


## Health Action in Crises (WHO/HAC) Highlights - No 39: Monday, 13 December 2004

*The WHO/HQ Department for Health Action in Crises aims to produce a running note on select current issues at weekly intervals. This note—which is by no means exhaustive—is designed for internal use and does not reflect the official position of WHO.*

<p><b>PHILIPPINES</b></p> 	<p><b>Assessments and events:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• As of 13 December, the Government of the Philippines has reported 1,060 dead, 1,023 injured and 559 missing as a result of massive floods and mudslides during late November and early December. The total population affected by the crisis is upwards of 3.6 million. More than 880,000 persons are displaced. In this immediate relief phase, many of the displaced persons are totally reliant on external sources to meet their basic needs.</li><li>• The health of the affected population is at risk. Survivors lack adequate access to safe drinking water and sanitation facilities. There is an increased risk of an outbreak of malaria, as it is endemic the Philippines and standing water increases the likelihood of an outbreak of vector- and water-borne diseases. Diarrhoeal diseases and upper respiratory infections contribute to ill-health.</li><li>• Health facilities have suffered at least US\$ 1.1 million in damages. Many had key equipment and medicine stocks wash away or buried in mud. The remaining facilities are unequipped to meet the escalated needs of the affected population. The cold chain for the storage of vaccines and other essential medicines has been damaged by electricity outages. Many essential medicines and supplies need to be replaced.</li><li>• Health needs identified through the recent UNDAC mission and rapid health assessments indicate an urgent need for the following:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>➢ Ensure effective functionality of the existing surveillance system for communicable diseases of concern (including diarrhoeal diseases) and nutritional deficiencies.</li><li>➢ Address the increased risk of a malaria outbreak in the coming weeks.</li><li>➢ Ensure the distribution of essential drugs and priority medical supplies (i.e., oral rehydration salts and water disinfection powder).</li><li>➢ Guarantee the availability of mobile health teams (clinicians and public health specialists) in badly affected communities.</li><li>➢ Ensure psychosocial care, especially in areas with high levels of mortality and property damage.</li></ul></li></ul> <p><b>Actions:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• WHO, at the request of the Department of Health, is focusing on malaria preparedness and outbreak control in the northern Philippines. Interventions will target a population of 200,000, for the possibility of 80,000 cases of malaria (estimates based on previous experiences).</li><li>• Additional WHO activities are in the area of emergency response coordination and support to health authorities. These include: provision of medicines and supplies; water purification; technical assistance (forensic pathology, health services management, environmental health, and psychosocial care), health promotion activities and rapid response logistics.</li><li>• At the request of the government of the Philippines, preparations are underway for the 15 December launch of a Flash Appeal to meet the urgent needs of the survivors. WHO encourages the international community to unite in its response to the needs of affected population. It urges donors to fund health-related projects in the forthcoming UN Flash Appeal, and to provide resources for the other components of the appeal, as this will contribute to the immediate and long-term improved health status of the population.</li></ul>
-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

