SUDAN

DARFUR CRISIS

Events:
• In South Darfur, the situation remains dramatic. In the week 17-23 May, in Kaalma camp, Crude Mortality Rate oscillated between 1.9 and 2.4 x 10,000/day: i.e. still above the emergency alert threshold of 1 death x 10,000/day. Among children under five, causes of death were mainly diarrhoea, acute respiratory infections and measles. Providing assistance and monitoring outcomes is made more difficult by people’s movements and irregular registration procedures.
• In West Darfur and among a population of 16,086 IDPs (Internally Displaced People), no deaths were reported during week 21. This is according to the Early Warning System (EWARN).

Actions:
• Preparations continue for the mass measles vaccination campaign. Led by the Ministry of Health of Sudan, WHO and UNICEF, the campaign targets 2.2 million children between the ages of 9 months and 15 years. It will also provide the opportunity to distribute vitamin A capsules and vaccinate children under five against poliomyelitis.
• The protocol for the Early Warning System (EWARN) is finalized for monitoring and responding to disease outbreaks in the Darfur.
• A preparedness plan was developed to address the risk of cholera outbreaks in accessible IDP camps.
• Following a need assessment, plans were developed to upgrade both the National Public Health Laboratory in Khartoum and the Nyala Hospital Laboratory. The Nyala Hospital Laboratory will act as a reference laboratory for South Darfur, to diagnose and confirm communicable diseases. The National Public Health Laboratory will act as reference laboratory for the Greater Darfur.
• WHO provided tools to support a sanitation campaign in Mornwi, West Darfur.
• The Orthopaedic Department in Khartoum will send a team of six staff for 30 days on rotation to assist at the Kass and Garcilla hospitals. Surgical equipment and material will also be provided by WHO.
• Preparations are underway for the High-Level Donor Alert Meeting and Consultations on Darfur, on 3 June in Geneva. WHO will participate.

IRAQ

Events:
• The UN Secretary-General addressed a letter to UN heads of agency advising them that, due to the current security situation, UN humanitarian activities should be restricted to essential interventions. He requested that the number of international staff in Amman and Kuwait be reduced.
• Malnutrition rates in Iraq have fallen in the past two years, but acute malnutrition is at almost six percent according to WFP. A million children under five are estimated to be chronically malnourished. UNICEF is collaborating with NGOs to detect and treat malnutrition.
(Source: IRIN)
Actions:
- The WHO Representative for Iraq represented the UN Health Cluster in the Iraq Donor Meeting in Doha 25-26 May. It was agreed that funds from the International Reconstruction Fund for Iraq will be used for the following areas: re-establishing essential services (especially health and education), infrastructure rehabilitation, job creation, poverty reduction, and governance.
- USAID plans to equip 600 primary health care centres with basic medical equipment, office furniture and laboratory equipment. Forty centers are already receiving the supplies.
- The joint UN & NGO Health Emergency Group continues to coordinate the shipment of essential supplies to respond to emergency situations in Iraq. During April-May, WHO shipped goods to Iraq with a value of approximately US$90,000.
- WHO continues to monitor the availability of drugs and medical supplies, particularly in areas most affected by violent incidents (Najaf, Kerbala, Falluja, Basra).
- Preparations are underway for a technical meeting on humanitarian preparedness on 1 June in Amman. WHO will participate.
- On 2-6 June, the WHO-organized "Workshop on Maternal and Child Health in Iraq" will take place in Amman. It is to be attended by MOH officials and experts on maternal and child health issues.

WEST BANK AND GAZA STRIP

Events:
- In Rafah, the needs for health, water, food, and shelter have been mainly met. Until 27 May, however, only 90% of the population had electricity. The Tal Al Sultan clinic needs to be rehabilitated, as well as supplied with a generator and a blood cell count machine.
- During the 19-25 May period, there were 15 denials of access, eight incidents of delay (up to 120 hours), and five incidents of damages to ambulances. (Sources: OCHA, PRCS, MoH)

