**Global Overview - January 2016**

**EL NIÑO AND HEALTH**

**HEALTH CONSEQUENCES**

1. **UNUSUAL DRIER AND WETTER CONDITIONS**
   - Food insecurity and increase in moderate and acute malnutrition especially amongst the most vulnerable.
   - Increase in water-borne diseases such as cholera due to water scarcity or flooded water and sanitation infrastructure.
   - Increase in vector-borne disease outbreaks such as malaria in warmer highland areas that are normally too cold for disease transmission, and increased risk of Rift Valley Fever.
   - Increased number of people affected by infectious diseases such as measles and meningitis, especially in humanitarian situations.
   - Disruption of health services due to lack of water supply in drought situations or damage to health infrastructures by floods and cyclones.
   - Respiratory diseases due to smoke from wildfires and deteriorated air quality.
   - Direct injuries and fatalities, population displacement and psycho-social effects.

**HEALTH EFFECTS CAN BE PREVENTED**

1. Disease surveillance and control
2. Safe water and sanitation services
3. Health and hygiene promotion
4. Emergency health supplies
5. Vaccination
6. Continued access to health care

WHO is working with the Ministries of Health and other health partners in affected countries to address the health needs and effects caused by the El Niño.

**HEALTH SECTOR NEEDS**

USD 76 million is needed for seven high risk countries
EXPECTED EL NIÑO HEALTH CONSEQUENCES IN 2016

- Extreme drought and acute water shortages affecting millions of people in the south-western Pacific (4.7 million), Central America (4.2 million) and southern Africa (30 million) will extend in the first half of 2016 leading to increased malnutrition, diarrhoeal diseases and an additional burden on already constrained health services.
- In the Horn of Africa, the devastating drought which has affected 22 million people has been followed by unusual heavy rains causing a high risk of vector-borne disease and communicable disease outbreaks, especially among displaced populations and those with high levels of malnutrition.
- El Niño is causing heavy rains and flooding in eastern Africa with a risk that the ongoing cholera epidemic in Tanzania will spread, and other countries may experience cholera outbreaks. There is also a risk of resurgence of Rift Valley Fever.
- Following the severe flooding in Paraguay in December which led to evacuations of more than 100 000 people, wetter conditions are expected to cause more flooding in South America, particularly in Peru, Ecuador and Bolivia, with increased risk of vector-borne diseases, respiratory infections and damage to health facilities.

1. The El Niño phenomenon affects rainfall patterns and temperatures, most intensely in the tropics, with significant impact on people’s health.
3. Adverse climate conditions from El Niño peak in January 2016, but the health consequences will likely worsen until the end of 2016.

El Niño will affect more than 60 million people across Latin America, Africa and Asia throughout 2016

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