

## UNICEF SOUTH AFRICA Situation Report – 29 December 2008

### Highlights

- As of 27 December 2008, a total of 1,320 cases of cholera and 13 related deaths have been reported in all the nine provinces of South Africa, including 1,235 cases in Limpopo (93.6%), 76 cases in Gauteng (5.7%) and 9 cases in the remaining 7 provinces (0.7%). A cumulative number of 9 deaths have been reported in Limpopo, 3 in Gauteng and 1 in KwaZulu Natal. The Case Fatality Rate (CFR) nationwide has dropped to 0.98% with 0.73% in Limpopo and 3.95% in Gauteng (the high case fatality rate in Gauteng is mainly due to the small number of declared cases in the province).
- From 20 to 27 December 2008, 217 new cholera cases were reported in Limpopo Province, a decline of 38.7% compared to the previous week. Most new cases in the Province are from Capricorn and Sekhukhune districts.
- From 4 to 27 December 2008 only one cholera-related death has been reported in Limpopo Province. This has lowered the Case Fatality Rate in the Province from 0.92% two weeks ago to 0.73% at present.
- About 10% of the cholera cases reported in Musina and Madimbo are children under five. 63% of the reported cases are males.
- The Government of South Africa (GoSA) is working closely with UN agencies and other partners to contain the cholera outbreak and to finalize the national cholera action plan.

### Humanitarian Situation

#### *Cholera crisis*

In general the number of cases reported daily is declining in Limpopo, the most affected province with 93.6% of the cases and 69.2% of the related deaths. This is partially due to the improvement of hygiene awareness and case management in the CTCs in Musina and Madimbo. The table below gives the cholera latest official statistics in Limpopo Province.

**Table1:** Epidemiological Data – Limpopo Province (27<sup>th</sup> December 2008. Source: National Outbreak Committee)

	Vhembe District				Waterberg District	Capricorn District			Sekhukhune district - Dilokong	Limpopo Totals
	Musina	Madimbo	Other Areas	Vhembe Total		Knobel/Lekhureng	Botlokwa	Mopani District		
Cumulative Number of Cases	966		1	967	0	57	108	0	103	1235
Cumulative Number of Deaths	8	0	1	9	0	0	0	0	0	9
Case Fatality Rate	0.83%		100.00%	0.93%		0.00%	0.00%		0.00%	0.73%
Patients in the Wards	14	8	5	27		2	16	0	44	89
New Cases of the day	3	11	1	15		2	16	0	8	41

#### *Water and Sanitation*

Because of the end of the year holidays, most administration offices (such as the Department of Home Affairs) are opened only a few days per week. This causes delays for asylum applications and as a result of this; the "show ground" site is hosting more people than expected. The hygiene situation at the "show ground" is deteriorating every day. Although the residents are provided with adequate sanitation and safe drinking water, the drainage of the area is of concern. Existence of stagnant used water from laundry in the area represents a hazard to the residents and might result to a widespread of malaria.

#### *Child Protection and Education*

While the cholera outbreak is the main concern for humanitarian actors in South Africa, the situation of migrants/unaccompanied children in Musina area is also of major concern. Only 2 of the 13 Drop-In Centres in Musina are not closed during the end of year holidays. These two Drop-In Centres will be providing daily food to about 650 street children up to 5 January when the other Drop-In Centres will open again. The UNICEF / Save the Children project is also on standby during this holiday period. Activities related to the project will start on 5 January 2009

## Government / National Response to date

The National Outbreak Response Team (NORT) met on 22 December 2008 with major stakeholders to review progress made in development of the National Cholera Response Plan. A small team was put in place and mandated to finalize the response plan. The team is composed of technical experts from the Department of Health, OCHA, WHO and UNICEF. This team of experts will work on the technical details of the response plan, including coordination, and submit it to the NORT in a plenary meeting on 5 January 2009 for general discussions and endorsement.

Because of the increased number of cases of cholera in Capricorn and Sekhukhune districts (Limpopo Province), the Government of South Africa (GoSA) is working with the partners on the need to strengthen the case management and initiating interventions to prevent the epidemic from spreading to the communities at risk in these two districts. Lessons learnt from the Musina and Madimbo experiences will be used in preventing the spread of Cholera. WHO and UNICEF officers in Musina and Pretoria will be visiting these districts next week to provide support to the teams in the affected areas.

