Saharawi refugee camps (Tindouf) SITUATION REPORT

December 2015

Situation Overview and Humanitarian Needs

As the humanitarian response is progressively implemented, basic needs start to be temporarily covered and life is progressively regaining a semblance of normality. However, basic services such as education and primary health care for children and women do not cover all affected individuals and they are provided in temporary structures (i.e. tents) which need to be progressively replaced with adequate and sustainable infrastructures.

Health

UNICEF led the MOH damage assessment process of the most flood affected health centers and damaged hospitals, with a focus on maternity and pediatric wards, emergency and primary health care.

Situations in Numbers

Date: 3/12/2015

Population in need

11,500
# families affected

35,000 to 55,000
# individuals affected

6,500
# children with limited access to school

UNICEF Appeal 2015
US$ 1.7 million

Highlights

- A Back to School campaign was launched in the presence of UNICEF Algeria’s Goodwill Ambassadors, as all UNICEF’s school tents have been erected allowing more than 4000 children to attend school in UNICEF’s temporary learning spaces;
- Primary emergency health care is being provided in 17 UNICEF’s tents for temporary health centers;
- The visibility of UNICEF’s emergency response was maximized thanks to a visit of UNICEF Algeria’s GWA to the refugee camps followed by a largely attended press conference;
- UNICEF’s plan of action for light rehabilitation of damaged infrastructures has been validated by relevant authorities.
services, pharmacy and cold chain equipment. It was estimated that USD 500,000 is urgently required to rehabilitate those critical health infrastructure, with a priority focus on Dakhla camp, the camp most affected by the flood emergency.

Despite the resuming of emergency primary health care, diarrhea cases have been reported to be raising by health NGO partners across all flood affected camps. Following the disaster, the MOH surveillance and information system has recorded an increase of 3,827 ARI and diarrhea cases (14% are under 5 children) at hospital, district and health centers levels in 4 out of 5 camps. The MOH noted that health data could not be consolidated and thus analyzed in the most affected camp in Dakhla given the scope of disaster and the disruption of services including surveillance systems. This increase in diarrhea emphasizes the need for UNICEF to continue to ensure vaccines supplies and immunization of young children.

**Education**

As damaged schools and kindergartens remain unusable, more than 70% of affected school-age children are attending schools in temporary learning spaces set-up and equipped by UNICEF. To maximize capacity, temporary learning spaces often function on a shift-basis, with up to 3 shifts per day.

UNICEF led the MOE damage assessment process for all flood affected schools and kindergartens, identifying a need of USD 1.4 million to rehabilitate the damaged infrastructures. Particularly, 30 schools and 27 kindergartens have been identified as needing rehabilitation and reconstruction.

**Child Protection**

The Ministry of Social Affairs is in a process to complete a comprehensive damage assessment of all flood affected centers for children with disabilities, with support provided by the Sahrawi Red Crescent.

**Humanitarian leadership and coordination**

Weekly sectoral meetings coordinate the humanitarian response. To improve coordination capacities, an inter-agency and inter-authorities lessons learnt exercise on the emergency flood response has been carried out by the Sahrawi authorities at the Prime Minister level, with the UN agencies including UNICEF, NGOs, and Red Cross and Red Crescent partners. The lessons learnt emphasized the importance of streamlined coordination in sudden onset disaster response, preparedness and contingency planning including emergency stockpiling, and fast track procedures to address administrative constraints and delays in delivering relief aid.

Additionally, UNICEF, along with UNHCR and WFP, briefed the UN Secretary General’s Personal Envoy to the Western Sahara –Christopher Ross - on the humanitarian situation in the Sahrawi refugee camps. UNICEF focused on the results achieved so far in emergency education, the Back to School campaign, and UNICEF’s Build Back Better approach in school rehabilitation. Special emphasis was made on the lack of humanitarian funding to respond to the emergency.

Lastly, Swedish MSB scoping mission has been carried out in the refugee camps to assess the humanitarian situation and identify potential support and funding possibilities.
Summary Analysis of Program Response

UNICEF’s immediate response focuses on resuming primary services in health, education, and child protection. Immediate results are being reached, thanks to the establishment of temporary learning spaces, health care centers, and centers for children with disabilities. Rehabilitation of some of the damaged infrastructures is in its planning phase.

Education

- All planned UNICEF’s emergency education tents have been erected by NGO partner Triangle in the 3 most affected refugee camps in Dakhla, Smara and Laayoune. While 53 tents were originally planned, 57 tents have been set-up thanks to the additional availability of UNICEF’s Child Friendly Tents. All learning spaces have been secured to allow safe access for children to the emergency schools given the widespread destruction in and around the camps. Those emergency learning spaces allowed more than 4,000 school-age children to attend regular education and recreational activities. As a result and thanks to UNICEF and education partners support, all children passed their exams in the flood affected refugee camps.

