



## SUDAN: MENINGITIS

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*The Federation's mission is to improve the lives of vulnerable people by mobilizing the power of humanity. It is the world's largest humanitarian organization and its millions of volunteers are active in 185 countries.*

### In Brief

This DREF Bulletin is being issued based on the situation described below reflecting the information available at this time. CHF 219,497 (USD 180,507 or EUR 135,492) was allocated from the Federation's Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF) to respond to the needs in this operation, or to replenish disaster preparedness stocks distributed to the affected population. This operation is expected to be implemented over 3 months, and will be completed by July 2007. The Final Report will be made available three months after the end of the operation. Unearmarked funds to repay DREF are encouraged.

[<Click here to go directly to the attached map>](#)

This operation is aligned with the International Federation's Global Agenda, which sets out four broad goals to meet the Federation's mission to "improve the lives of vulnerable people by mobilizing the power of humanity".

#### Global Agenda Goals:

- Reduce the numbers of deaths, injuries and impact from disasters.
- Reduce the number of deaths, illnesses and impact from diseases and public health emergencies.
- Increase local community, civil society and Red Cross Red Crescent capacity to address the most urgent situations of vulnerability.
- Reduce intolerance, discrimination and social exclusion and promote respect for diversity and human dignity.

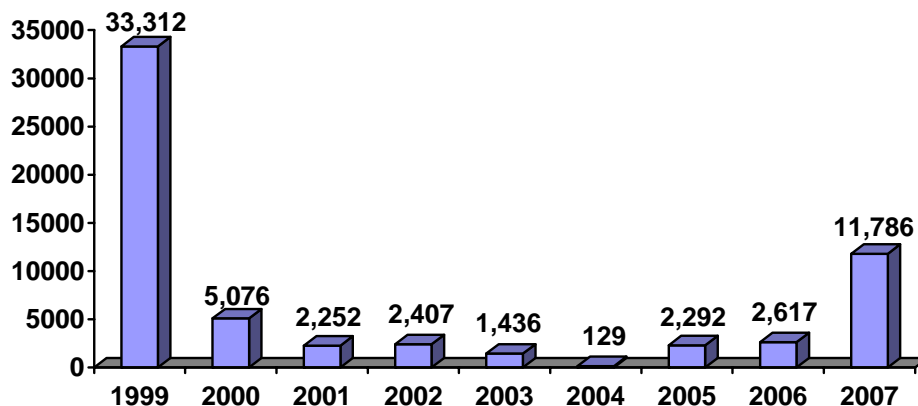
### Background and current situation

Sudan falls within the traditional African "Meningitis belt" which includes 21 of the most vulnerable countries. Recent epidemics occurred in 1988 and 1999. The latest outbreak of meningitis started in southern Sudan in early 2007 and hit 16 states. The current surveillance indicates that northern Sudan also the threshold of a meningitis outbreak. Five northern states, ten southern states, and one Darfur state are among the most affected areas, who have reached their epidemic thresholds.

From 1 January to 8 April 2007 a total of 11,786 meningitis cases and 704 deaths have been reported in southern Sudan. In northern Sudan 775 cases and 43 deaths had been reported as at 17 April 2007. In total, 46 counties in 16 states of Sudan have so far been affected

In response to the high rate of mortality as a result of the epidemic, the Sudanese Red Crescent (SRC) and the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies has combined forces with Partner National Societies (PNSs), national authorities and United Nations (UN) agencies to promote a three-month intervention programme focusing on vaccinations, assistance for treatment in hospitals and health centres, a community education and awareness campaign as well as health education for SRC volunteers.

Graph 1: Total number of meningitis cases in Sudan per year (from 1999 to April 2007)



## The needs

### Immediate needs:

The Sudanese Red Crescent has developed an effective plan of action to respond to the meningitis outbreak as well as agree on priority activities. The National Society, supported by the Federation, has made several contacts with the Ministry of Health (MoH) to assess the needs of the 16 affected states considered to be at high risk. The MoH, together with the World Health Organization (WHO) and United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) are conducting mass vaccination campaigns in all states, targeting the 2 to 30 years old. However, there are shortages of vaccines and antibiotics, as shown in the table below. All concerned partners will be informed if and when additional vaccines are urgently needed.

