

Each week, the World Health Organization Health Action in Crises in Geneva produces information highlights on the health aspects of selected humanitarian crises. Drawing on the various WHO programmes, contributions cover activities from field and country offices and the support provided by WHO regional offices and Headquarters. The mandate of the WHO Departments specifically concerned with Emergency and Humanitarian Action in Crises is to increase the effectiveness of the WHO contribution to crisis preparedness and response, transition and recovery. This note, which is not exhaustive, is designed for internal use and does not reflect any official position of the WHO Secretariat.

WEST AFRICA FLOODS



- ⇒ The UN Consolidated Appeal Process (CAP) for West African flood-affected countries is on-going.
- ⇒ To date, the Flash Appeal for Ghana has been funded up to \$ 2 761 958 including \$ 2 496 956 from the CERF and \$ 265 000 from Canadian Cooperation.
- ⇒ A Flash Appeal is being launched for Burkina Faso. The Health sector looks for US\$ 1.8 million and WHO for US\$ 1.7 million.

Assessments and Events:

- As of, 17 October, 785 000 people are affected in Benin, Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Liberia, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra Leone and Togo.
- Relief efforts are taking place regionally across the critical sectors of health, nutrition, transport and infra-structures. The response of the Governments of the affected countries is supported and complemented by the UN and other international partners.
- In *Guinea*, a cholera outbreak with 6000 cases has been reported.
- In *Niger*, insecurity has caused national authorities to ask aid agencies to stop working in the North. Thousands of people risk to be cut off from access to food and healthcare. Of equal concern, this year the Country's weekly incidence of Polio is 304 cases for 100 000 people against 176 cases for 100 000 in the same period of 2006.

Actions

- Region-wide, the work of WHO is focused on prevention and preparedness against acute watery diarrhoeas and increased risk of malaria.
- A joint AFRO/HAC-Geneva team is in the region to assist the Country Offices scaling up their logistics and operational capacities: after Ghana and Togo, the mission is now in Burkina Faso.
- AFRO and the WHO inter-country team, based in Ouagadougou, are preparing a plan for the distribution of health supplies donated by Norway
- WHO received US\$ 400 000 in CERF funding to control the spread of cholera in Guinea and a donation of health supplies from the Norwegian Government. All other WHO emergency activities in West Africa are supported only by internal funds, from the Regional Office and Geneva.

CHAD



Assessments and Events

- In the wake of armed violence among rival groups, *Chad's* government on 16 October declared a state of emergency in three regions of the north and in the east. Dozens are reported dead from inter-communal clashes.
- A hundred cases of fever of unknown origin as from October 14, including 4 deaths, recorded in the Hospital of Amdam.

Actions

- WHO is donating drugs against the Leishmaniasis outbreak
- WHO donated Ringer lactate and compressed ciprofloxacin to the hospital of Amdam to support to the response to the fever outbreak in the military camp.
- WHO has participated in the investigation of 3 cases of fever of unknown origin accompanied by vomiting and abdominal pains at the hospital of Abéché.
- WHO's emergency activities are supported by Italy, ECHO and the CERF in Chad

SUDAN



Assessments and events:

- In *northern Sudan*, cases of a suspected viral haemorrhagic fever of a nature to be determined have been reported in White Nile and Sennar States. These are being investigated by the Ministry of Health supported by the WHO country office, EMRO and WHO CDS/EPR.
- Acute Watery diarrhoea cumulative cases are 10 105, and 402 deaths from 1 January to 14 October. From 8 - 14 October, there were 299 cases of Acute Watery Diarrhoea reported, no deaths and 32 cases of Acute Bloody Diarrhoea.
- There has been a report of new floods in the Northern Bahr El Gazal and Lake States of *southern Sudan*. Thousands of households are displaced; most of them lack shelter, adequate food, safe water and sanitation facilities. The risk of disease outbreaks is high.
- In Eastern Equatoria, 91 cases of measles were reported from week 39 to 41. Two cases of meningitis were reported with the total of 11 986 cases and 673 deaths from January to 14 October.
- The security situation in *South Darfur* has worsened over the last four weeks.
- There were two reported cases of neonatal tetanus and two cases of acute flaccid paralysis in *West Darfur*.