## UNICEF's response

On site, UNICEF has since been providing technical support to the development of district response plans and coordination of the response in the areas of water, sanitation and hygiene through established social mobilisation and Environmental Health sub groups and has been involved in monitoring the implementation of identified prevention interventions. In partnership with Mvula Trust, a local NGO with extensive expertise in water, sanitation and hygiene promotion, UNICEF is intensifying hygiene promotion and social mobilization activities through the province of Limpopo. UNICEF also maintains a partnership with Save the Children UK to address the protection and education needs of children arriving from Zimbabwe, in particular unaccompanied children.

### **Water, Sanitation and Hygiene Promotion**

#### *Water and Sanitation*

- In partnership with UNICEF, solutions to improve the hygienic situation at the "show ground", namely the drainage of water points, a clear separation of toilet facilities by sex and the enforcement of hand washing before the meals are being looked at.
- An agreement was formed with the Jubilee Church, FBO which provides meals at the showground. UNICEF, through Mvula Trust, will provide chlorine and buckets with taps and will put in place a hand washing system. The Church volunteers will ensure the beneficiaries have washed their hands before they give them food.
- Water trucking activities are still ongoing for the farms in Madimbo in collaboration with DWAF and in partnership with Mvula Trust

#### *Social Mobilization and Hygiene Promotion*

- Community mobilization and hygiene promotion activities (including the procurement of essential supplies for this purpose) are still ongoing in the ground with Mvula Trust, especially in the farms along the South Africa / Zimbabwe border in Madimbo area.
- IEC materials are now available in Musina and Madimbo area. Mvula Trust field workers are instructed to explain and distribute the posters in all cholera affected areas in the province.

### **Child Protection and Education**

UNICEF and Save the Children UK have signed a partnership agreement focusing on child protection and education activities for the unaccompanied minors in Musina. The project will address the needs of women and children at the "show ground", in the border area and in the drop-in / feeding centers in Musina. Because of the holiday season, the representation of the Department of Social Development in Musina is closed, making it impossible to start the implementation of the project. Activities related to this project will start on 5 January 2009

### **Supplies**

So far UNICEF has provided US \$65,526 worth of supplies for the response to the cholera outbreak. Supplies provided include water storage materials, water purification products, IEC materials, and sanitation and hygiene supplies. Most of the supplies have been delivered last week in Musina.

UNICEF's Officer in Musina is working closely with WHO, Mvula Trust and the Provincial Department of Health to release the supplies in the areas where they are most needed.

**Coordination / Human resources**

At the national level the response to the cholera outbreak is led by a National Outbreak Committee, which comprises the departments of Health, Social Development, Water Affairs, Home Affairs, Provincial and Local Government and Defence; UN agencies – WHO, UNICEF, OCHA, UNHCR, IOM; and The Committee meets weekly for sharing information, identifying pressing needs and actions to be taken.

In Musina, the coordination is done through the existing Joint Operations Committee (JOC) which is a standing coordination mechanism for disaster management under the Musina Municipality. The JOC meets weekly with all departments, UN and NGO to review the cholera and broader humanitarian situation in the area.

Within the UN, WHO leads the UN support to prevention and control of the cholera outbreak, with support from UNICEF, IOM, UNHCR, OCHA and other agencies. A draft inter-agency response plan is being finalized in consultation with the Ministry of Health. The UN Team is working closely with NGO partners on the ground. WHO has brought three experts and is based in Musina.

Internally, UNICEF has established an Emergency Management Team (EMT) comprising all Heads of Sections and respective emergency focal persons. Under the leadership of the Representative, the EMT provides direction and guidance for timely, effective and coordinated implementation of response as per UNICEF’s Core Commitments for Children in Emergencies.

**Funding situation and Donors Response:**

The Country Office has received US \$375,000 of EPF funds, from the US\$525,000 requested for the response to the cholera outbreak and addressing the needs of Zimbabwean children along the border. An Immediate needs document was also issued on 16 December 2008. The IND total amount is US \$1,400,000 for the needs of children and women affected by the cholera outbreak and protections concerns at the border with Zimbabwe, in the areas of WASH, Child Protection and Education, including Early Childhood Development.

**For more information, please contact**

<p>Aida Girma,                  Representative                  (+27) 12.354.8235  <a href="mailto:agirma@unicef.org">agirma@unicef.org</a></p>	<p>Malathi Pillai,                  Deputy Representative                  (+27) 12.354.8238  <a href="mailto:mpillai@unicef.org">mpillai@unicef.org</a></p>	<p>Ruben Um Bayiha,                  Emergency Specialist                  (+27) 73 156 2648  <a href="mailto:bruben@unicef.org">bruben@unicef.org</a></p>
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