

# Republic of South Sudan

## Measles Outbreak and Response Weekly Situation Update

Issue number                    31  
 Issue Date                      05 October 2023  
 Epidemiological week        Week 39 (September 25 – October 01, 2023)

<b>Suspected Measles Cases</b> New (0) cases with date of onset in week 39 Cumulative (10,178)	<b>Lab Confirmed Cases</b> New (0) Cumulative (870)	<b>Deaths</b> New (0) Cumulative (190) CFR 1.9
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\* Above data is cumulative from 2022

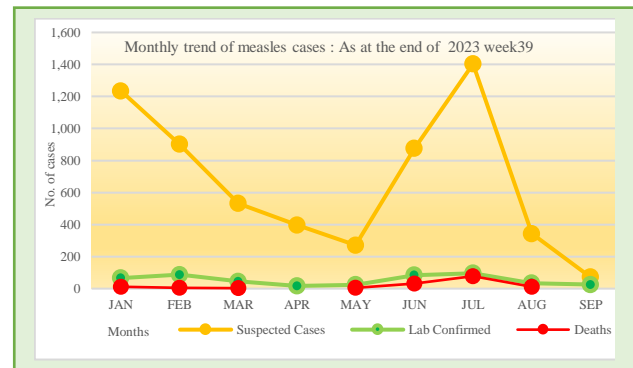
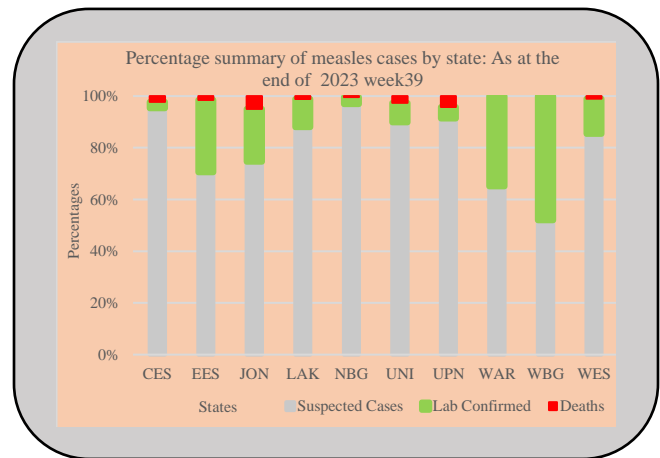
### Background

As of Epi week 39, year 2023, a total of 6,030 suspected measles cases were reported, with 478 (7.9%) lab-confirmed, 145 deaths and a case fatality rate of 2.4.

After the nationwide Integrated Measles Follow up Campaign in May 2023, reactive campaigns were conducted across fourteen (14) counties in two phases: Phase I (Renk, Aweil East, Aweil North, Aweil West) and Phase II (Rubkona, Malakal, Melut, Leer, Ayod, Juba, Longechuk, Gogrial West, Twic and Abyei) in response to the outbreaks reported amongst the returnees from Sudan. A total of 395,123 children (66,843 returnees and 328,280 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 36-39 data shows two counties (Tonj South and Abiemnhom in September) with laboratory confirmed outbreaks and fourteen counties reporting suspected cases, warranting further investigation and laboratory validation.



### Key weekly Situation Update as of 01 October 2023

- Additional 89 cases in weeks 33-37 have been reported this week from Renk (71), Kapoeta South (3), Ikotos (1), Magwi (1), Abiemnhom (3), Maridi (1), Tonj South (6), Lainya (1) and Kajo-Keji (1)
  - A total of 10 lab-confirmed, 8 discarded, 5 epi-linked, and 66 clinically compatible cases.
- No deaths have been reported in the week under review.
- Tonj South and Abiemnhom still have ongoing measles outbreaks as of epi week 36.
- Aweil West, Cueibet, Ikotos, Juba, Kajo-Keji, Kapoeta South, Lainya, Magwi, Maridi, Morobo, Renk, Tambura, Tonj South, Wulu, and Yei continue to report suspected cases in the last four weeks and need to collect samples as per the revised SOP.

