

**INTER-AGENCY STANDING COMMITTEE WORKING GROUP
58th MEETING**

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UNICEF New York**

Background Note on Darfur

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1. The WHO mortality survey, which covered the period from 15 June to 15 August 2004, confirmed that there were major gaps in the assistance delivery during this period, particularly in water and sanitation, health but also food assistance. In addition, while many of the 90-day targets established in early June were met or even exceeded by the end of August, needs continued to increase during the same 90-day period, including a 20 percent increase in the number of IDPs, constantly changing the goalposts as the humanitarian community was building up its capacity. The number of IDPs and others affected by the crisis have increased further as of 1 September when the estimated total number of IDPs was 1.45 million, a further increase of 220,000 since 1 August. The total number of affected has increased to 1.84 million, 340,000 more than in August.

2. The planned target population for October to December is expected to peak at or slightly above 2 million, including affected host communities. A more detailed assessment of the exact number of people in need of food assistance will be available by early October when the results of a joint WFP/FAO food security and nutrition assessment will become available.

3. Reducing the mortality rates in the middle of the rainy season presents enormous challenges due to the logistical difficulties and the serious health risks caused by the rains. But there are indications that significant progress has been made since July, and that we should see substantial improvements in many areas in October:

- The number of relief workers on the ground is continuing to increase: the total number of international staff has increased further to at least 670 as of 1 September, of which 133 are UN staff. The total number of national staff now stands at over 4,900, of which more than 90% are employed by international NGOs. An increasing number of major international NGOs are getting close to full strength, offering the expertise and implementation capacity that had been lacking.
- So far, about 28,500 latrines have been built to serve 570,000 people. UNICEF anticipates meeting the target of 48,000 latrines by October. A total of 127 health facilities are now reaching more than 950,000 people and vaccination campaigns are expanding into rebel controlled areas.
- The logistics capacity is continuing to improve: all 120 of the special WFP trucks have arrived, additional planes are being deployed and WFP has now contracted four helicopters. The end of rainy season will improve the ability of agencies to deliver assistance by land and by air.

- Camp management and quality control is improving with the help of several major NGOs that have taken on this responsibility, as well as IOM which has deployed a number of staff for camp management. All of the 23 large stand-alone camps should be allocated to camp managers by now. More still needs to be done to create a common management framework and standards, and to improve management in other IDP concentrations.

4. Despite these positive developments, humanitarian agencies continue to run behind the monthly increases in the number of IDPs and others affected by the conflict, leaving substantial gaps in most sectors. For example, WFP is confident that it will meet its target of 1.2 million beneficiaries in September, and food deliveries are expected to increase considerably thereafter thanks to enhanced capacity and the end of the rainy season. However, WFP is unlikely to be in a position to reach the expected 2 million beneficiaries as early as October (the WFP/FAO assessment mentioned above will provide more information on the precise extent of the gaps we should anticipate over the coming 2-3 months). Even larger gaps should be expected in many other critical sectors in the near future.

5. The build-up of capacity therefore has to be sustained and potentially accelerated over the next 3-4 months. UN agencies and NGOs should also deploy more international staff outside the three capitals of Darfur. There is also a need for more senior staff to be deployed to Darfur.

6. The poor funding situation remains a key obstacle to an effective and sustained response. While an additional \$25 million in contributions has been registered since late August, the total funding gap for operations in Darfur and Chad is still at \$235 million or 46%. The Secretary-General's Special Adviser on Africa, Mr. Sahnoun, received encouraging messages of support during his recent mission to the Gulf but no specific commitments have been made to UN agencies or international NGOs. (A recent contribution of \$10 million by Kuwait was given as bilateral assistance to the Government of Sudan. Other Gulf countries have channeled assistance through their Red Crescent societies.)

7. Insecurity remains a major concern, including banditry, continued fighting, and detentions in rebel held areas. Following an UNSECOORD-led inter-agency assessment mission in August, a series of recommendations were made to improve the security management capacity in Darfur. UNSECOORD has received most of the required funding to deploy additional Field Security Coordination Officers and national Field Security Coordination Advisors to each of the three capitals of Darfur. Discussions on arrangements that would allow international NGOs to benefit more from the UN security management system are ongoing.

8. The UN Country Team in Sudan has agreed to develop a unified work plan for 2005 with chapters on relief, recovery and development. The work plan will include resources required to implement the plan, and will thus serve as the Sudan common appeal for 2005. The CT is holding a retreat on 20 and 21 September to lay the foundation for the 2005 planning process and, in so doing, develop a common strategic vision for 2005. The specific objectives of the retreat are: (a) to reach consensus on the overall UN priorities and strategy for 2005; (b) to agree on next steps to manage and coordinate the planning process and monitor its implementation; and (c) to identify lessons from the 2004 planning experience and apply these

for 2005. The participation of NGOs in this process, including in the common appeal for 2005, should be discussed.

9. Discussions are ongoing in Khartoum about the structure of UNAMIS, including consultations at the Country Team level.

OCHA
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