- On November 29, a Back to School campaign has been launched by the Minister of Education and UNICEF in Smara refugee camp. The event took place in one of UNICEF’s emergency learning space, with support from UNICEF Good Will Ambassadors Majid Bouguerra (football player) and Samira Bouakri (judoka), the Minister of Social Affairs, the Minister of Youth and Sports and the President of the Sahrawi Red Crescent. The objective of UNICEF’s sponsored Back to School campaign is to kick start the distribution of UNICEF’s emergency education materials and emergency kits for approximately 4,000 most vulnerable children, and to plan a second distribution of learning and teaching materials for more than 32,000 school-age children in all refugee camps.

- Following UNICEF and MoE’s damaged assessments of all schools, the Prime Minister, Minister of International Cooperation, Minister of Education and the President of the Sahrawi Red Crescent validated UNICEF’s plan of action for school and kindergarten rehabilitation. This will be based on Build Back Better principles, to prevent future emergencies and to ensure improved sustainability. Damaged schools in Dakhla camp will be prioritized, followed by Smara and Laayoune camps.

Health

- The resumption of primary health care activities including routine vaccination for all children was enabled by the erection of 85% of UNICEF’s emergency health tents (17 tents installed out of 20 procured) in all flood affected camps and regional hospitals and pharmacy. The NGO triangle played a crucial role in setting-up the necessary tents.

- UNICEF in collaboration with Sahrawi health officials introduced an innovative community approach addressing maternal and child health and development issues. Two large workshops, including 40 health staff, community workers, midwives, and community radio managers, enabled the identification of key messages around maternal and child health in the Saharawi context. This messages will serve to develop a portable pedagogical tool based on visual illustrations aimed at sensitization and behavioral change within communities around key health issues.
Child Protection

- The International Disabilities Day has been celebrated on December 3rd with an event organized by the Ministry of Social Affairs and child protection partners in the refugee camps, including UNICEF and NGO partner Handicap International. Throughout the day, children playgrounds, special meals, and specific recreational and socio-education activities have been accommodated for all children including those with disabilities;
- 20 child protection staff members working in specialized centers for children with disabilities supported by UNICEF have been identified by the NGO Handicap International to attend a technical training in Algiers. The focus is to build additional staff capacities on specific care for children with disabilities, innovative psycho social activities, and effective management of Child Friendly Spaces and specialized centers.
- UNICEF in collaboration with the NGO Handicap International is supporting 9 specialized centers for children with disabilities including Child Friendly Spaces. Handicap International will procure and refurnish missing recreational equipment.

Media and External Communication

UNICEF Algeria's Good Will Ambassadors (GWA) football player Majid Bouguerra and judoka Samira Bouakri visited Smara and Dakhla refugee camps, between November 29 and December 1st. The GWAs were welcomed with great enthusiasm by the refugee communities and the children in the camps, as well as the Sahrawi authorities. The GWAs supported the launching of the Back to School campaign, maximizing its visibility.

At their returned to Algiers, the GWAs took part together with UNICEF Algeria Representative, Thomas Davin, in a press conference organized by UNICEF which saw the participation of numerous journalists. The GWA visit and the press conference brought crucial visibility to UNICEF’s emergency response with the aim to support UNICEF Algeria's fundraising efforts, while providing a platform to advocate for children's rights in humanitarian action.

Operations

UNICEF Algiera Supply assistant has developed an end-user monitoring tool with specific focus on emergency education supplies. The process has been established including a plan of action for UNICEF in the Saharawi refugee camps, in collaboration with the Education PO in Algiers. The Education section has developed a specific planning software (LeBras) to identify and quantify education needs including supplies in all refugee schools.
The MOE has validated the approach and the tool. With regards to distribution of supplies, a training on supply monitoring at end user level (i.e. school and beneficiary children in targeted schools) will be planned with UNICEF and MOE staff including checklists, inclusion of end-user monitoring issues in UNICEF’s field trip reports, and follow up actions if required.

**Funding**

CERF Secretariat is to allocate USD 5 million to the UN Humanitarian Country Team including UNICEF, given the scale of the overall humanitarian needs, and to boost and to fund the most critical and urgent aspects of the initial emergency response mainly in terms of health, food assistance and shelter.

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<th>Appeal Sector</th>
<th>Requirements</th>
<th>Firm pledges</th>
<th>Funding gap</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>$</td>
<td>$</td>
<td>%</td>
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<td>Education and protection</td>
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<td>Health</td>
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<td>Total</td>
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<td>925,000*</td>
<td>775,000</td>
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* Firm pledges were received by: US govt ($425,000) ; Italian Govt ($200,000) ; CERF ($300,000)

Next SitRep: 17/12/2015

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