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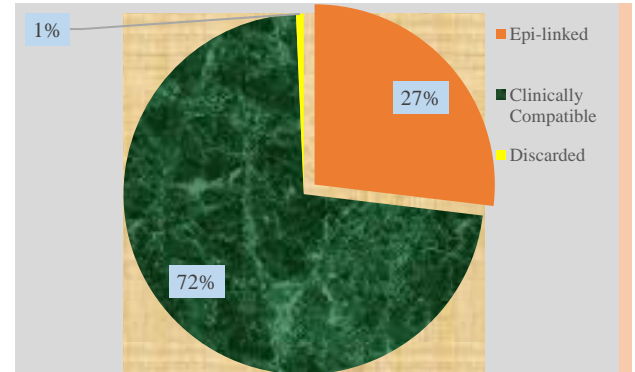
## Measles Outbreak and Response Weekly Situation Update

### Summary of cases as of 01 October 2023

Table 1: Distribution of cases by final classification: 2023

FINAL CLASSIFICATION	2023	
	NO. OF CASES	%
Lab confirmed	478	7.9
Epi-linked	1,311	21.7
Clinically Compatible	3,981	66.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>5,770</b>	<b>95.7</b>
Discarded (-ve)	260	4.3
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>6,030</b>	<b>100.0</b>

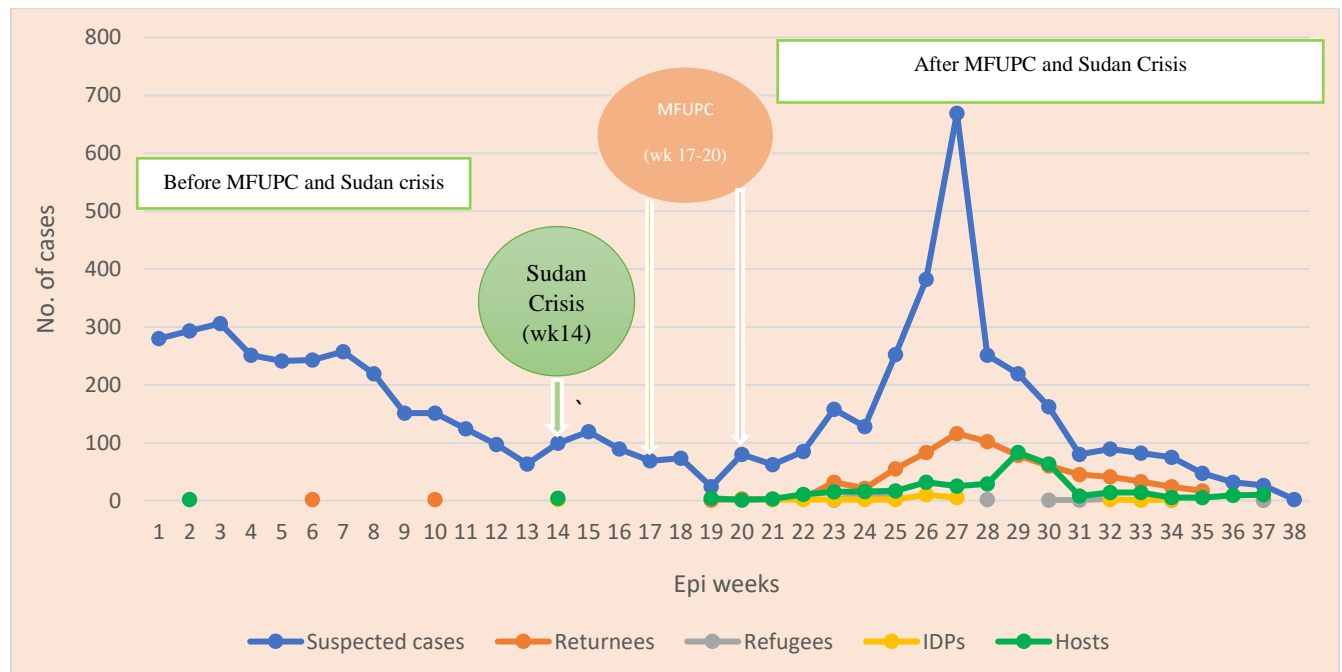
Figure 1: Distribution of deaths by final: 2023



Out of the 6,030 suspected measles cases, 478(7.9%) are lab-confirmed, 1,311(21.7%) epi-linked, 3,981(66.0%) clinically compatible, and 260(4.3%) discarded cases have been reported from epidemiological week 1 to week 39, 2023. A total of 42 rubella positive cases from the discarded (negative measles cases)

