

### KEY UPDATES:

- ◆ Heavy snowfall, avalanches and landslides caused destruction in March: between 22 February and the end of March 2015, 307 people were killed or injured, 1,933 houses damaged or destroyed and 2,233 families affected in 64 districts of 16 provinces. Another 55 people have been killed or injured, 5,853 houses damaged or destroyed and 5,943 families affected in 72 districts in 13 provinces due to floods
- ◆ During March, 23 measles outbreaks, two suspected rabies outbreaks and an acute viral hepatitis outbreak have been reported
- ◆ The movement of refugees from Pakistan's North Waziristan Agency (NWA) into Khost, Paktia and Paktika provinces continues due to active military operations—the re-verified total active caseload is 34,192 families (235,959 people) with 170,837 people in Khost and 67,319 in Paktika

### PROGRAMME ACTIVITIES AND ACHIEVEMENTS:

- ◆ WHO supplied five basic health kits and medicines to SHRDO to cover 7,000 people living in the Kabul informal settlements
- ◆ Mass casualty management simulation exercises were conducted in Nangarhar regional hospital and Wardak provincial hospital to build the capacity of major hospitals and pre-hospital settings. Funded by ECHO, the project was undertaken by WHO in line with the MoPH National Health Sector Disaster Management Plan and National Disaster Management Plan of the Afghan National Disaster Management Authority (ANDMA). This exercise was conducted in collaboration with the Governor and Public Health Director of Nangarhar, HNITPO and AADA
- ◆ Regional health cluster meetings were conducted in western and eastern regions to enhance cluster coordination and Emergency Preparedness and Response Committee activities in the regions
- ◆ A workshop on improving WASH facilities and medical waste management in therapeutic feeding centers was conducted on 11 March to reduce the risk of transmission of hospital-acquired diseases to malnourished children and caretakers
- ◆ WHO deployed a mission to Badghis province between 29–31 March to assess provincial hospital and other pre-hospital health facility networks on their mass casualty management capacity. A Mass Casualty Management Plan for Badghis will be developed based on the assessment findings by April 2015
- ◆ Emergency healthcare services for refugees from Pakistan's NWA are provided by HNTPO, ACTD and IMC in Khost and Paktika. HNTPO provided psychological awareness and self-coping trainings for 1402 refugees



Child sits in a waiting room of a mobile clinic, one of the many that WHO supports to ensure everyone has access to basic health services



IMC providing mobile health services for North Waziristan refugees in Paktika province



Girls playing in a camp for internally displaced people where WHO and partners support the provision of health services

### MAJOR PUBLIC HEALTH RISKS:

- ◆ Loss of lives, damage to houses and related challenges due to heavy snow, avalanches and floods in March 2015, combined with the continued risk of flooding in northern and eastern provinces, raise the risk of water-borne communicable diseases among the affected people
- ◆ 23 measles outbreaks have been reported in March 2015 with 317 cases and two related deaths. Measles continues to be a key public health concern but the national measles vaccination campaign has been postponed due to financial constraints
- ◆ Continuing typhoid outbreaks in Darwas Ishkashim and Shugan districts of Badakhshan province highlight the need to develop a prevention and control strategy for waterborne diseases in the districts. WHO/EHA in collaboration with MoPH and BPHS NGOs plan to launch an intensive intervention plan in April 2015

The recent heavy snow and flood-related loss of lives, destruction of infrastructure and internal displacement might cause increasing diarrheal disease outbreaks in the coming weeks

### KEY MESSAGES:

- ◆ Flood-related emergency preparedness, including repositioning of supplies, enhanced surveillance and refresher trainings for public health staff remain priorities in high-risk provinces prone to flooding and related waterborne disease outbreaks
- ◆ Continuing measles outbreaks demand an urgent nationwide measles vaccination campaign in Afghanistan
- ◆ Outbreaks of typhoid and acute viral hepatitis in isolated districts of Badakhshan and Laghman provinces indicate the need for intensive WASH-related interventions in these areas

Sub-national immunization campaign for measles has been planned and will be conducted in Kandahar and Helmand provinces in April 2015

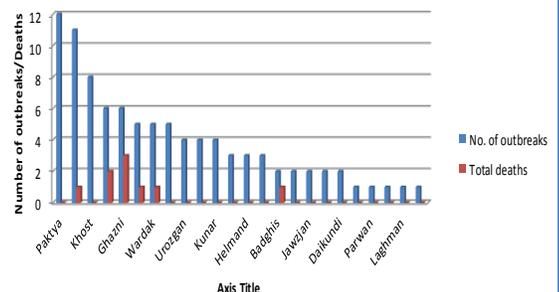


Emergency NGO's first aid post was fully operative in Panjsher province's Darband village during heavy snowfall



Mass casualty management simulation exercise at Joi Haft comprehensive health centre in Jalalabad

Number of measles outbreaks and deaths by province between week 1-11 2015



Programme Update  
Emergency Humanitarian Action WHO Afghanistan

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