

Republic of South Sudan

Measles Outbreak and Response Weekly Situation Update

Issue number 32
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 Epidemiological week Week 40 (02 - 08 October 2023)

Suspected Measles Cases New (35) cases with date of onset in week 40 Cumulative (10,380)	Lab Confirmed Cases New (6) Cumulative (913)	Deaths New (0) Cumulative (194) CFR 1.9
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* The above data is cumulative from 2022

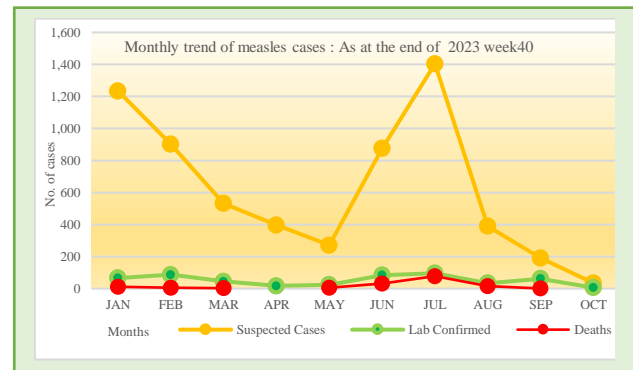
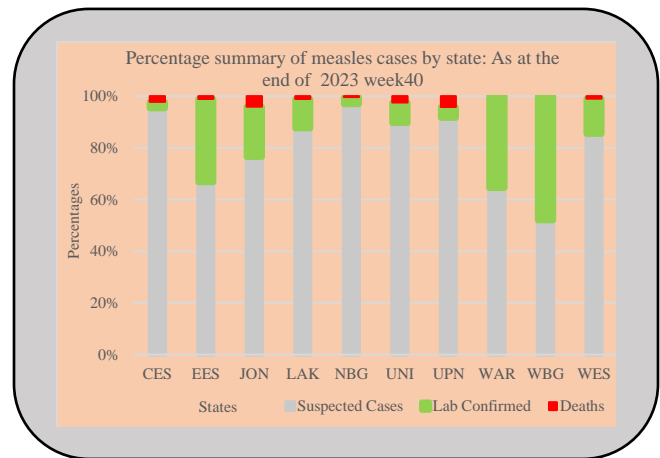
Background

As of Epi week 40, year 2023, a total of 6,232 suspected measles cases were reported, with 521 (8.4%) lab-confirmed, 149 deaths and a case fatality rate of 2.4.

After the nationwide Integrated Measles Follow up Campaign in May 2023, reactive campaigns were conducted in fourteen (14) counties in two phases: Phase I (Renk, Aweil East, Aweil North, Aweil West) and Phase II (Rubkona, Malakal, Melut, Leer, Juba, Abyei, Gogrial West, Twic, Ayod, Longechuk, Aweial and Yirol East,) in response to the outbreaks reported amongst the returnees from Sudan. A total of 524,512 children (73,124 returnees and 451,388 hosts) have since been vaccinated with the Measles vaccine.

Despite observing a downward trajectory in the suspected measles cases since the peak in July 2023 week 27 (refer to figure 2), the persisting outbreak risks demand continued attention.

Epi weeks 37- 40 data shows six counties with laboratory confirmed outbreaks in September and thirteen counties reporting suspected cases, warranting further investigation and laboratory validation.



Key weekly Situation Update as of 08 October 2023

- Thirty-five (35) new cases reported this week from **Akobo (32)** and **Pibor-Meiwun (3)**
 - Late batch of additional 167 cases in week 30-39 have been reported this week from **Abyei (6)**, **Akobo (41)**, **Cueibet (3)**, **Guit (6)**, **Kapoeta South (7)**, **Kapoeta East (5)**, **Magwi (1)**, **Pibor-Meiwun (3)**, **Renk (84 returnees)**, **Tonj North (10)** and **Torit (1)**.
- Out of the 43 additional lab confirmed cases, **Akobo (5)** and **Pibor-Meiwun (1)** had 6 newly confirmed cases in week 40.
- Four (4) deaths in weeks 34, 35, and 39 have been reported this week from **Renk (3)** and **Akobo (1)**.
- **Akobo**, **Cueibet**, **Guit**, **Kapoeta South**, **Kapoeta East** and **Tonj North** still have ongoing measles outbreak as of epi week 37 with no response.

