

HAC/ERO update on Bangladesh Operation Management 5 December 2007

The current public health situation:

- In the affected areas of Bangladesh current trends of diarrhoea and ARI/pneumonia cases are low, but it is anticipated that water borne disease as well as ARI/pneumonia cases may increase due to lack of safe drinking water, poor sanitation and inadequate shelter and shortage of warm clothes especially for children.
- Overall high prevalence of typhoid/fever and skin diseases in comparison with diarrhoea and ARI/pneumonia cases in the nine worst-affected districts. The highest number of diarrhoea cases, ARI/pneumonia cases and typhoid cases (without laboratory confirmation) are reported from Bagerhat district. Highest number of eye and skin infections cases are reported in Pirojpur and Barguna districts.
- The cumulative cases (24 November- 2 December 2007) are:
 - fever/typhoid - 39%
 - skin diseases - 24%
 - diarrhoea - 19%
 - ARI/pneumonia - 12%
 - eye infection - 6%
- The possibility of a malaria outbreak has gone up because of water stagnation.

Actions:

- The third Health Cluster meeting took place on 3 December, where an overview of the current public health situation was presented. The main recommendation was to establish better coordination and partnership building among the Government health sector, WHO, NGOs and other stakeholders.
- WHO is leading the health cluster to ensure a coordinated response by various actors in the health sector and ensure there is no overlapping in interventions. A mapping of activities was done jointly by the MoH, WHO in which over 20 health partners participated.
- WHO is mobilizing supplies of safe water from its own stocks to affected hospitals and peripheral health units. 56 hospitals are located in the nine severely affected districts, seriously limiting the availability of health care.
- Buffer stocks of medicines are being replenished through the MoH.
- In the nine worst affected districts, WHO is working in the area of disease surveillance, reproductive health, psychosocial support and replenishment of emergency buffer stock of medicines.
- WHO is providing support to the GoB for training on search, rescue, evacuation and mass casualty management.
- WHO is assisting the work of partners in the WATSAN cluster.
- WHO continues support with resource mobilization and donor liaison.