Health Action in Crises (HAC/WHO)
Highlights - Monday, 1 March 2004

Haiti
Event: The severely deteriorating political, security and humanitarian situation in Haiti is having a negative impact on the health of the Haitian population.
WHO actions: On February 27, PAHO/AMRO released an updated appeal for US$ 2,710,000 to provide the following: medical supplies, vaccines and propane gas to the main hospitals and select clinics; a social fund to temporarily subsidize the purchase of essential drugs; epidemiological surveillance; medical staff and first responders trained in emergency procedures and mass casualty management; logistic support and staff; drinking water to health facilities and most vulnerable communities in affected areas; public campaign to ensure safety of victims and staff in hospitals; and assistance to externally displaced persons in Dominican Republic.

Morocco
Event: An earthquake (6.5 on the Richter scale) occurred in the Mediterranean sea--close to Al Hoceima, Morocco--on Tuesday, 24 February. There are 564 dead and 300 people injured, with many more left homeless.
WHO actions: WHO is actively supporting the MOH through the Country Office. Two emergency health kits have been sent and will arrive 1 March in Casablanca. Other items requested by MOH include structures for transporting persons with multiple spinal injuries and operation equipment. WHO has offered to send staff, and HQ and EMRO staff are on standby.

Sudan and Chad
Event: Thousands continue to flee the ongoing conflict in the Greater Darfur Region of Western Sudan; there are now 700,000 Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) and more than 100,000 refugees in Chad. Humanitarian access is extremely limited. Peace talks (not covering Darfur) between the Government and the rebel group-SPLM-in Southern Sudan are ongoing. WHO is supporting efforts to establish options for a one-Sudan health sector recovery plan.
WHO actions:
- The WHO health needs assessment of Sudanese refugee camps in Chad commenced on 23/02.
- WHO’s strategy for supporting health partners in Sudan has been finalized.
- Preparations for the 8-9 March Khartoum workshop-for the reconstruction of the health sector in northern Sudan-are underway, with WHO supporting the FMOH, NGOs, UN agencies and donors.
- WHO contributed to the health component of the draft Inter-Agency Emergency Plan for Sustainable Returns of IDPs.
- WHO is taking part in the UNDAC needs assessment mission covering Nyla, Geneina and El Fasher.
**Iraq**

**Event:** A donors meeting took place in Abu Dhabi on 28-29 February.

**WHO actions:** WR Iraq was asked by Ross Mountain, Acting Special Representative for Iraq, to present the UN strategy on behalf of the United Nations. WHO was task manager for the health component of the UN Strategy.

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/>>