



**UNITED NATIONS MISSION IN SUDAN
Office of the Spokesperson**

Press Release 009

**Facts and figures on UN humanitarian work in Darfur:
The United Nations addresses misinformation on its operations**

Khartoum, 27 March 2005: The United Nations in Sudan has noticed the increased interest of the Sudanese media and the general public in the humanitarian activities of the United Nations and International Non-Governmental Organizations (NGO's) particularly regarding operations in Darfur. The UN welcomes this interest in one of the largest humanitarian operations in the world and encourages public scrutiny as it is fully committed to transparency and accountability.

However the United Nations in Sudan is concerned about some misleading and factually inaccurate information on humanitarian assistance and management of the resources intended to alleviate the suffering throughout the Sudan propagated in the local media, sometimes citing administrative authorities.

In one recent example it was stated that the UN spends 88% of donated funds on staff and only 12% of these funds reach the IDP population. This statement is demonstrably false, as illustrated by the examples below.

- The United Nations World Food Programme spends 85% of its contributions on buying food and delivering it to the needy in Darfur, and 8% on staffing in Darfur
- The United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization in emergency projects such as Darfur allocates between 55% and 60% of received funds to supplies that are directly distributed to beneficiaries. Staffing costs never exceed 9%-10% of the budget.
- The United Nations World Health Organization spends 42% of its contributions on supplies.
- The United Nations Population Fund spends 73% of its funding on drugs and equipment and delivering them to the Darfurs.

Despite increasing insecurity, the United Nations and its partners are reaching a larger number of people in need of assistance. In February, WFP delivered food to more than 1.6 million people in Darfur, the highest monthly total fed since the start of its emergency operation in April 2004. Overall, food was delivered to 70 per cent of the 2.4 million affected population in February. By 1 March, shelter and non-food items reached 80% of the IDP population, while 67 per cent were covered by sanitation activities. Of the total 2.4 million people affected by the conflict, 58% had better access to clean water, and an average of 69% had access to primary and secondary health facilities and basic drugs, due to the intervention of the UN and its partners.

It is also important to mention that out of the 10,378 aid workers in Darfur, only 930 – or less than 10% -- are international staff. This ratio illustrates the importance the UN assigns to supporting local employment in the region, through recruiting and training, to build the capacity of national staff. Important support is also provided to local NGOs.

Moreover, whenever possible, materials are purchased locally, in support of the Sudanese economy. For example, last year alone, WFP bought 115,000 metric tons of sorghum in Sudan, at a cost of \$19 million. In addition, most WFP dispatches from Port Sudan to the Darfurs are carried by local transport companies, which in turn support the Sudanese economy. WFP negotiates contracts with local transporters in an increasingly competitive environment, as demand for truck capacity in Sudan outstrips supply.

The United Nations recognizes that more is needed to address the humanitarian crisis in Darfur. But the humanitarian community is limited by challenges beyond its control; the parties to the conflict have to ensure a viable security environment in order for the humanitarian assistance to reach all its beneficiaries. Attacks on humanitarian workers and looting of their trucks and humanitarian goods have to stop.

The 11 operational United Nations Agencies and their 77 implementing partners from the NGO community currently operating in Darfur are exerting every effort, often risking – and sometimes losing – their lives, to alleviate the suffering of a large population victimized in this man-made crisis. With the support of the donor community, they make a tangible difference in the daily lives of huge numbers of people driven from their homes.