Sudan and Chad
Event: In Darfur, at least a million people are affected by the current unrest. Their protection remains the number one concern. There are continuing attacks on nomad communities and villages, and military activity. In addition to security fears, traumatised IDPs are now faced with the further deterioration of coping mechanisms. Rising malnutrition rates are reported in West Darfur, contributed to by food shortages and lack of basic health services. (Source: UN Resident Coordinator, 12 March)

WHO actions:

• The ongoing UN system assessment mission (with WHO involvement) in Darfur reveals urgent health and nutrition needs, including violence-related trauma and wounds. Security continues to impede access and hinder relief operations. Meanwhile, WHO is also working with the rest of the UN system and the Government of Chad to address the health needs of those who have crossed from Sudan to Chad (around 100,000). This calls for increased capacity in eastern Chad (Abeche)--a challenge for the WR and team who are based 950 km away in the capital. Funds are being sought to support this temporary extension of capacity. Seed money has already been provided through CCO.

• The preparations for the Sudan peace process continue: negotiations in Naivasha are underway and there are hopes that the post-peace "reconstruction process" will be starting by the middle of the year. One of the features of this is a Joint Assessment Mission (JAM).

• As a precursor, WHO has been invited by the authorities in the north and the south to help prepare for revitalization of the health systems (and to explore options for a combined national system).

• After the February workshop on health in the south (Nairobi) on 8-9 March in Khartoum, EMRO organized a planning workshop for health sector recovery with wide participation (including representatives from NGOs, the World Bank, academia and government). Working groups discussed health policy and financing, human resources and infrastructure. Main constraints and priorities for sectoral recovery were discussed, and scenarios for the future were developed.

• The preparatory phase for the UN/World Bank JAM is underway with WHO participation. A draft plan of work was prepared by WHO and the World Bank, and endorsed by the FMOH.

Haiti
Event: The health situation remains a major concern. Insecurity and violence restrict people's access to essential needs for health, and health workers' ability to reach their places of work. During the 5-12 March period, 80 bullet-injured and 40 stabbed persons were received at the Emergency Room of the University Hospital (source: Minister of Health
and Population and University Hospital). A UN appeal for Haiti was launched on 9 March for USD 35 million, of which the health component constitutes USD 11 million.

**AMRO/PAHO actions:**
- AMRO/PAHO is participating in the 10-24 March UN multidisciplinary assessment mission, which is led by the UN Department for Peace Keeping Operations (DPKO).
- After establishing emergency operation centres in Washington, D.C., and Haiti, AMRO/PAHO continues to support the health response to the crisis. Specific actions include the deployment of emergency staff and management, epidemiological surveillance and logistics; the instigation of a simplified epidemiological surveillance system based on sentinel sites; the monitoring of urgent health needs and hospital working capacity/conditions in Port au Prince and in other parts of the country; support to the functioning of the University Hospital; the distribution of medical supplies to 12 hospitals and of vaccines to several regions (after the assessment of cold chain and vaccine supply); and the mobilization of personnel trained in SUMA (a unified logistics system). WHO and other UN agencies are ensuring that the international community is made aware of the extent to which people's health is being endangered by the current situation and the need for attention to health issues in the current system repair and recovery phase.
- Meanwhile, AMRO/PAHO is developing a contingency plan for the Dominican Republic and supporting health partners responding to the needs of refugees in Jamaica.

**Iraq**

**Event:** With the end of the WHO-supported "Lifeline of Drugs and Medical Supplies to Iraq" approaching (late March), WHO is now establishing plans--with the CPA and MOH--for further support to the medical supply system (alongside its current support to laboratory services, nursing and disease surveillance). The possibility of medicine shortages in some service delivery points remains, while new procurement and distributions systems are being implemented by the government. Meanwhile, a catch-up measles campaign (that includes vitamin A supplements) started on 13 March with a target of 5.25 million children ages 6-12. The campaign, expected to last two weeks, is in response to an outbreak of measles in the south that mainly affected school children.

**WHO actions:**
- WR/Iraq is to meet with the Iraqi official responsible for the Medical Supply System (Kimadia) on 17-18 March in Amman to discuss WHO's support of said system.
- WHO is contributing to the current measles immunization campaign through technical advice, transport, coordination with the Iraqi Red
Crescent (in charge of supervising the campaign) and public information messages.

**Vanuatu**

**Event:** Cyclone Ivy has affected more than 54,000 people. Over 95% of water storage facilities, water sources and systems in the affected islands have been damaged. An outbreak of malaria is reported in Tanna. Approximately 11,000 houses and 44 schools and rural training centres have been damaged. Cash crops, especially cocoa and kava, have been destroyed. It is speculated that, within one-to-two weeks, affected communities will start running out of food. Relief stocks are now almost exhausted. (Source: OCHA) The US government has donated USD 45,000 through WHO for partial support to vector-borne disease control.

**WHO actions:**
- A WHO environmental health expert has been deployed to Vanuatu to join the UNDAC assessment team.
- WHO and UNICEF, in cooperation with UNDAC, are supporting the National Disaster Management Office (NDMO) in assessing the water supply and sanitation situation.
- WHO Vanuatu has been holding daily meetings with the MoH to coordinate the health sector response. Funds from WPRO/RDDP have been released to support assessment missions.

**Madagascar**

**Event:** As of 12 March, the IFRC reported that cyclone Gafilo had affected between 50,000-100,000 people, with 13 dead. According to 15 March reports by the Agence France-Presse (AFP), the death toll has risen to 74 people, with an additional 169 people missing and 200,000 left homeless.

**WHO actions:** WHO-Madagascar is participating in the preparation of a UN Flash Appeal.

**Inter-Agency Initiatives**
- A two-day workshop on HIV/AIDS in emergency settings, chaired by WHO, took place in Geneva on 10/11 March to identify training support mechanisms, review advocacy, and agree on field testing methodology.
- Preparations are underway for the High-Level Forum on Humanitarian Security and the Inter-Agency Standing Committee, both to be held in Geneva on 31 March and chaired by Emergency Relief Coordinator, Jan Egeland.
- The departments for Gender and Women's Health, HIV/AIDS and HAC in Geneva--together with colleagues in AFRO, the UNAIDS secretariat, UNFPA, and UNICEF and activists in Southern Africa--have started work on an urgent initiative to improve the capacity of health services in crisis settings to respond to the health needs of
women, especially when they have been subjected to violence (including sexual assault).

**Inter-Departmental Initiatives**

- Guidance is being developed for human resources development in post-conflict settings, in collaboration with HRH.
- In support of the CMH mission to Sudan, HAC is providing technical input on post-conflict issues.
- Work has started between CCO and HAC to add a section on countries in crisis to the Guidelines for Country Cooperation Strategies.

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/](http://www.who.int/disasters/)