A total of 145 measles-related deaths were reported since January 2023. 72%(105) were among clinically compatible cases whereas 27%(39) 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 36-39):2023

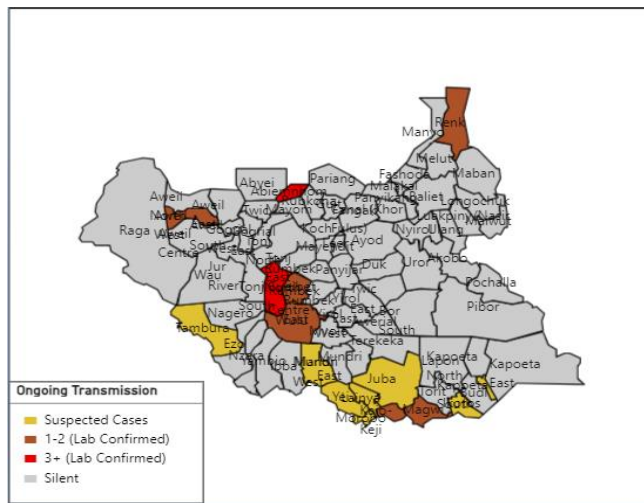
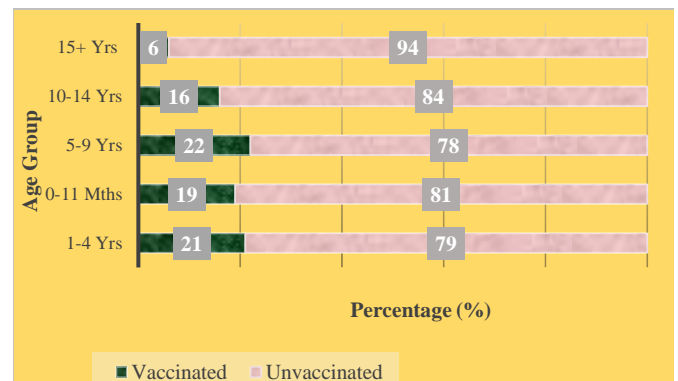


Table 2: Distribution of reported measles cases and deaths by age groups in South Sudan, 2022-2023

Age Groups	2023			
	No. of cases	%	Deaths	%
0-11 mths	1,132	18.8	25	2.2
1-4 yrs	2,983	49.5	85	2.8
5-9 yrs	1,058	17.5	18	1.7
10-14 yrs	385	6.4	7	1.8
15+ yrs	472	7.8	10	2.1
<b>Total</b>	<b>6,030</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>145</b>	<b>2.5</b>

*Note: More than half 4,115(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 (110)76% out of the 145 reported deaths were among children below age 5 years*

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



*Note: Generally, 4,864(81%) were unvaccinated (zero, unknown) including 3,272(67%) children <5 years. Among children less than one year old (1,132 cases), 81% (919 cases) have not been vaccinated against measles compared with 213(19%) 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.
- 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)



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#### 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 repositioning kits to support case management in counties with active outbreaks.

#### Vaccinations

- A total of 15 counties were targeted for a reactive campaign during phase II, and 14 counties were targeted for POE/Transit post-vaccination
- Seven counties (Ayod, Leer, Fangak, Abyei, Gogrial West, Bentiu POC, and Malakal) are supported by Partners (MEDAIR, HFO, IHO, MSF, and Save the Children). WHO finances the rest of the counties, and Unicef supports the vaccine and consumables in all counties.
- As of week 39, 10 counties implemented the campaign (Ayod, Leer, Juba, Rubkona, Malakal, Melut, Abyei, Longechuk, Gogrial West, and Twic ). Complete data was submitted from 6 counties, and partial data from 4 counties. 329,518 (62%) of children were vaccinated as of 04/10/2023.
- Two counties (Awerial and Yirol West) will start next week as they received vaccine and supply
- Fangak County delayed due to vaccine and supply delivery challenges.
- The 2 counties (Maban and Maiwut) will start once they complete the preparatory activities.

#### Deamand 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)
- 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 risk communication and community engagement in health and help-seeking behaviour.



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