Table 1: current stock and need of vaccines at MoH

Item	Unit	Available	Needs
Oily Chloramphenicol injection	Ampoule	5,800	15,000
Bivalent vaccine	Dose	242,750	1,500,000
Quadrivalent vaccine	Dose	170,000	500,000

## Red Cross and Red Crescent action

With assistance from SRC volunteers, MoH conducted vaccination campaigns, community mobilization and health education in Kassalla and Algazira states. In addition, the National Society and the International Federation have made joint efforts to discuss the current meningitis outbreak situation in Sudan and establish a joint plan of action.

The Federation allocated CHF 219,497 from its Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF) to support the National Society's effort in mitigating the effects of the current meningitis outbreak and to prevent it from progressing into a much larger epidemic. An immediate and aggressive vaccination, social mobilization and health education campaign has the potential to eliminate another major epidemic year in 2007.

### Coordination

Intensive coordination efforts have occurred with Movement components including SRC and the Federation Delegation in Sudan to liaise with the Movement partners as well as MoH, WHO and Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF) - in southern Sudan - involved in mass vaccination and response operations. The MoH is responsible for the overall coordination of the campaign and response efforts. The National Society is coordinating with the MoH during health education, awareness raising and community mobilization activities to avoid duplication as well as to reach most of the affected areas in Sudan. The Ministry of Health will be responsible for the storage of the vaccine stocks as well as the vaccination exercise, and will comply with the International Coordination Group (ICG) for vaccines.

## **The proposed operation**

The Sudanese Red Crescent, supported by the Federation's Delegation in Sudan, will implement activities in 10 States of Sudan: Khartoum, Al Gezera, Sinnar, Kassala, South Kordofan, Central Equatoria, Western Bahr El Ghazal, Upper Nile, Unity and Lake State.

**Goal: To prevent the meningitis outbreak from progressing into a larger epidemic, and mitigate the effects of the current outbreak covering a potential population of 900,000 people for three months.**

**Objective (Medical supplies): To support the Ministry of Health's response efforts by urgently supplying the required items (vaccines, antibiotics and syringes, among other items).**

### **Planned activity**

- Mobilize 10,000 doses of Oily Chloremphenicol injections and deliver them to the Ministry of Health.

### **Expected result**

- The MoH is supplied with all the required items

**Objective (Health education): To raise the awareness of local communities about meningitis and ways of prevention as well as mobilize them during mass meningitis immunization campaigns in target areas through local SRC volunteers.**

### **Planned activities**

- Conduct 10 sensitization sessions for SRC staff and volunteer leaders on social mobilization and meningitis prevention.
- Conduct 20 training sessions for SRC volunteers on social mobilization and meningitis prevention.
- Mobilize 60 SRC volunteers in each targeted state; each volunteer is expected to reach 300 households with messages on prevention and importance of immunization during the operation.
- Print and distribute 180,000 information, education and communication (IEC) to targeted households.
- Organize two training sessions for SRC response teams on epidemic preparedness and response activities.
- Carry out community surveillance, identification of suspected patients and referral to the nearest health care facility.

### **Expected results**

- Red Cross staff, volunteers and response teams are trained on meningitis preparedness and response.
- 900,000 people are reached through sensitization activities.
- IEC materials are produced and distributed to the target population.
- Meningitis cases in the community/household level are identified and referred to the nearest health care facility within the shortest time possible.

### **Capacity of the National Society**

The Sudanese Red Crescent has a health department at its headquarters in Khartoum, which is headed by the health director. This department is the focal point for emergency health activities. The National Society has approximately 40,000 active volunteers from all over the country and is operational in the country through its 20 branches, which cover 9 out of 10 targeted states where SRC is going to implement emergency health activities to curb the further spread of meningitis. The National Society is considering the possibility of opening a branch in Lake State. The mobilization of volunteers and implementation of the planned activities will contribute to establishing the branch in Lake State and further develop the National Society's operational capacity.

During the drafting of the plan of action to mitigate the effects of the meningitis epidemic, the National society discussed about the commencement of a primary health care (PHC) project that will be supported by the Norwegian and Swedish Red Cross societies.

### **Capacity of the Federation**

In Sudan, the Federation team comprises of a head of delegation, programme coordinator, health coordinator, a sub-delegation in Juba (southern Sudan) and a number of locally recruited staff specialized in health, disaster management, organizational development, logistics and administration. The team is and will continue to offer technical support necessary to curb the spread of the epidemic.