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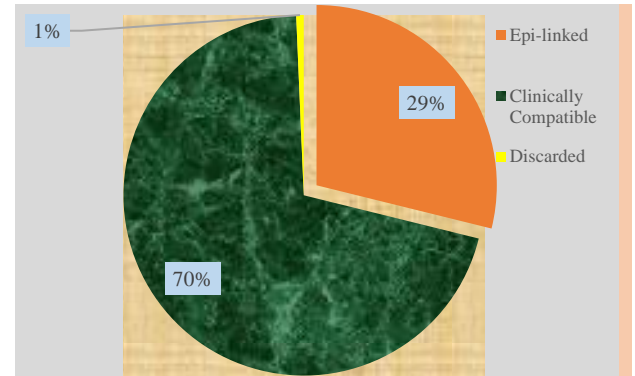
- Juba, Kajo-Keji, Lainya, Yei, Torit, Magwi, Pibor, Renk, Tambura, Maridi, Tonj South, Wulu and Renk continue to report suspected cases in the last four weeks and need to collect samples as per the revised SOP.

Summary of cases as of 08 October 2023

Table 1: Distribution of cases by final classification: 2023

FINAL CLASSIFICATION	2023	
	NO. OF CASES	%
Lab confirmed	521	8.4
Epi-linked	1,453	23.3
Clinically Compatible	3,981	63.9
Total	5,955	95.6
Discarded (-ve)	277	4.4
Grand Total	6,232	100.0

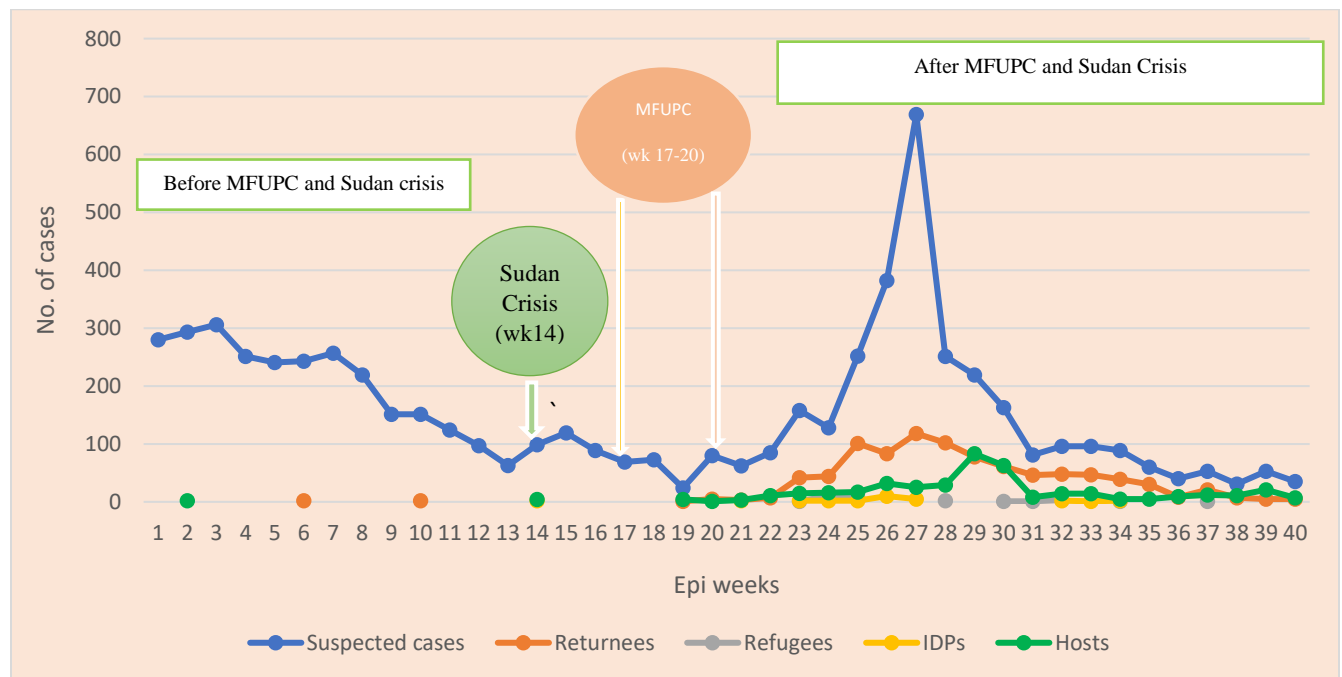
Figure 1: Distribution of deaths by final: 2023



