

UNICEF Situation Report Solomon Islands - External 11 June 2007

Needs Assessment

The Ministry of Education and Human Resource Development (MEHRD) submitted the Sector Damage Summary to NDMO/TAT (Technical Advisory Team) on Wednesday 6 June. The Summary outlines the broad impacts, damage assessment and replacement costs. It finds that 89 per cent of students (18,258) in the affected areas have endured significant impact in terms of schooling.

The Ministry of Health and Medical Services (MHMS) initial infrastructure assessment of all clinics in affected areas has been completed and will be available on Tuesday 12 June. The assessment will provide an overview of damage caused to the Primary Health Care system and related costs of rehabilitation.

UNICEF Response

WATER, SANITATION AND HYGIENE (WASH)

UNICEF and Public Works Department have completed cleaning and improving the spring box for the hospital water supply. The work on the water supply rehabilitation started 11 June. The work on sewer outfall will start within one week. UNICEF is working on the Hospital incinerator. After repair, medical waste collection will be more organized with burning the waste every one or two weeks.

UNICEF and RWSS just finished the implementation of two new rain catchment systems in Ringi – one at the school with 270 children and one at the local clinic.

Water quality tests continue at Gizo hospital two times a week. A total of 35 water samples have been analyzed so far and still show small amounts of faecal contamination in the water supplied. In some cases higher levels of contamination, mainly in dams, have been measured. UNICEF will set up a mobile team to conduct tests in more difficult areas in the outer islands with Oxfam and Save the Children partnership.

UNICEF has provided 1,000 water containers to Save the Children to be distributed in Western Province which in turn has benefited 500 families.

UNICEF has provided 2,500 bars of 100 g. of soap to Oxfam for distribution in Gizo camp for 1,000 internally displaced persons (one month's use) and the hygiene education team was left with 1,700 bars to be distributed in Shortland and Choiseul (680 beneficiaries).

RWSS Assessment team is still in Rendova. The assessment report for Simbo and Ranonga Islands is completed and will be available soon.

SHELTER

A Shelter Coordination Group at the Honiara level is currently finalising a shelter strategy for private housing, with assistance from UNDP.

HEALTH AND NUTRITION

From 15 May-1 June, teams of Health Promotion Officers (HPO) delivered the health and hygiene promotion outreach program to more than sixty villages/camps and on Ghizo, Rendova, Ranonga, Shortlands, Simbo and Vella Lavella Islands. Currently two teams continue with health promotion activities on Kolombangra, and Vella LaVella. The main health and hygiene issues raised have been increasing cases of malaria related to mosquito breeding in newly formed coral pools that are filled by rainwater. Sanitation concerns related to the use of "sea front" toilets have also been raised. The

earthquake has changed the seashore topography in some places by lifting it 2m above sea level. Other health issues included early weaning and malnutrition related to people supplying their best produce to the market and buying only rice for themselves.

Asbestos removal from the road-side through the joint effort of the Public Works Department and the Hospital continues in Gizo as well as Choiseul. UNICEF is currently producing communication materials for children and parents on the dangers of asbestos. A WHO consultant arrived June 6 to formulate a broad approach to the issue and funding is being sought from a variety of donors to support this plan.

The 28 Youth Volunteers (YV) from 15 Internally Displaced Persons' (IDPs) camps trained on three Pacific Starts Life Skills modules (including HIV), have surveyed 240 young people in IDP camps in relation to Self Awareness, Coping with Emotions and Stress and HIV/STIs.

EDUCATION

The Emergency Education Assessment report is under final review by the PS and Minister and will be released soon. As noted, the Sector Damage Assessment Summary has been finalized and sent to the 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% 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 UNICEF press release about the intensive distribution of urgently needed items to the most affected schools and play safe/temporary learning areas (reaching 13,000 children who have been directly affected by the disaster) is ready to send out. The final distribution of initial supplies is wrapping up in Choiseul and is completed in the Western Province. A monitoring plan for this activity is being developed by education staff in Gizo and Honiara.

UNICEF education specialists are also cooperating closely with the WHO consultant on Asbestos impact and removal in schools and educational facilities.

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.

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 as well as the subsequent 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.