

**WASH situation AT A GLANCE
SUPER CYCLONE 'SIDR':
BANGLADESH 12 DECEMBER 2007,**

(Since 09-12th December 2007)

WASH Situation Highlights:

- As reported previously the issues of water availability in water scarce areas has now been mostly addressed except for small pockets. However water quality is on an going concern as people return to their preference of using pond water, sometimes where treated water is available. The WASH cluster has now mapped the water scare areas where ponds are the only/major water source and shared this information. Activity of WASH organizations on WASH NFI distributions and pond clearance is now being directed to these areas. Work in areas with tube wells has progressed well and is nearly completed after considerable DPHE activity and are thus considered low priority.
- The pace at which sanitation work is being undertaken is quite slow. Much work is being undertaken spontaneously by populations who are finding their own means to repair their old toilets, but the work of agencies is slow to be initiated at scale and pace. However "permanent" sanitation is a complex area to deal with and it is essential to adopt an approach that consults with and engages communities on solutions that work for them, which necessarily takes more time. However in order to boost focus on this area of work, a workshop on sanitation and hygiene promotion will be held in the next couple of weeks to bring together major organizations to ensure consistency of approach, common standards and a suitably intense focus to move work forward at an appropriate pace.

WASH Interventions:

- Extract from DPHE report 12/12/07;
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| No of Water Points before SIDR | 221,039 |
| No of Water Points Damaged Due to SIDR 07 | 12,984 |
| No of Water Points Repaired till date | 10,603 |
| Number of Ponds used for Drinking Water Supply before SIRD 07 | 9,289 |
| Number of Ponds Damaged due to SIDR 07 | 5,982 |
| Out of Damaged Ponds, Number of Ponds Disinfected till date | 2,888 |
- Around 1,500 ponds have been cleaned by NGOs
 - Preliminary information suggests that several million \$ are already committed for WASH activities, probably mostly focused on water supply. Some of this has been spent on WASH NFIs (see report from 5/12/07 for status of these items) and much of the NGOs focus has been on pond cleaning.
 - WASH NFI distributions are being requested to be targeted at water scare areas. However major agencies that are bringing in WASH NFIs have to contend with the fact that such items are viewed as being available for general distribution across the affected area and it is difficult to persuade that these should be targeted at the most public health vulnerable areas, i.e. water scare locations. These agencies will report back next week on this issue.
 - WHO/MoH reported 757 diarrhea cases in total in the period 7-9 Dec, with Bagherhat reporting the highest number of cases (117). Bagherhat is also reporting the highest number of typhoid cases and skin diseases. It is the district that contains most water scare unions. It remains the district of greatest concern, but notably it is the area of most intense WASH activity, so there is some level of correlation of capacity deployed to area of greatest need.

Challenges and Priority Action:

- Good progress has been made to quantify the level of outstanding WASH relief and recovery needs and much information has been shared to provide a collective WASH capacity in terms of planed programmes and budgets. However more work needs to be done in the next couple of days before an agreed view can be formed from the WASH

cluster as to whether there are sufficient resources to collectively meet relief and early recovery needs.

- A major challenge with the task of agreeing WASH needs is the issue of dealing with varying sets of figures of data on who remains affected. New data from the WFP led food/nutrition assessment (information should be available over coming few days) needs to be looked at in the light of the initial assessment figures. A cross cluster wide agreement, fully endorsed by government is important in order to move ahead with a reasonable level of consensus on the scale of the recovery task ahead.
- Some district and division level WASH coordination mechanisms and meetings are occurring and a tentative schedule of meetings has been prepared and shared. DPHE is happy with the idea that a major WASH NGO in each of the 5 most affected districts supports their lead in coordination and these NGOs have been identified. However information flows between these mechanisms and Dhaka need to be strengthened, all WASH participants need to be encouraged and reminded of the value of these mechanisms for these to work without too much prompting from Dhaka. The Eid and Christmas holidays will mean a reduction in activity so it is important that these mechanisms have enough momentum to be resurrected post the holiday period.
- Water quality remains a challenge for water scare areas as the combination of lack of WPTs on an ongoing basis, the fact that people are often disinclined to maintain pond sand filters which thus fall into disrepair, means that though water quality has improved with the basic pond cleaning, it will not be fully potable in many cases. Given that people often choose to take water from pond sources, rather than treated water because they dislike the taste of treated water, the issue is more complex. We cannot make people take treated water, but we have to encourage this and focus WASH NFIs distribution in water scare areas, support with hygiene promotion and awareness of benefits of PSFs. This work is more developmental in nature and cannot be accomplished overnight.