

## WASH Cluster oPt bi-weekly situation report

Number 8

20<sup>th</sup> March

### Summary overview

- WASH Cluster focus strengthened on both West Bank & Gaza issues
- 150,000 persons are still without access to water from the networks in Gaza
- 50 tons of cement and 6 trucks with WASH material has entered Gaza
- Preparations for response to West Bank drought are ongoing
- WASH Cluster Coordinator (Tim Forster) leaves to return to the Global WASH Rapid Response Team pool.

### General situation

#### *Gaza*

There are no changes in amounts of households receiving water from the general network, i.e. 50,000 persons are completely without access to water and an additional 100,000 are virtually without water, receiving water only every 5 or 6 days in Beit Hanoun, Beit Lahiya, Az Zaitoun, Jabalia and east Khan Younis.

The UNWRA Epidemiological bulletin (volume 1, issue 4, 05-03-09) indicates that acute watery diarrhoea for children below 3 years has exceeded the alarm threshold during the reporting period, and that close monitoring of the trend is required.

50 tons of cement and 6 trucks with WASH materials have entered Gaza during the last week. The trucks are reported by CMWU to contain aluminium and electric cabling, but no pipes, which is needed in order to repair the water networks.

Progress is being made in preparations for rollout of the Global WASH Cluster Monitoring Survey across the Gaza Strip, with major involvement by the PCBS and PHG. A successful workshop with key partners on the questionnaire design has been completed. Consultations with key partners about strengthening the surveillance and monitoring of diseases and water quality in the Gaza Strip are in progress.

#### *West Bank*

The drought in the West Bank is expected to be severe this year due to a combination of lack of rainfall and an accumulative effect of the last years' drought. According to measurements done by the Ministry of Agriculture the rainfall until March 15 is 70% of the usual rainfall, varying from 53% (Jerusalem District) and 88% (Qalqilia District). The Humanitarian Country Team will discuss the drought in their meeting on Monday and preparations for creating a joint strategy between the clusters are ongoing.

### WASH Cluster Humanitarian Response - Gaza

#### *Drinking and domestic water*

The organisations tankering water (potable and household) have agreed to cooperate in an external assessment to identify/map any gaps or overlapping in coverage, and the need for future tankering once the current contracts are complete. This assessment will be funded by Oxfam.

PHG, Oxfam, CARE and ACF continue with their water distribution activities.

ACF distributed 1,893.5 m<sup>3</sup> of domestic water to 9,588 beneficiaries, expected to last for 5 days (approximately 33 l/p/d), between 9<sup>th</sup> - 14<sup>th</sup> March.

Oxfam distributed 2195 m<sup>3</sup> to 285,000 beneficiaries, (approximately 7 l/p/d) during the same period. Oxfam has also signed a new contract for water trucking for North and South locations in Gaza. The new contract will enable Oxfam to approximately double the amount of water distributed per day.

### ***Solid waste***

COOPI continues to work with solid waste collection in Gaza City and is planning to extend this activity to northern Gaza as well. CARE has started working with rubble removal in Beit Hanoun and Beit Lahiya. Oxfam is currently training cleaners for a clean up campaign.

UNRWA is supporting Gaza, Khan Yunis, Rafah, Wadi Gaza municipalities and Solid Waste Management Council, Middle area with fuel for solid waste activities. Last week 111,450 litres of fuel were delivered.

Disaster Waste Recovery (DWR) has proposed a ToR for an assessment mission which currently is being circulated to WASH Cluster members for feedback. The purpose of the mission is to detect any short-term gaps in the waste management sector, and to identify potential short-term threats to water sources and public health from solid waste and rubble. The needs assessment will also help by identifying small scale short-term opportunities for WASH partners in the waste management sector.

### ***Water repairs***

CMWU is currently completing repairs to Al Attatra well in Beit Lahiya (serving 10,000 people) and Khadeeja well in Beit Hanoun (serving 7,000 people).



Khadeeja well before repairs, picture provided by CMWU



Khadeeja well after repairs, picture provided by CMWU

### ***Wastewater***

ACF continue working on cleaning the Beit Lahia Wastewater Treatment Plant and cleaning and repairing sewage pumping stations. UNRWA is supporting CMWU with fuel for operating water and waste water assets of Rafah and north areas. Last week 27,950 litres were delivered.

### ***Hygiene and NFIs***

The hygiene promotion subgroup in Gaza is working on setting up definitions of hygiene kits.

### **WASH cluster activities**

Tim Forster, WASH Cluster coordinator, is leaving on Sunday. UNICEF is currently recruiting a replacement and in the interim period Oscar Butragueno will be interim WASH Cluster Coordinator with the support of Graham Henderson for Gaza and Ghassan Madieh for the West Bank.

Key WASH Partners are kindly requested to participate in an evaluation of the WASH Cluster structure put in place to date. The evaluation is on behalf of the Global WASH Cluster Rapid Response Team, and is linked to the Global WASH Learning Project run by ACF-UK. Key partners will be contacted shortly about the evaluation process and methodology.

The WASH advocacy task force continues to set its priorities and work with the HCT advocacy group. The HCT advocacy group has requested benchmark indicators from all clusters in order to set up a coordinated benchmarking for all sectors. The WASH cluster is currently looking into funding possibilities for the task force, in order to contract a dedicated advocacy resource. UN Habitat has expressed an interest in being involved in WASH Advocacy work.

### **Constraints**

The main constraint continues to be access of material into Gaza. In an effort to advocate for increased access, the WASH Cluster coordinator attended a meeting with COGAT and the logistics cluster in Tel Aviv on Wednesday. The WASH Cluster continues to cooperate with the Logistics Cluster and OCHA to strengthen the advocacy efforts.

### **Highlights for next weeks**

- Finalising the set up of the monitoring tool in Gaza with support from UNICEF on administrative issues related to WASH Cluster funding
- Continued discussions on the preparations for the drought in the West Bank and presentation of the drought strategy at the HCT meeting in Jerusalem
- Conducting assessment of water distribution needs in Gaza
- Holding the 1<sup>st</sup> Hygiene Promotion sub-group meeting in Gaza
- Next Gaza WASH Cluster meeting, Tuesday 24<sup>th</sup> March
- Next Ramallah/Jerusalem WASH Cluster meeting, Thursday 2<sup>nd</sup> April
- Evaluating The WASH Cluster RRT Deployment with key WASH partners

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