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Summary of Health Concerns from latest health assessments (Jan2-3, 2005)

Source: WHO Regional Office for South-East Asia Situation report 5

I. Health Priorities:

- A. Communicable diseases. Damaged water and sanitation systems, sea water contamination, congested and crowded conditions among the displaced are serious threats for disease outbreaks.
- a. No epidemic outbreaks of diseases have been reported so far.
 - b. Public health surveys coming from a variety of sources that are incomplete and without verification are not useful for planning and response.
 - c. Data are being verified through disease surveillance:
 - Thailand: Acute diarrhea (167), wound infections (163), food poisoning (33), pneumonia (20), malaria (8), Dengue (7)
 - Maldives: Health problems are being reported, including: acute diarrhea (225), viral fever (124), injuries (552), anxiety /shock (152).
 - Sri Lanka: Cases of diarrhea are reported in some districts but are very much the expected norm. No evidence of outbreaks yet. Plans for rapid diagnosis of diarrhea to exclude cholera have been carried out.

II. Environmental health: All areas lack safe water and sanitation. Some areas have only 1-2 weeks supply of water. Maldives and Nicobar islands report only 2-3 days water supply.

III. Mental health, maternal and child health: Affected population show signs of psychological trauma, acute anxiety and shock. One case of measles prompts an immediate immunization response targeting infants and children 6-59 months. Target group may be expanded to age 15 if feasible with substantial overcrowding.

IV. Health system and infrastructure: Damage is extensive to health facilities in all affected areas. Major constraint is health personnel and their families also affected by disaster. Functioning facilities working full speed and additional supplies being requested. Temporary facilities are being established.