Actions

- The MoH, UNICEF and WHO launched a polio immunization campaigns in all of Sudan, 23 - 25 October.
- In Southern Sudan the MoH, with WHO support, will train rapid response teams in viral hemorrhagic fever in two strategic states.
- The Ministry of Health, with WHO support, has established a State Health Crisis Management Committee in response to the floods WHO participated in the joint UN mission assessment to the flood affected areas, and also led a health assessment among the Ambororo pastoralists in Western Equatoria State.
- WHO trained MoH staff on first aid, case management of epidemic-prone diseases, rapid assessments and disease surveillance. The team was supplied with the necessary working tools and deployed to the flood affected areas.
- WHO pre-positioned supplies at state level to ensure a rapid response should there be an outbreak of acute watery diarrhoea
- A measles outbreak assessment by WHO, MOH and other partners took place on 26 October. WHO shipped medicines and sample collection materials. A WHO epidemiologist will lead the investigation team.
- WHO and UNICEF trained 15 trainers on IMCI.
- In *North Darfur*, SMOH and WHO conducted a training on leishmaniasis for 52 medical personnel.
- The indoor residual spraying (IRS) campaign in Zamzam camp was completed.
- A joint team from WHO and SMOH controlled the quality of water sources in El Fasher town.
- WHO will support MDM Greece in conducting trainings for the implementation of the New Malaria Treatment protocol.
- In *South Darfur* WHO, SMOH, UNICEF and health partners conducted a polio mass vaccination campaign targeting more than 760 000 children under 5 years old on 23-25 October.
- WHO, in collaboration with SMOH, conducted a spray campaign for 5 days in Alsalam IDPs camp.
- In *West Darfur* WHO supports water quality activities in camps and towns and continues to monitor proper collection and safe waste disposal in IDP camps. WHO and SMOH conducted two trainings on the new malaria treatment protocols. The vector control campaign was completed
- Contributions for WHO's emergency activities in Sudan were received from ECHO, Ireland, Finland, the CERF and the Common Humanitarian Funds.

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/hac/>

HORN OF AFRICA



⇒ On 26 October, the Resident Coordinator / Humanitarian Coordinator for Somalia briefed the humanitarian community in Geneva on the situation in the Country

Assessments and Events

- In *Somalia*, malnutrition of the under five children in the IDP settlements of Somaliland is at critical levels.
- Increased tension between the self-declared Republic of Somaliland and the neighbouring self-declared autonomous region of Puntland has led to the displacement of up to 20 000 people.
- In *Ethiopia* there are growing concerns on the humanitarian situation in violence-ridden Ogaden.
- Country-wide there are 412 Acute Watery Diarrhea cases and 1 death reported (CFR: 0.24%) From 1 January to 30 September, there were 1 215 confirmed cases of measles with 48% of confirmed cases from unvaccinated people and 63% of cases are children under 5 years old.
- Although rain fall has decreased, new floods are reported in Gambella and Somali regions. A total number of 239 586 people are affected and 73 746 are displaced.
- In *Eritrea*, the cholera outbreak in Bada, Northern Red Sea has been confirmed. From 15 – 21 October 10 new cases were reported, but only 1 case was reported 22 - 28 October. A total of 190 cases and 5 health facility deaths have been reported with a CFR of 2.6%.
- There is a reported outbreak of acute diarrhoeal disease from the neighboring Southern Red Sea Zoba. A team has been dispatched to conduct preliminary investigations including any possible links to the current outbreak.

Actions

- Two Regional WHO staff are in *Somalia* to provide support
- In *Ethiopia*, the Government and the UN are gearing up to bring humanitarian relief in the Ogaden. AWHO/EHA national consultant participated in the inter-agency field assessments
- WHO provides technical support in the Acute Watery Diarrhea affected region.
- Measles follow-up campaign is being conducted in Afar.
- WHO surveillance officer and EHA consultant are monitoring the Malaria situation in the high risk area.
- Disease surveillance has been strengthened in flood affected areas.
- In *Eritrea*, in response to the cholera outbreak, the MoH and WHO are educating the public, providing materials for disinfection, increasing the supply of safe water and training community volunteers on hygiene, use of distributed chlorine tablets and contact tracing.
- WHO activities are supported by the CERF, Canada, Italy, Norway, Sweden, the United States and Finland for *Somalia* and by the CERF and the local Humanitarian Response Fund in *Ethiopia*.

