UNICEF Namibia – Drought Situation Report #3
5 November 2013

Highlights
- The food security conditions remain critical as the drought impacts continue to take its toll on vulnerable populations. The need for support for food relief continues.
- Namibia Red Cross are implementing community based nutrition and WASH activities that are reaching those communities most affected.
- The National Emergency Operations Centre has been activated with the aim of monitoring the overall drought response.
- Government of the Republic of South Africa contributed US$ 300,000, the Government of Canada C$350,000 and the Canadian National Committee for UNICEF contributed US$ 24,000 for emergency drought relief focusing Nutrition and WASH interventions through UNICEF Namibia in October 2013.

Situation Overview & Humanitarian Needs

The National Emergency Operations Centre (NEOC) has been activated in mid-September 2013. Its main role is the monitoring of the overall drought response. The Emergency Response Plan, which is to be led by Government with support from humanitarian partners, has now been released (end October). The biggest challenge remains the issue of water stress for livestock and human consumption.

The government and partners are responding through provision of free food as drought relief to affected regions, livestock market incentive programme which encourages willing farmers to destock before animal body deteriorates, drilling of boreholes for drinking water for both humans and livestock, and provision of soup kitchens through church organizations and the Namibian Red Cross Society among other interventions.

According to the Food and Nutrition Security Working Group Southern Africa’s monthly newsletter (FNSWG), water levels are decreasing, and 40-50% of water points no longer function. Many farmers are forced to sell cattle, due to lack of pasture, while cow-herds from Angola, which also suffer from the drought, are reportedly crossing the border in search of food, fuelling tribal tensions as competition for scarce pastures intensifies.

The FAO reports that crop production in 2013 is 27% below 2008-2012 average production and 42% below 2012 levels. Furthermore “pasture and water availability for livestock worsened significantly …resulting in distress sales of livestock at relatively low prices and a fall in milk production”. While rains remained below average in October, the forecast is for “an increased chance of normal to above normal precipitation from November onwards”, in good time for the end-year planting season. (GIEWS Country Briefs: Namibia)

Local news reports continue to highlight anecdotal reports of children dying from malnutrition in Otjozundjupa Region however that information was not verified by the Ministry of Health and Social Services.

Humanitarian leadership and coordination

The National Drought Emergency Response Plan (July 2013 – March 2014), developed by the Directorate of Disaster Risk Management (DDRM) with inputs from the relevant government line ministries, the Namibia UN Country Team and CSOs, has now been released and provides a basis for coordinated action in each sector.
The government has established a National Emergency Operation Centre to which key sectors have seconded staff to staff the centre during the response period of the drought relief. OCHA have provided a Humanitarian Affairs Officer for 6 months to assist the UN Country Team and DDRM with coordination of drought response activities, monitoring and reporting.

A food and nutrition security monitoring system is under development with support from WFP.

The Namibian Red Cross Society has soup kitchens operating in Kavango, Kunene and Ohangwena regions, which continue to provide hot meals to 21,928 beneficiaries, since they began operating in August. Other activities being carried out at the soup kitchens include health, nutrition and hygiene promotion and education. Children presenting to the soup kitchens are being screened for wasting and referred for treatment if detected as moderately or severely malnourished.

UNICEF Programme Strategy

UNICEF is supporting the Government of the Republic of Namibia (GRN)’s response plans in nutrition and WASH to improve access to clean water, hygiene practices, and community identification and treatment of acute malnutrition.

Priority interventions include:

- Community-based early detection of acute malnutrition (CMAM) amongst children 6-59 months and pregnant and lactating women, to ensure early referral to health services for treatment.
- Household nutrition assessment data collection system, which involves training volunteers to screen for and report on incidence of acute malnutrition amongst children 6-59 months of age
- Provision of micronutrient powder (MNP) for all children aged 6-59 months to prevent further deterioration of nutritional status and to complement Government’s distribution of food parcels.
- Supporting access to clean water through household water treatment, promotion of hygiene and sanitation at the community level
- Installation of water tanks near schools to provide access to Government-trucked clean water
- Building the capacity of regional and district government bodies, NGOs, and CSOs in assessment of water and sanitation needs, immediate response, and reporting.
- Coordination with CO Angola to ensure exchange of cross-border information on trends, population movements and disease surveillance.

