

Current major event

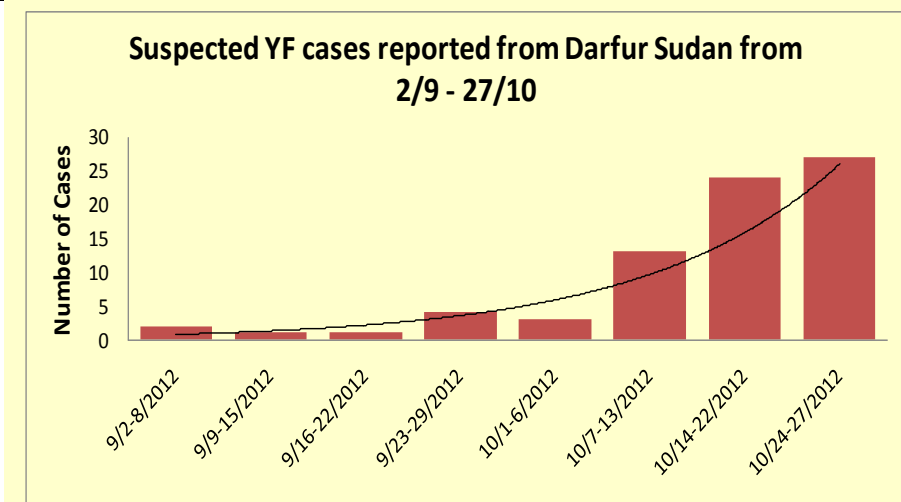
Yellow fever outbreak in Sudan

The Federal Ministry of Health in Sudan has reported an outbreak of suspected yellow fever from nine localities in Central and Southern Darfur states of the Country. A total of 98 suspected cases of YF, including 42 deaths were reported between 2 September to 31 October 2012. Out of 16 samples tested at the Central Public Health Laboratory (CPHL) in Khartoum 3 were positive for yellow fever virus. Some samples have been sent to Institute Pasteur in Dakar, Senegal for further laboratory confirmation. The World Health Organization is supporting the FMoH to respond to this outbreak and to carry out further risk assessments.

Editorial note

The reporting of suspected outbreak of yellow fever in two states of Darfur Region of Sudan at a time when the Country is preparing to introduce routine yellow fever vaccines in their routine expanded programme for immunization underscores the need for urgency at which the planning must move. Since 2002 GAVI has funded YF vaccine stockpile to support routine preventive yellow fever vaccination in countries at high risk of the disease. Sudan has already applied for GAVI support and as a pre-requisite a yellow fever risk assessment is planned for the end of November this year.

According to the World Health Organization, large areas of Sudan extending from Darfur in the West to Kassala in the East are considered high risk areas for yellow fever. In the 1930s yellow fever neutralizing antibodies were found over a wide area of southern Sudan from Juba in the South to as far north as El Fashar. This was confirmed in surveys conducted in the early 1940s and in 1953. Large epidemics of yellow fever occurred in the Nuba Mountains (1940), Southern Kordofan, and in this same region in 2005. If yellow fever virus is



Darfur: Reported YF cases by States

| State | Cases | Deaths | CFR |
|----------------|-------|--------|------|
| South Darfur | 17 | 9 | 52.9 |
| Central Darfur | 84 | 33 | 39.3 |
| West Darfur | 2 | 0 | 0 |

confirmed as the cause of this outbreak, it would be the first outbreak of YF reported from Darfur region. This should not be a surprise. Many countries in Africa have witnessed re-emergence of YF with outbreaks being frequently reported especially in West Africa. Effective YF mass vaccination campaigns done from 1930 to 1960 were successful in eliminating yellow fever as a public health problem. But the risks of sylvatic yellow fever were always there as long as the non-humans reservoirs, vector and ecological factors remained.

Following the confirmation of this outbreak, Sudan plans to conduct mass outbreak response immunization in the affected region, and has applied to ICG for vaccines. This application is currently put on hold pending the result of the confirmation test from the WHO collaborating Centre for arbovirus and viral haemorrhagic fever in Dakar. The samples arrived Dakar on 5 November and it may take some few more days to get the results. In emergency such delays can be costly. There is need to designate more of such reference laboratory.

Update on outbreaks

in the Eastern Mediterranean Region

Suspected YF: in Sudan; **WNV:** in Tunisia; **Hepatitis E:** in South Sudan; **Cholera:** in Iraq; and **CCHF:** in Pakistan;

Current public health events of international concern

[cumulative N° of cases (deaths), CFR %]

Avian influenza

| | |
|--------------|---------------------|
| China | [43(28), 65.1%] |
| Egypt | [168 (60), 35.7%] |
| Indonesia | [190 (158), 83.1 %] |
| Viet Nam | [123(61), 49.5%] |
| Cambodia | [21(19), 90.4%] |
| Bangladesh | [6(0), 0%] |
| Global total | [607(358), 58.9%] |

Suspected Yellow fever

| | |
|-------|-------------------|
| Sudan | [98 (42), 42.9%]# |
|-------|-------------------|

West Nile Virus

| | |
|---------|-----------------|
| Tunisia | [32 (2), 6.3 %] |
|---------|-----------------|

Crimean-congo haemorrhagic fever

| | |
|----------|-------------------|
| Pakistan | [55 (14) 25.4.%]# |
|----------|-------------------|

Cholera

| | |
|------|---------------------|
| Iraq | [3392 (3), 0.08%] # |
|------|---------------------|

Ebola Haemorrhagic Fever

| | |
|-----------|-----------------|
| D.R Congo | [77(36), 46.8%] |
|-----------|-----------------|

CFR=Case-Fatality Rate; # Suspected cases