Out of the 6,232 suspected measles cases, 521(8.4%) are lab-confirmed, 1,453(23.3%) epi-linked, 3,981(63.9%) clinically compatible, and 277(4.4%) discarded cases have been reported from epidemiological week 1 to week 40, 2023. A total of 44 rubella positive cases from the discarded (negative measles cases)

A total of 149 measles-related deaths were reported since January 2023. 70%(105) were among clinically compatible cases whereas 29%(43) and 1%(1) occurred among the epi-linked and discarded cases respectively.

Figure 2: Trend of suspected measles cases against their residential status by epi weeks: 2023

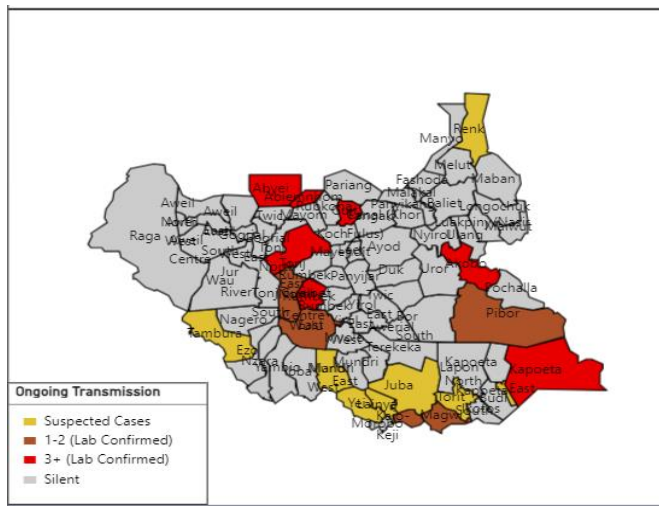


Note: Measles cases have been reported from different counties throughout 2023. The observed peaks are driven by different counties that experienced surge in measles cases at different times. The Sudan crisis started in week 14 with the influx of returnees and refugees since then. The nationwide MFUPC also took place from week 17-20.

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Figure 3: A map showing outbreak counties in the last four weeks (week 37-40):2023



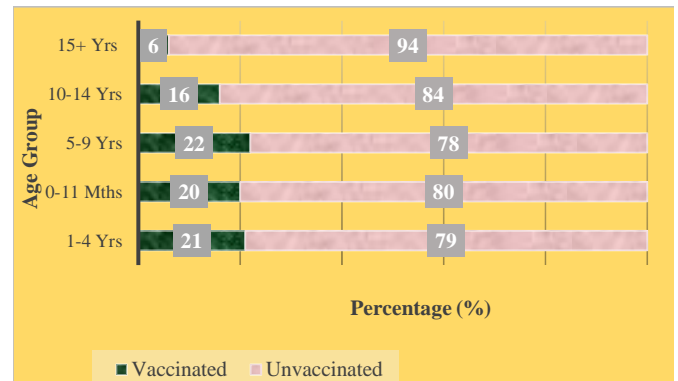
NB: Abyei is shown on the map as an outbreak county, the samples were collected during the recent campaign and no immunization response is needed, however surveillance to be enhanced with new samples collected a month after the campaign

Table 2: Distribution of reported measles cases and deaths by age groups in South Sudan, 2023

Age Groups	2023			
	No. of cases	%	Deaths	%
0-11 mths	1,169	18.8	26	2.2
1-4 yrs	3,097	49.7	88	2.8
5-9 yrs	1,091	17.5	18	1.6
10-14 yrs	394	6.3	7	1.8
15+ yrs	481	7.7	10	2.1
Total	6,232	100.0	149	2.4

Note: More than half 4,266(68%) of all the measles cases are children below 5 years of age. The case fatality rate is highest (2.8%) among children age 1-4 years. Most (114)77% out of the 149 reported deaths were among children below age 5 years

Figure3: Percentage distribution of measles cases and their vaccination status: 2023



Note: Generally, 4,997(80%) were unvaccinated (zero, unknown) including 3,363(67%) children <5 years. Among children less than one year old (1,169 cases), 80% (931 cases) have not been vaccinated against measles compared with 238(20%) vaccinated. This trend is observed across all the age groups.

