministry of Health and Myanmar Red Cross volunteers in the cyclone-affected areas.
- Heavy rains continue to affect conditions for road transport of supplies, including medical supplies.

HEALTH CLUSTER RESPONSE

1. Supplies

- The Health Cluster has procured more than 350 metric tonnes of medical supplies and equipment for the cyclone-affected regions of Myanmar to date. These include three million water purification sachets, 90 000 water containers, more than 50 000 insecticide-treated mosquito nets, shelter equipment, emergency health kits and essential medicines requested by the national and local health authorities.
- The health partners are supplying 80 basic health units to the health centres in rural areas. This is in addition to the basic malaria treatment module which is also being supplied.
- In two days, IFRC will start operating a water and sanitation unit for 40 000 people.
- UNICEF has received 30 emergency health kits and therapeutic food.

2. Medical Care

- According to UNAIDS, all ART services are functioning and providing the necessary services to the HIV-positive community in the affected areas. Most service points delivering ART are taking special measures to track and assess patients' needs and drug supplies. The Myanmar Positive Group in collaboration with local community organizations such as Phoenix group and with support from HIV/AIDS Alliance and UNDP and other organizations working with self-help groups such as AFXB are tracking all their members and organizing to ensure that relief supplies, including shelter rehabilitation, are being provided.
- Currently all WHO Myanmar Regional Surveillance Officers have been deputed for relief operations and health care in most affected townships.
- IFRC has basic health units (emergency response units) available for immediate deployment if requested.
- UNICEF and other INGOS are working with the Ministry of Health to finalize distribution plans for therapeutic feeding supplies for three hospitals in the affected areas that have trained paediatricians.
- Some NGOs are planning to undertake a rapid assessment of the nutritional status of the people in the cyclone-affected areas and prepare draft plans for management of acute malnutrition.
- WHO, UNICEF and IFRC are preparing a statement on appropriate child feeding in emergencies as concern has been expressed about rumours of distribution of breast milk substitutes in the cyclone-affected areas.

3. Surveillance

- The Myanmar health authorities are providing daily reports on disease cases from the affected townships. These are being provided from Divisional Health Director office to Central Epidemiological Unit (CEU). The Health Cluster has requested the Ministry of Health to share these reports on a daily basis.

HEALTH COORDINATION

- The health cluster has established three operations centres in the townships of Patheingyi, Labutta and Bogale.
- The Humanitarian Information Centre web site for Myanmar has been established.

NEXT STEPS

- A joint action plan and charting of activities for the Health Cluster for the next 3 to 6 months is being finalized.
- WHO continues to advocate with the donors to mobilize stronger support for the health sector. Australia donated 2.4 million Australian dollars and DFID will increase its contribution US\$ 493 000. The Flash Appeal will be revised and readjusted during the following weeks as assessments bring in more clear information on needs.
- Psychosocial support is likely to be an important issue in the next few weeks, and WHO guidelines and protocols in the local language have been sent to Myanmar.