The urgency of the response allows scaling up and acceleration of several initiatives already under discussion or in early stages of implementation, including CMAM and Community Led Total Sanitation (CLTS). Working through line ministries and extending engagement with community structures gives stronger support to a sustainable approach and builds resiliency, as Namibia continues to face more limited rain shortfalls on a regular basis.

UNICEF Action to Date

UNICEF continues its technical and financial support to the Namibian Red Cross (NRCS), Directorate of Water Supply and Sanitation Coordination (DWSSC), Ministry of Health and Social Services (MoHSS) and DDRM on coordination, planning, implementation and monitoring of improving community and household access to safe water, sanitation, health and hygiene practices as well as prevention, early detection and referral of malnutrition problems among children and women.

Food Security

The food security conditions remain critical as the drought impacts continue to take its toll on vulnerable populations. The need for support for food relief continues.

Needs:

- Distribution of fortified cereal and protein rich food item/s to all affected areas
- Clear criteria for eligibility for food support in the affected regions is needed urgently

Response:

- GRN distribution of Maize meal to all 13 regions is ongoing, but limited to rural areas.
• GRN allocated N$ 120 million to purchase additional 35,740 metric tons of cereals (fortified) and N$ 10 million for logistic management on distribution
• GRN also procured fresh, dried and canned fish; fresh and canned beef; and canned beans as an attempt to balance the diet adding to Maize meal

Gaps/constraints:
• Some of the children with severe malnutrition admitted to hospitals came from informal settlements and urban poor. Food distribution should cover all those affected
• Criteria for household eligibility for assistance has not been well defined and post food distribution monitoring and reporting from community level remains a challenge

Health and Nutrition

Needs:
• Continue support to the MoHSS to strengthen health facility nutrition surveillance for acute malnutrition trends and emerging micronutrient deficiencies
• Continue support to Namibia Red Cross for active case finding for acute malnutrition in the community using health and community volunteers
• Increase community awareness of and demand for nutrition services
• Implement national vitamin A supplementation for children 6-59 months
• Support to MoHSS for implementation of quality improvement activities for the Nutrition Assessment, Counselling Support (NACS) programme

Response:
• A total of 30 Red Cross staff were trained as trainers in infant and young child nutrition counselling, community nutrition assessment, and health and hygiene promotion. They represented 6 out of the 13 regions in Namibia: Caprivi, Kavango, Kunene, Ohangwena, Omusati and Otjozondjupa.
• Since the TOT, a total of 289 Red Cross volunteers have been trained to carry out household screening for acute malnutrition, counseling in infant and young child feeding, and hygiene practices such as hand washing with soap.
• Otjozondjupa Region - 87 households were visited by 19 volunteers to provide nutrition information and counselling services and take mid upper arm circumference (MUAC) measurements. 117 people were measured; 15 adults and 102 children. 22 cases of malnutrition were detected of which 14 were children and 8 were adults. All cases were referred to the nearest health facility for care, treatment and support.
• Ohangwena Region – 658 people including both adults and children have been screened using MUAC for acute malnutrition. 28 cases of malnutrition were detected, 8 of which were children under 5 years. These children were referred to health facilities for care, treatment and support.
• UNICEF with NRCS have planned field supervision visits to Zambezi and Kavango regions in late November to monitor implementation of community based nutrition and WASH activities.

Gaps/constraints:
• Delays in the collection, analysis and dissemination of data and information by the Ministry of Health and Social Services
• Nutrition and health surveillance needs to be strengthened
• Insufficient funds to implement essential nutrition activities
• Coordination mechanisms at all levels need to be strengthened in order to respond adequately.

Water and Sanitation

Needs:
• Directorate of Water Supply and Sanitation Coordination have identified a need for an additional 7 water tankers to truck water to affected communities and 224 new boreholes to be drilled.
• Mapping of areas to better understand the critical water and sanitation needs.

Response:
A WASH response plan has been developed by UNICEF in partnership with NRCS that includes activities to support better access to safe water at household and community level via installation of water tanks, distribution of jerry cans and water purification tablets to households and the promotion of health and hygiene messages.

Informed by the rapid WASH assessment carried out by NRCS with support from UNICEF, the following interventions have been implemented:

- Ohangwena – 920 people have been reached with hygiene promotion messages such as hand washing with soap and household water treatment
- 8092 water purification tablets have been distributed to households in Okongo and Omundaungilo districts

The National Drought Emergency Response Plan includes a detailed WASH section that describes short, medium and long term activities such as water trucking, borehole drilling and rehabilitation, pipeline extension, construction of earthdams, strategies to eliminate open defecation.