Coordination

- The Incident management structure remains in place and lead by the MOH
- The vaccination response and the measles outbreak post-Sudan crisis plan developed and shared with partners.
- The country has finalized a budget for the Measles outbreak component of the Sudan crisis
- Plans for an IAR ongoing.

Surveillance and Laboratory

- Enhanced surveillance ongoing in silent counties
- Sample collection for all counties that last had measles outbreak confirmed in the last 4 weeks to track the Measles epidemiology.



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- Enhance surveillance for VPDs, especially at the points of entry for the refugees, returnees from Sudan, and in the silent counties
- Ensure weekly reporting (including zero dose reporting where applicable)

Case Management

- The MOH, WHO, and partners are intensifying measles case management (including vitamin A administration), surveillance, and risk communication in locations with suspected and confirmed outbreaks
- In collaboration with partners and MOH, WHO is prepositioning kits to support case management in counties with active outbreaks.

Vaccinations

- Phase I Measles reactive vaccination campaign in a total of 65,605 children of under 15 years were vaccinated in 5 counties (Renk, Aweil East, Aweil North, Aweil West and Rubkona)
- A total of 15 counties were targeted for the Phase II reactive measles vaccination campaign, and 14 counties were targeted for POE/Transit post-vaccination
 - Seven counties (Ayod, Leer, Fangak, Abyei, Gogrial West, Bentiu POC, and Malakal) were supported by Partners (MEDAIR, HFO, IHO, MSF, and Save the Children).
 - WHO supported the other counties, while UNICEF supported vaccine supplies.
- As of week 40, a total of 11 counties have implemented the campaign (Ayod, Leer, Juba, Rubkona, Malakal, Melut, Abyei, Longechuk, Gogrial West, Twic and Yirol East).
 - Complete data submitted from 7 counties and partial data from 4 counties which makes a total of 458,907 (73%) of children vaccinated as at 11/10/2023.
- Fangak county delayed due to vaccine and supply delivery challenge.
- Two counties (Maban and Maiwut) preparation was ongoing however, due to vaccine stockout at national level the implementation will be delayed till stock replenishment.
- Akobo county in Jonglei state confirmed outbreak and the team on ground is preparing the MP and the response will start as soon as possible. Available vaccine stock (for routine) at national or state level will be used to respond for this outbreak.

Demand Generation/ Communication

- Demand generation activities ongoing for the planned mop up and reactive campaigns as well as routine immunization (radio talk shows and jingle broadcast)

Operational challenges and gaps

- Inadequate detailed investigation of suspected measles cases and deaths in counties reporting suspected cases of measles
- Inadequate sample collection for laboratory confirmation and classification cases of suspected measles cases
- A high proportion of unvaccinated/unknown status children (80%) was detected among the cases, noting poor quality of investigations and gaps in immunization especially among the returnees and refugees.
- Late and constant retrospective reporting of suspected cases
- Incomplete and inaccurate filling of line lists

Way Forward

- MOH and partners to support planned mop up campaign and other measles activities
- State and County MOH to continue weekly reporting of measles cases (including zero reporting where applicable)
- UNICEF to fill in the anticipated Measles vaccine rupture.



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- Prompt detection and management of measles cases
- Addition of Vitamin A in future responses
- Blood samples to be collected from suspected cases, in counties that continue to report and the lab confirmation is beyond 4 weeks to monitor the epidemiology
- Collection of nasopharyngeal swabs from new cases
- Strengthen routine immunization at POEs, and within the community
- Prioritize case management to reduce morbidity and mortality.
- Enhance the risk communication and community engagement on health and help seeking behaviour.

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