OCCUPIED PALESTINIAN TERRITORIES



More information is available at: www.emro.who.int/palestine/

Assessments and events:

- Twelve confirmed cases of Leishmaniasis and six cases suspected cases were reported in the Jaba village near Jerusalem.

Actions:

- WHO and UNFPA donated 11 pallets of drugs to Gaza.
- WHO and OCHA conducted a field visit to Sufa Crossing to assess its suitability to serve as a crossing point for weather-sensitive items.
- The monitoring of district and hospital pharmaceutical stores is continuing.
- WHO met with the MSF physicians in Gaza to brief them on the latest monitoring surveillance system results and to discuss expanding the monitoring of communicable diseases in Gaza.
- MoH and WHO responded to the leishmaniasis outbreak with house to house spraying in the village and providing treatment.
- WHO's emergency activities are supported by Finland, and the CERF.

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IRAQ



More information is available at:
www.emro.who.int/iraq/information_publications.htm#cholera_sitrep

Assessments and Events

- Tensions increase in the Kurdish areas along the Iraq-Turkey border. Armed confrontations
- Some families have already left villages and towns near the border and have been displaced for the past week.
- Aid agencies working in Iraq's northern provinces have put in place emergency supply programmes in anticipation of a worsening of the politico-military crisis.

Actions

- The UN Country Team has applied for a Rapid Response CERF grant. If approved, the grant would facilitate WHO and partners in further assisting the Government of Iraq contain cholera.
- WHO Regional Office and WHO Headquarters are assisting WHO Country Office in following up on the request for the Rapid Response CERF grant.
- WHO's emergency activities are funded by Japan and the UNDG Iraq Trust Fund.

COSTA RICA



Assessments and Events

- Intense storms affected Costa Rica's Central/North Pacific and Valle Central regions.
- The storms have caused 18 deaths and affected more than 900 homes. Approximately 12 000 people have been evacuated and 2 108 people are in 29 shelters
- The President has declared a state of national Emergency

Actions

- PAHO/WHO is supporting the Ministry of Health in establishing a Situation Room and is coordinating with other agencies to establish communication lines
- PAHO/WHO provided three technical staff from the Emergency and Disaster Relief group to assist in the damage and needs assessment
- PAHO/WHO continues to monitor the situation.

INTER-AGENCY ISSUES

- **UNDAC.** The United Nations Disaster Assessment and Coordination (UNDAC) Asia-Pacific Induction Course 2007 is taking place in Christchurch, New Zealand, from 14 to 26 October 2007.
- **The Global Symposium +5** 'Information for Humanitarian Action' took place in Geneva from 24-26 October 2007.
- **Consolidated Appeals Process.** The IASC CAP Sub-Working Group met on 25 October.
- **Iraq.** On 25 October, the Deputy Special Representative of the UN Secretary-General and Humanitarian Coordinator for Iraq briefed the humanitarian community in Geneva on the humanitarian situation in Iraq. A Humanitarian Liaison Working Group meeting on Iraq took place the same day.
- **Afghanistan.** An information briefing on Afghanistan took place in Geneva on 26 October.
- The next **Emergency Team Leadership Programme (ETLP)** will take place in Villars, Switzerland, from 28 October to 2 November 2007.
- A High-Level Meeting on **Humanitarian Preparedness for an Influenza Pandemic**, organized by UNSIC and the IFRC, will be held in Geneva on 29 October 2007.
- **Clusters.**
 - A one-day workshop for Donors and Global Cluster Leads will take place in Geneva on 30 October 2007.
 - The Global Health Cluster will meet face to face in Geneva from 14-16 November.
- Preparations are stepping up for the next **IASC Working Group** in Rome in November 2007.

Please send any comments and corrections to crises@who.int

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