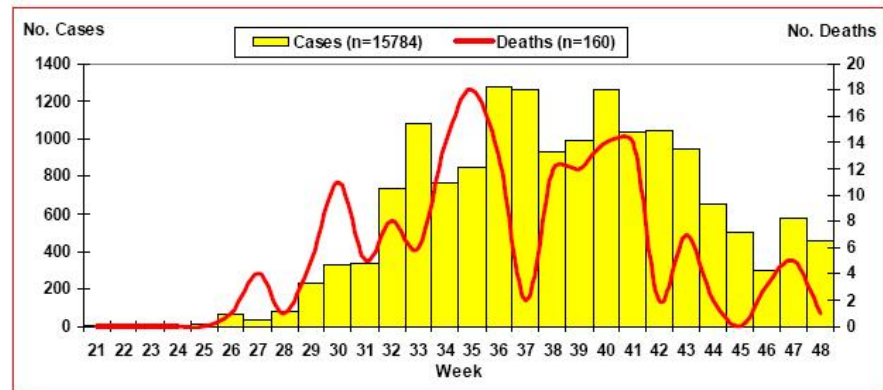
## SUDAN



## DARFUR CRISIS

### Assessments and events:

- An investigation revealed 12 measles cases on 5 December in West Darfur and thus confirmed an outbreak of measles (threshold: one case for two consecutive weeks) [WHO, State MOH and SCF-US]. WHO—in collaboration with the SMOH, UNICEF and MEDAIR—is currently vaccinating 3500 children (aged 9 months to 15 years) against measles in Abu Surooj, West Darfur. A second measles vaccination campaign targeting 6000 children is planned for 19-21 December in West Darfur.
- For the upcoming Acute Respiratory Infection (ARI) season, WHO has prepared a contingency stock of ARI medicines (total cost of 3.700 USD) to back up PHC facilities. Due to the increase of cases in some health facilities, IDP camps are facing a shortage of drugs like paracetamol, amoxicillin and erythromycin.
- Weekly reports of Hepatitis E cases and deaths, in the Greater Darfur Region, for the period 22 May to 3 December 2004, are summarised below. In South Darfur during Epidemiological week 48, there was an increase in the number of reported cases in comparison to the previous four weeks.



### Actions:




- As part of its contribution to outbreak preparedness in South Darfur, WHO is providing technical guidance on: (a) measures to address the increasing cases of Acute Jaundice Syndrome; (b) Cerebrospinal Meningitis case investigation and management and (c) the target population for mass meningitis vaccination and the type of vaccine to be used.
- SMOH, WHO and the NGO ARC are collaborating to strengthen PHC services in Gereida, South Darfur, with a focus on Maternal and Child Health services. WHO has thus far provided one Basic Delivery Kit and five Basic Health Kits (each meeting the basic health needs of 1,000 persons for three months) to ARC.
- WHO and Federal/State MoH are preparing for a Malaria control campaign in South Darfur. The campaign will cover six IDP camps. WHO has provided technical guidelines, 600 doses of malaria drugs, 1000 *paracheck* tests and three Basic Health Kits to NGOs operating there. In West Darfur, WHO donated 20 boxes of Malaria RDTs to Tear Fund for its clinics in Mistri, KZ and Arara.
- Environmental health activities continue throughout the Darfur. WHO and SMOH have started the second Environmental Health campaign in Kalma camp, South Darfur. WHO conducted a one-day workshop on water quality in West Darfur.
- Funding for WHO humanitarian operations in Darfur has been provided by African Development Bank (AfDB), UK's Department for International Development (DfID), the Humanitarian Aid Office of the European Commission (ECHO) and the governments of Netherlands, Italy, Ireland, Norway and United States.

### DARFUR REFUGEES IN CHAD

- The protocol for the Early Warning and Response Network for epidemic-prone diseases (EWARN) has been reviewed at the N'Jadmerna level and has now been reviewed by all interested stakeholders—including MoH, UNICEF, and NGOs—in Abeche.
- Plans for strengthening laboratory capacity in Abeche and N'Jadmerna (essential

### Health Action in Crises

WHO is working with partners to address the health aspects of crises in more than 40 countries. Check the Health Action in Crises Web site for more details: <http://www.who.int/disasters/>

