

## UNICEF Situation Report Solomon Islands - External 24 June 2007

### Needs Assessment

The Solomon Islands Government presented the draft Recovery Action Plan (RAP) to donors on Monday 18 June and it is being considered by Cabinet, together with the Shelter strategy on Sunday 24 June.

The Ministry of Education and Human Resources Development (MEHRD) assessment has been approved by the Permanent Secretary and will be released in the coming days. The Ministry of Health and Medical Services (MHMS) initial infrastructure assessment of all clinics in affected areas is finalized and will provide an overview of infrastructure damage caused to the Primary Health Care system and related costs of rehabilitation. Rural Water Supply and Sanitation (RWSS) has completed assessments on Rendova, Simbo and Ranonga Islands and reports will be available soon. The ADB infrastructure assessment focused on such features as roads, wharfs and bridges is expected shortly.

### UNICEF Response

#### Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH)

UNICEF has not received any assessment report from the RWSS survey team, despite them being completed in May. Two RWSS staff members are in the field now for two weeks to implement water supply rehabilitation work.

UNICEF and the Public Works Department are working on rehabilitation of the Gizo Hospital water supply. A plan has been established and material ordered. The work implementation should start next week.

UNICEF, RWSS and CARITAS are working together in Shortlands Islands to rehabilitate three water supply systems in Nila, Tomua and Pirumeri. An additional 500 water containers procured by UNICEF will be distributed in these areas. A total of 1,500 water containers have been delivered in the last two weeks.

Referring to the last water testing session, where we found more than 1,000 total coliforms in drinking water sample in Nimu camp (Kohinggo Island), UNICEF initiated a quick response in terms of water quality improvement and sanitation programme, providing material to improve rain catchments, water containers for water storage, tools to dig a well and 6 latrines, and providing soap according to minimum Sphere standards.

New water tests have been carried out in Gizo hospital following the spring box cleaning and rehabilitation (main supply for the hospital). No coliform was found in the water sample analyzed (58 colonies were found before our action).

#### Shelter

Lack of permanent shelter, including both public (for government staff) and private housing, remains a significant issue in affected areas. A Shelter Strategy for private housing has been finalised in Honiara, with assistance from UNDP, and will be considered by Cabinet on Sunday 24 June.

Partners in Gizo are working together to look at long term strategies to solve housing issues and there has been some criticism of the proposed Shelter Strategy and inaction on public housing.

There is a need to ensure consultation between the government and NGOs relating to shelter and assistance to the government to provide temporary solutions for government staff to ensure services continue to function.

#### Health and Nutrition

UNICEF is advocating with the Ministry of Health and Medical Services (MHMS) to develop a comprehensive plan for the reestablishment of primary health care services. UNICEF support will include Expanded Programme on Immunization (EPI), health promotion and outreach, disease surveillance and infrastructure.

UNICEF is supporting the MHMS in improving EPI coverage in areas not covered by the post-tsunami measles and routine catch-up campaign. The goal is to have 90 per cent routine coverage across Western and Choiseul Provinces.

UNICEF is assisting the MHMS with strengthening the disease surveillance system in Western and Choiseul Province. The system will build on the current outpatient register data collection protocols and focus on diseases relevant to post-tsunami disaster situations as a result of overcrowding and poor sanitation. This will allow early response and control of outbreaks.

The first phase of the UNICEF supported Health Promotion Campaign with the MHMS was completed on 8 June. Planning with the MHMS and other partners is underway for the next phase of health promotion activities that will start mid-July. The focus will be on nutrition, including breast feeding, hygiene and safe sex.

UNICEF is also supporting the rehabilitation of damaged clinics on all affected islands in Western and Choiseul provinces. This includes essential equipment and supplies to assist the facilities once rebuilt to function optimally.

Supported by Save the Children Alliance (SCA) and UNICEF, youth volunteers are also continuing to deliver community based life skills activities with young people in the Internally Displaced Persons' (IDP) camps. A team from UNAIDS (Suva) and UNICEF (HQ) arrived in Gizo on Wednesday 20 June to conduct an HIV training session for UNICEF emergency staff and key partners from the MHMS and complete an assessment (Inter-Agency Standing Committee guidelines and Core Commitments for Children in Emergencies) in Gizo. The team travelled to Choiseul on Friday 22 June to conduct further assessments before returning to Honiara to conduct an HIV Stakeholders Workshop on Monday 25 June.

WHO has completed an asbestos assessment on Ghizo Island from June 8-11 with assistance from UNICEF. A clean-up plan has been formulated based on the assessment and will begin July 9. UNICEF has produced communication materials (radio spots, posters and leaflets) for children and parents on the dangers of asbestos. Radio spots are currently being aired and distribution of material will happen later this week.

### **Education**

The Emergency Education Assessment report has been approved by the Permanent Secretary of the MEHRD and will be released next week. As noted, the Sector Damage Assessment Summary has been finalized and sent to the Technical Advisory Team (TAT). The Summary confirms the number of children whose schooling has been significantly disrupted as 18,258 (89 per cent of those assessed). It also reports that 56 per cent of students in the affected areas (11,578) will not have permanent schools until full or partial rehabilitation takes place. In addition 44 per cent of education staff housing has suffered complete destruction or major damage.

A monitoring plan for the distribution of initial supplies is wrapping up in Choiseul and is completed in the Western Province and will be pre-tested by education staff in Gizo and Honiara.

The MEHRD Task Force for Education in Emergency Situations (TEES) has begun work on the 6-month Response and Recovery Action Plan (RAP). In addition to the costing for replacement of capital costs in the Damage Assessment Summary, indicative costs for the 6-month response and recovery plan have been produced. The work taking place on the MEHRD Recovery Plan is being closely coordinated with TAT/NDMO Recovery Action Plan (RAP) process that will feed into upcoming donor meetings.

The asbestos clean-up project plan is completed and is projected to commence in early July. The clean up will include several education facility sites (20 per cent of the overall budget).

Members of the MEHRD Task Force (TEES) have initiated the rapid development of an Education Response and Recovery Database. A concept note on the database development with costing is expected to be complete early next week.

### **Protection**

A total of 55 Play Safe areas have been set up and are active reaching over 3,500 affected children in Gizo, Simbo, Ranonga, Vella La Vella and Choiseul through partnerships with Save the Children, World Vision, and MEHRD. Further request has been received for materials for Play Safe areas for 18 other sites in Gizo, Kolombangara, Rendova, Vella La Vella, and Munda areas.

The Social Welfare Division (SWD), with the support of UNICEF, continues implementing the new pilot model of Community Welfare Volunteers (CWV). There are now over 105 CWV who have been trained from some 77 communities across all 10 affected islands of the Western Province and Choiseul. A strategy paper has been

developed to look at how UNICEF can best support this model and the next steps with the Social Welfare Division. It is hoped that this network could serve as a Social Service System pilot model for the Solomon Islands.

Social Welfare Division together with UNICEF has started implementing its follow up plans to review and look at how the Community Welfare Officers are implementing their community protection plans. A SWD officer from Honiara will travel to Gizo at the end of next week (29 June).