Cairo, 20 June 2023 – The World Health Organization (WHO) welcomes the support of Member States and partners to the humanitarian response in Sudan and the Region and urges donors to fulfil their pledges so that the urgent health needs of millions of Sudanese people can be met. A humanitarian crisis is always a health crisis. Two months of heightened violence have severely impacted the delivery of health care in Sudan, leaving 11 million people across the country in urgent need of health assistance.

WHO welcomes the 72-hour ceasefire that went into effect on the morning of 18 June to last until 21 June, in which parties have agreed to allow the unimpeded movement and delivery of humanitarian assistance throughout the country. We call on parties to uphold – and extend – the ceasefire to ease the suffering of the people of Sudan.

About two thirds of health facilities in affected areas are out of service. Repeated attacks on health care are preventing patients and health workers from reaching hospitals, and have targeted health facilities, medical warehouses, transportation of supplies, and health workers themselves. Some 46 attacks on health care have been verified by WHO since the start of the fighting. Nonetheless, Sudanese health workers continue to show enormous courage and resourcefulness to respond to the growing health needs.

Critical services have been discontinued in many areas, including maternal and child health care, management of severe acute malnutrition and treatment of patients with noncommunicable diseases. Childhood vaccinations and disease surveillance have also been disrupted.

There are significant challenges in controlling ongoing epidemics of measles, malaria and dengue fever. The risk of epidemics will only increase given the upcoming rainy season, limited access to safe water, population displacement, and limited capacity to detect outbreaks early.

Last week, WHO released a new funding appeal requesting US$ 145 million to meet increasing health needs of people affected by violence in Sudan and those who fled to neighbouring Egypt, Chad, South Sudan, Central African Republic and Ethiopia.

WHO is scaling up its response to include supporting the delivery of essential health services, including trauma and emergency care, while reinforcing surveillance for epidemic-prone diseases.

In neighbouring countries, WHO is supporting coordination of health care to ensure the access of refugees to essential health services, including provision of medicines and mental and psychosocial support, through health centres and mobile clinics.

But we will not be able to protect people's health alone. There is an urgent need for commitment and a show of solidarity from the international community to make sure that, together with our partners, we can continue to provide lifesaving interventions over the next 6 months in Sudan and in the Region.

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