	<p>back-up for the surveillance system) have been prepared. They include a training for laboratory staff and supply of laboratory materials and reagents.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The acute jaundice syndrome outbreak is spreading; there are new cases, two of which are confirmed Hepatitis E, in the Iridimi refugee camp. In response, a water quality control testing protocol is being implemented in the camps and water and sanitation interventions have been increased to level three (the highest level).</li> </ul>
<p><b>IRAQ</b></p>  <p>The map shows Iraq with major cities like Baghdad, Mosul, Kirkuk, Samarra, Ar Ramadi, Karbala, An Najaf, An Nasiriyah, Al Basrah, and Umm Qasr. It also shows neighboring countries: Turkey, Syria, Iran, Saudi Arabia, and Kuwait. A scale bar indicates 0, 50, 100 km and 0, 50, 100 miles.</p>	<p><b>Assessments and events:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The first national training activity on the Iraq Water Quality Control Programme at the Central Water Laboratory/Ministry of Environment was held from 4–9 December with WHO participation (supported through the UNDG Iraq Trust Fund).</li> <li>• A ‘Refresher Course for Psychiatrists’ took place in Amman last week as part of the UNDG Iraq Trust Fund Mental Health and Non-Communicable Disease Programme. The course, which benefited over 30 psychiatrists in Iraq, was organised through collaboration between the MoH and WHO, with the support of mental health professionals from throughout the region.</li> <li>• Preparations are underway for the WHO-supported measles, mumps, rubella (MMR) National Immunization Days for school children, scheduled to be held 18-23 December.</li> <li>• The National Symposium on Hepatitis was organized by the Directorate of Public Health and Primary Health Care/MoH, with full WHO participation.</li> </ul> <p><b>Actions:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Medical equipment procured by WHO was delivered to the Nutrition Research Institute in Baghdad.</li> <li>• As part of a situation analysis of the Iraqi pharmaceuticals production sector, WHO briefed a team from UNIDO on the status of Iraqi drug manufacturing industries. The brief covered oxygen for medical use, and pharmaceutical plants of Samara Drugs Industries (SDI). WHO also supplied details on pharmaceutical dosage forms produced before March 2003.</li> <li>• WHO is providing guidance to the MoH on the strengthening of disease surveillance and outbreak response in Iraq. Proposed actions include the establishment and training of specific teams in all governorates to respond rapidly to any outbreak or public health problem.</li> <li>• WHO is supporting the Maternal and Child Health (MCH) unit of the MoH in the preparation of the District Team Problem Solving (DTPS) training in 2005. DTPS teams at Governorate/District Level in 13 Governorates—Baghdad, Salah Al Deen, Al-Sumawa, Diala, Mousil, Thee Qar, Arbil, Al Sulaymania, Missan, Basrah, Wasit, Dewania and Babil—will be trained.</li> <li>• WHO hosted the weekly UN Health Cluster coordination meeting in Amman on 8 December. The UNDAF matrix and the general activities of NGOs working for health in Iraq were the main topics.</li> </ul>
<p><b>WEST BANK AND GAZA STRIP</b></p>  <p>The map shows the West Bank and Gaza Strip. Key locations include Dayr al Balah, Khan Yunis, Abasan, and Rafat. It also shows the Mediterranean Sea, the 1967 Armistice Line, and neighboring countries: Syria, Israel, and Egypt. A scale bar indicates 0, 4, 8 km and 0, 4, 8 miles. A note at the bottom right states: 'Israeli occupied; current status due to the Israeli-Palest. Interim Agreement; permanent status determined through further negotiations.'</p>	<p><b>Assessments and events:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Under WHO's sponsorship, Palestinian and Israeli health professionals came together to launch the first volume of the Israeli-Palestinian Public Health Magazine "Bridges" on 8 December in Jerusalem. The magazine focuses on the potential for Health to serve as “a bridge for peace”. It covers public health topics of importance to both populations.</li> </ul>  <p>The magazine cover features a person in a grey shawl sitting on a bed. The title 'bridges' is at the top. Below it, the subtitle reads 'Poverty and Health Inequity: A Daily Battle'. Other text on the cover includes 'Special Attention: (X) Disasters, (Y) Gender, (Z) The Latest'.</p>

**Health Action in Crises**

WHO is working with partners to address the health aspects of crises in more than 40 countries. Check the Health Action in Crises Web site for more details: <http://www.who.int/disasters/>