***For further information specifically related to this operation please contact:***

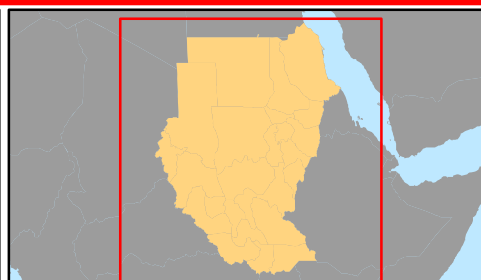
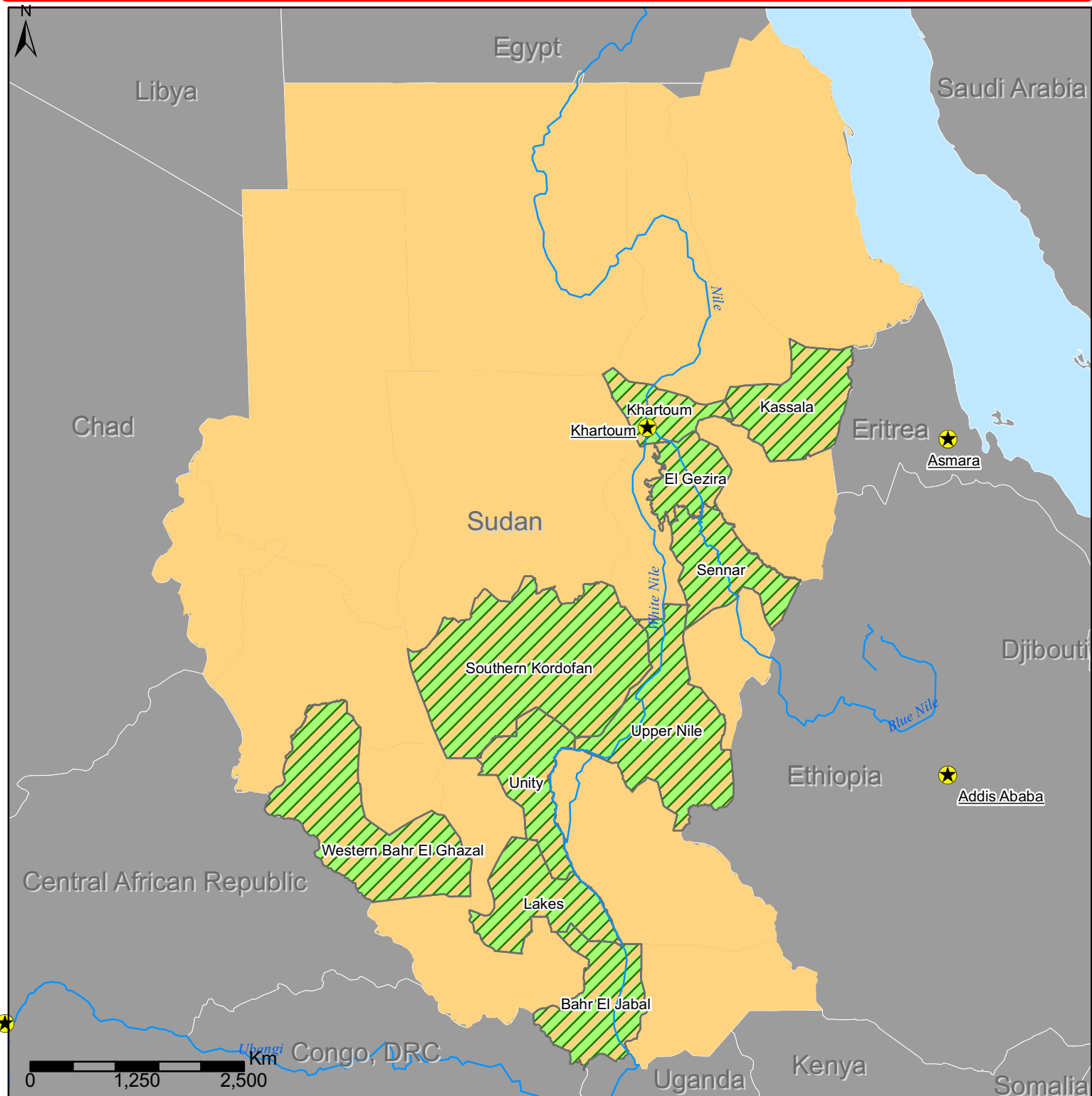
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# Sudan: Meningitis



-  States where activities are planned
-  Capitals

The maps used do not imply the expression of any opinion on the part of the International Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies or National Societies concerning the legal status of a territory or of its authorities.

Map data sources  
ESRI  
GIST  
Federation