

KEY UPDATES:

- ◆ A 6.3-magnitude earthquake struck Afghanistan on 25 December 2015 – 15 people were injured, 91 homes damaged and six homes destroyed in the earthquake that affected 680 people in 22 districts
- ◆ Multiple disease outbreaks during December: four measles, two Crimean-Congo haemorrhagic fever (CCHF), two scabies and one pertussis outbreak reported
- ◆ Continuing measles outbreaks after the July/August national measles vaccination campaign poses a concern for public health in Afghanistan
- ◆ Pneumonia cases exceeded the national average of week 51 and 52
- ◆ An estimated 200,000 people have been displaced by the end of 2015, a 64% increase from 2014

PROGRAMME ACTIVITIES AND ACHIEVEMENTS:

- ◆ To reduce the risk of hospital-acquired infections for malnourished children, WHO renovated 14 therapeutic feeding units (TFUs) in six provinces where malnutrition rates are high—renovations will improve water, sanitation and hygiene facilities in health centres and help keep children safe and healthy
- ◆ WHO supported the renovation of an isolation ward and waste management unit in Nangarhar regional hospital
- ◆ Joint assessment covering 14,292 newly-displaced people fleeing conflict in Helmand conducted: IDP task force provided food and non-food items and healthcare, hygiene and sanitation facilities to address gaps
- ◆ WHO conducted a refresher training-of-trainers on emergency preparedness and response (EPR) for 32 EPR committee members from seven provinces
- ◆ WHO supported the last batch of training on basic life support of war trauma cases and two batches of triage training for 16 nurses from nine provincial hospitals—the trainings were facilitated by Emergency NGO with CHF and ECHO funding



WHO is supporting the renovation of an isolation ward and waste management unit of Nangarhar Regional Hospital



Polio team conducting monitoring visits between vaccination campaigns in Nangarhar



Emergency NGO conducted a training on basic life support and triage in Kabul

PUBLIC HEALTH RISKS AND CHALLENGES:

- ◆ Insecurity and active fighting continue to be major challenges for health service provision—insecurity resulted in the temporarily closure of 27 health facilities in December 2015 alone in Nangarhar, Helmand, Zabul, Uruzgan and Kandahar provinces
- ◆ Continuing measles outbreaks and deaths and CCHF outbreaks present a challenge for health service providers in the coming months
- ◆ The closing of 10 health facilities due to insecurity in Nangarhar leaves people living in the districts deprived of primary healthcare services
- ◆ Increasing internal displacement due to insecurity is a concern for health service providers and adds to the existing burden on health facilities
- ◆ There is an increased risk of pneumonia-related fatalities during the winter season

KEY MESSAGES:

- ◆ Health staff, health facilities and patients in conflict must be protected as determined by International Humanitarian Law
- ◆ It is crucial to step up efforts in disaster preparedness and response—Afghanistan suffers from serious man-made and natural disasters, and more floods and landslides are expected for the coming year
- ◆ Community knowledge and awareness of vaccination and prevention of CCHF and pneumonia must be increased to prevent avoidable deaths

In 2015:

66 aid workers killed, 91 wounded, 152 abducted (OCHA)



WHO Kandahar sub-office took part in a joint IDP assessment in Helmand



WHO supports the renovation of a therapeutic feeding unit in Spin Boldak, Kandahar



A training-of-trainers on emergency preparedness and response was conducted in December

Programme Update
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