WHO Actions:
- Health Inforum—a collaborative effort of WHO, the Italian Cooperation, and USAID—is monitoring the situation in Rafah, in coordination with the Ministry of Health, Rafah municipality, ICRC, UN agencies, and NGOs.
- Better preparedness was underlined at the 26 May coordination meeting in Gaza. Activities for promoting breastfeeding, first aid, hygiene, etc., will be undertaken through MoH coordination.
- Professor Patrick Vaughan, WHO Task Force Coordinator of the Health Sector Review Second Phase, attended meetings with the Palestinian Ministry of Health and other main health stakeholders. He also visited health information centres, hospitals, universities, and Israeli medical associations.
- Preparations are underway for a workshop to promote discussion among the following task forces: Health Care Financing, Health Status/Outcomes, Delivery System, and Governance and System Performance. Representatives from the Palestinian Ministry of Health and experts from international organizations will attend. The workshop is being supported by the World Bank, the European Commission, Department for International Development (DfID) and the Italian Cooperation.
HAITI/DOMINICAN REPUBLIC

Events:
- Torrential rains beginning on May 21 along the border between the Dominican Republic and Haiti caused severe flooding. The total number of dead has risen to almost 2,000 and more than 12,000 people have been evacuated from their homes.
- Potential public health risks include changes in disease patterns, population displacement, deterioration in drinking water and basic sanitation systems and health infrastructure.

Actions:
- AMRO/PAHO launched an emergency health appeal on 28 May seeking US$300,000 to support immediate health sector needs.
- AMRO/PAHO is sending additional staff to the affected areas.
- AMRO/PAHO convened a meeting of the Inter-Agency Task Force, with the Organization of American States, the Inter-American Development Bank, the Inter-American Defense Board, and other agencies to brief the agencies on the most pressing health sector needs in the Dominican Republic, and PAHO actions and health situation in Haiti.

UGANDA

Events:
- The number of Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) has risen three-fold in 24 months; it now stands at over 1.6 million, 80 percent of which are women and children.
- Executive Director of UNICEF, Carol Bellamy, undertook a four-day mission to Uganda to highlight exacerbated humanitarian needs and the gross under-funding of the UN appeal for the conflict-ridden north. Governments, to date, have pledged just 20% of this year's U.N. appeal for $127 million in humanitarian aid for northern Uganda.
- During her mission, Bellamy highlighted the plight of the estimated 44,000 "night commuters"—children who travel into towns from outlying areas at night to escape abduction or attack by the Lord's Resistance Army. These children are particularly vulnerable to injuries and sexual violence.
- Repeated attacks to the IDP camps are being reported. Health problems, as well as infant and maternal mortality, are increasing.

Actions:
- WHO is sending a Public Health Officer for six months to provide technical support to health partners operating in northern Uganda.

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/
**INTER-AGENCY INITIATIVES**

- **Democratic People's Republic of Korea.** On 2 June, the UNICEF Representative in DPRK will brief Member States and agencies in Geneva on the state of children in DPRK.
- **Indonesia.** Preparations are underway for the ad-hoc Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) Working Group on Indonesia in Geneva on 18 June. WHO will participate.
- **Liberia.** On 2 June, Chairman Guyde Bryan of Liberia and the Special Representative of the Secretary-General in Liberia, Jacques Klein, will brief Member States and agencies in New York on reconstruction efforts in Liberia. WHO plans to attend.
- **Sierra Leone.** The Special Representative of the Secretary-General in Sierra Leone, Alan Doss, will brief Member States and agencies on 2 June in Geneva on crisis prevention and recovery in Sierra Leone. WHO will participate.
- **Preparedness and Contingency Planning.** WHO will participate in the IASC Task Force on Preparedness and Contingency Planning in Rome on 3 and 4 June to discuss early warning issues.
- **Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs).** Preparations are underway for the 2 June meeting of the Senior Inter-Agency Network on Internal Displacement in Geneva. The meeting will discuss the IASC Policy Package on implementing the Collaborative Response to Situations of Internal Displacement for UN Humanitarian and Resident Coordinators and Country Teams. WHO, as a member of the Senior Network, contributed to the development of the Policy Package and will participate.
- **Natural Disasters.** The next meeting of the IASC Task Force on Natural Disasters will take place in Geneva on 1 June. WHO is a member and plans to participate.
- **UNJLC.** WHO was represented at the United Nations Joint Logistics Centre training workshop in Mombasa by M. Michel Tomaszek, a WHO logistician based in Liberia. The next UNJLC training will be in Bangkok 21-27 June 2004. A WHO candidate will be sent from the region.

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**Please send any comments and corrections to kollert@who.int.**

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