



Office of the Undersecretary

For Immediate Release

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The Ministry of Health, Republic of South Sudan announces measles outbreak in Malakal county, Upper Nile state.

01 October, 2013, Juba – The Ministry of Health, Republic of South Sudan in collaboration with the World Health Organization announce the outbreak of measles in Malakal County, Upper Nile state.

This announcement follows reports of 44 suspected cases of measles reported from Malakal Teaching hospital pediatric ward since August 2013 in which 10 of the 15 samples collected from patients tested positive for the measles (IgM). Those affected are aged between 6 – 18 month of age and continue receiving treatment at Malakal Teaching Hospital.

The Ministry of Health informs all the communities that, we are committed to containing the outbreak in Malakal County. So far we have done the following;

- Reactivated a national and a state measles taskforce to coordinate the interventions response
- Surveillance has been heightened at the facility and community levels
- Together with the State Ministry of Health and partners on ground (WHO, UNICEF) plans to conduct mass measles vaccination campaigns targeting over 31,303 children between the ages of 6 month –5 years have been put in place.

Measles is a highly contagious viral disease, which affects mostly children. It is transmitted via droplets from the nose, mouth or throat of infected persons. Initial symptoms, which usually appear 10–12 days after infection, include high fever, runny nose, bloodshot eyes, and tiny white spots on the inside of the mouth. Several days later, a rash develops, starting on the face and upper neck and gradually spreading downwards.

There is no specific treatment for measles and most people recover within 2–3 weeks. However, particularly in malnourished children and people with reduced immunity, measles can cause serious complications, including blindness, encephalitis, severe diarrhoea, ear infection and pneumonia. Measles can be prevented by immunization. In this regard the Ministry of Health calls on all parents with children between 6 month to 5 years to ensure that all their children are vaccinated against measles.

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