

SUDAN: MENINGITIS

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The Disaster

During the course of the last several years a serious cerebrospinal meningitis pandemic has affected large parts of Africa. Sudan is located within the African cerebrospinal meningitis belt, and has been severely affected by sporadic waves of cases. On 12 December, 1998, 25 cases were reported in one area in Northern Darfour State, with a very high mortality rate of 40%. Up to 15 January, 1999, a total of 190 cases have been reported, with a slightly decreased mortality rate of 15%. Approximately 20 new cases are reported daily in the affected area. The table below summarises the latest statistics:

Province	No. of Cases	No. of Deaths	Fatality Rate
Kebkabya	52	15	29 %
Kutom	118	11	9 %
EL Fashier	20	4	20 %
Total	190	30	16 %

Following a series of meetings organised by the Ministry of Health (MoH) to consider a strategy for controlling the disease, a field visit was conducted on 14-15 January, 1999 to assess the situation (with the participation of the Federation's Health Delegate as well as with technical support from the World Health Organisation). The result is a plan to procure vaccines and to implement a vaccination campaign for 510,000 beneficiaries in four provinces of Northern Darfour State, of which the Federation/SRCS will serve 150,000. Health education for the entire population in the targeted provinces will also be provided through the SRCS's health volunteers. The central laboratory in El Fascher will be supported with reagents to ensure early and quick diagnosis.

Red Cross/Red Crescent Action

The immediate plan of action calls for the following activities to be implemented over a 2-month period:

- { Assistance in the vaccination of the at-risk 2-30 year age group by providing vaccines and manpower;
- { Promoting health education to increase early reporting to health facilities as well as to improve the success of preventive measures by disseminating health education messages at the community level through the SRCS health volunteers;
- { Participating in community mobilisation for immunisation and case identification for eventual referral to hospitals;

The following activities will also be carried out to support the programme:

- { Training of Trainers (ToT) for SRCS volunteers on prevention, case identification and referral, vaccination and personal hygiene; and
- { Support for logistics, technical equipment, and supplies.

The first month will focus on the vaccination campaign and health training of volunteers, the second month will entail health education and reporting.

Needs

The Government's Ministry of Health and other agencies have indicated the availability of 350,000 doses of vaccine. The gap therefore to be covered by the SRCS intervention is 150,000 vaccine doses. The following table also reflects the emergency supply needs (in Sudanese Pounds - SDP). All the items required for this operation are available locally and should be purchased in Sudan itself due to the urgency of the situation.

<i>Item</i>	<i>Quantity</i>	<i>Price per unit (SDP)</i>	<i>Total cost (SDP)</i>	<i>Total cost (CHF)</i>
Bivalent A & C vaccine CSM Bottle 50 doses	3,000 bottles	21,000	63,000,000	36,540
Disposable syringes/ needles 2 ml	150,000	170	25,500,000	14,790
Health education materials/posters	10,000		6,500,000	3,770
Transport			14,000,000	8,120
TOT 3 days in El Fashir (trainees)	12 persons	85,000	1,020,000	592
TOT (trainer)	1		800,000	464
Administration			14,300,000	8,294
Volunteers support (one month)	250	75,000/month	18,750,000	10,875
Refrigerator	1	1,400,000	1,400,000	812
Laboratory reagents			12,000,000	6,960
Total			157,270,000	91,217

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