Planning between NRCS, UNICEF and DWSSC underway to scale up implementation of CLTS to Ohangwena region. CTLS facilitator training for NRCS to take place in November 2013, supported by UNICEF and DWSSC.

Gaps/constraints:
- Funding for additional water tankers and to implement the National WASH sector response plan
- Coordination and information sharing remains an overall constraint to all sectors including WASH.
- There is a need to look at the local coping mechanisms on water stress. Identification of areas for new boreholes need to be consulted with local and traditional leaders

**Education**

Needs:
- The School Feeding Programme continues however covers less than one-third of schools and there are increasing reports of significant delays in the distribution of maize meal to schools
- NRCS assessment conducted in July indicates that 6 mobile schools in Kunene region and 26 schools in Ohangwena are in critical need of water due to dried up wells.
- Although systematic documentation has not been undertaken, the NRCS assessment indicates that migration of people closure to water sources and in search of grazing impacts negatively on school attendance especially among pastoralist communities
- Mapping of schools affected but not currently covered by the school feeding programme

Response:
- UNICEF through Ministry of Education and NRCS is monitoring the WASH situation in schools
- WFP is providing ongoing support to the MoE to improve management of the school feeding programme to ensure timely supply of meals to students. A monitoring tool has been developed with support from WFP for tracking supplies delivery and school attendance
- As part of the broader government response to the drought, MoE is planning expansion of the school feeding programme. The expansion plan includes coverage of pre-primary grades and provision of dry rations to secondary school learners in informal settlements.

Gaps/constraints:
- No official data on student attendance
- Less than one-third of schools across the country are currently on the school feeding programme
- Lack of reliable information on schools most affected by the drought
- Improved sanitation in schools was a pre-existing challenge (1 in 5 schools lack sanitation facilities, especially in the northern regions)

**Protection**

Needs:
- No reported protection issues to date however there are reports of increased cross border migration between Namibia and Angola that could have implications for child protection
- UNICEF monitoring situation with UNFPA as sector lead.
Supply and Logistics

UNICEF is seeking funds to provide additional supply items to support the response in the four most-affected regions:

**WASH commodities:** Water tanks, Water purification, Water testing supplies, Jerry Cans, Hygiene kits

**Nutrition commodities:** Ready to use therapeutic foods, fortified blended foods, and micro-nutrient powders ("sprinkles"),

Human Resources

Total # of Country Office staff pre-emergency: 35

Within this team, staff members have dedicated significant time to the initial assessment and response, with support from Regional Office. Additional support has been requested for Emergency Coordinator, Nutrition Coordinator, WASH Coordinator and 2 field-based WASH Officers.

The UNICEF Communications Officer, as chair of UN Communications Group, is representing the UN in the government’s Drought Emergency Information Dissemination Task Force.

Security

No security concerns at this stage.

Funding

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Appeal Sector</th>
<th>Requirements</th>
<th>Funds received*</th>
<th>Funding gap</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nutrition</td>
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<tr>
<td>Health</td>
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<td>WASH</td>
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<td>6,779,430.56</td>
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<tr>
<td>Child Protection</td>
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<td>Gender Based Violence</td>
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<td>HIV/AIDS</td>
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<td>Programme Support</td>
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<td>Cluster Coordination</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>7.4 million</td>
<td>620,569.42</td>
<td>6,779,430.56</td>
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* ‘Funds received’ does not include pledges

Namibia Red Cross Society has entered into a partnership agreement with UNICEF Namibia Country Office for the value of US $570,000. This was possible due to re-programming of existing grants from the Government of Japan and UNICEF Canada. The objective of this partnership is to build NRCS capacity to plan, implement and monitor emergency WASH and nutrition interventions in Ohangwena, Omusati, Kunene and Kavango.

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Grants received to date:</th>
<th>Grant</th>
<th>Programmable</th>
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<tr>
<td>South Africa (Government)</td>
<td>USD 300,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Canada (Government)</td>
<td>CAD 350,000</td>
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<td>Canada (National Committee)</td>
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For further information, please contact

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\[1 \text{ http://www.fao.org/giews/countrybrief/country.jsp?code=NAM } \text{ – accessed 5 November 2013}\]