#### Actions:

- WHO/Health Inform and the MoH organized the monthly emergency coordination meeting for the Gaza Strip on 7 December. The meeting included the presentation: "Reducing the prevalence of malnutrition and iron deficiency anaemia among children aged 0-59 months from the poorest population of the governorates of Gaza Strip".
- Two WHO mental health consultants participated in the Mental Health Task Force on 8 December and the Steering Committee on 9 December. Main topics covered were the five-year plan for comprehensive mental health services, the development of Community Mental Health Centres and Hospitals, and training plans.
- The 55th issue of the Health Inform newsletter was published. Main topics are:
  - HIV/AIDS in West Bank and Gaza Strip;
  - East Jerusalem Hospitals;
  - ICRC activities during November 2004;
  - World Bank/Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics report on poverty;
  - WHO Mental Health initiatives.

For further information see [www.healthinform.org](http://www.healthinform.org).

- Current WHO humanitarian actions in the West Bank and Gaza Strip have been made possible by 2004 funding from USAID, AGFUND, and the Government of Norway, as well as pre-2004 funding from ECHO.

### INTER-DEPARTMENTAL ACTIVITIES

- The WHO Department for Health Action in Crises is organizing an inter-departmental meeting in Geneva on 14 December entitled "Health in Conflict-affected States: a view from the UN in New York". Dr Richard Alderslade, Deputy Director a.i., WHO Office at the UN in New York, will moderate the meeting, which will focus on health issues before, during and after crises within the context of the NY work on transition (from relief to development), the Framework Team, and the report of the high-level panel on the UN's role in human security.

### INTER-AGENCY INITIATIVES

- **SGBV.** Following the discussion in the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) Principals meeting on 9 December on the draft IASC Statement of Commitment on Gender-Based Violence, agencies are providing additional input to strengthen the language of the Statement. The final version will be circulated by the Emergency Relief Coordinator to the IASC Principals for final endorsement.
- **HLWG.** On 14 December, the Chair of the Humanitarian Liaison Working Group (HLWG) will hold informal inter-agency discussions on the agenda, focus and format of HLWG meetings in 2005. The Representative of the WHO Director-General for Health Action in Crises will participate.
- **CAP.** The CAP Sub-Working Group will update on 14 December on the Needs Assessment Framework Matrix and review the November 2004 production and launch of the Consolidated Appeals. WHO is a member of the CAP SWG and will participate.
- **GDAS.** The first international Global Disaster AlertSystem (GDAS) workshop will be held in Geneva from 14 to 16 December. The purpose of the workshop is to determine the scope of GDAS and identify information requirements of decision-makers at all responder levels within the international community. The workshop will also examine possible workflow procedures and standards for information exchange by disaster-prone and responding countries, relief organizations and scientific institutions. WHO will participate.
- **HEWSweb.** On 15 December, the new Humanitarian Early Warning Service website (HEWSweb) will be launched through a series of joint press releases.
- **Philippines.** Preparations are underway to finalize the draft flash appeal for the Philippines Floods, which is expected to be issued in Manila at 9h00a.m. on Wednesday, 15 December.
- **Great Lakes Region.** On 15 and 16 December, WHO will participate in a regional scenario development and humanitarian analysis workshop for the Great Lakes Region in Nairobi.
- **ECHA.** The next meeting of the UN Executive Committee on Humanitarian Affairs (ECHA) will take place on 16 December. Tentative agenda items include Somalia, Uganda and the Report of the UN Secretary-General's High Level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change. The Representative of the WHO Director-General for Health Action in Crises will participate.

*Please send any comments and corrections to [kollert@who.int](mailto:kollert@who.int).*

#### Health Action in Crises

WHO is working with partners to address the health aspects of crises in more than 40 countries. Check the Health Action in Crises Web site for more details: <http://www.who.int/disasters/>

**MAP DISCLAIMER:** *The presentation of material on the maps contained herein does not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever on the part of the World Health Organization concerning the legal status of any country, territory, city or areas or of its authorities, or concerning the delineation of its frontiers or boundaries. Map source: Perry Castaneda Library Map Collection, University of Texas at Austin.*