

UNICEF Situation Report Swaziland - External

30 July 2007

SITUATION UPDATE

Parliament authorised the release of the \$23.8 million pledged by the Government to respond to the drought emergency. In the course of the week the Ministry of Economic Planning and Development, the Ministry of Finance and the Treasury are to execute the release of the funds to the Ministry of Regional Development and Youth Affairs (MRDYA).

The planned labour strike took place on 25-26 July. There were significant disruptions of the school activities, the banking sector and sugar industry, which is one of the major sources of employment in the country. The labour dispute has been referred to the Courts for arbitration.

UNICEF RESPONSE

Health and Nutrition/WASH:

The flow of nutrition data from the new sentinel sites commenced this week. Three of eleven sites submitted timely reports after the first week. The reporting sites screened 323 children less than five years of age, using mid upper arm circumference (MUAC). Twelve (4 per cent) and four (1 per cent) of the children screened fell in the yellow and red band, respectively on the MUAC. The Nutrition Council and UNICEF are taking corrective action to ensure timely submission of reports from all sentinel sites.

Food for the therapeutic feeding centers arrived in Swaziland. The Good Shepherd Hospital in Lubombo (the worst affected region) will receive the first shipment. To ensure the readiness of two hospitals (Good Shepherd and Htathikulu) that will start therapeutic feeding next week, a UNICEF team conducted a quick assessment of the water situation and found that the water supply is stable. However, the water quality is not optimal, according to the initial assessment. Two of the five satellite clinics for the Htathikulu hospital reported a relatively high number of cases of watery and bloody diarrhea. The UNICEF team will conduct a more detailed technical analysis of water quality for these hospitals next week.

CHILD PROTECTION

A community-based system for monitoring the status of children is now operational. The system which relies on community members – child protectors, rural health motivators, and chiefs - has detected signs of increased vulnerability.

Distribution of 3,500 blankets to 32 Neighbourhood Care Points (NCPs) was completed this week.

INTER-AGENCY COLLABORATION AND KEY PARTNERS

The UNCT launched the Swaziland flash appeal in Pretoria, South Africa on the 25th of July.