

The Republic of South Sudan



Ministry of Health *Office of the Undersecretary*

**Press Release by Dr. Makur Matur Kariom
Undersecretary
Ministry of Health – Republic of South Sudan**

The Ministry of Health announces 7 months without a confirmed case of Guinea Worm Disease and announces the cash reward for reported Guinea worm cases in South Sudan.

In 2006, the Ministry of Health's South Sudan Guinea Worm Eradication Programme began with the daunting task of developing a community-based surveillance system capable of detecting all Guinea worm cases and delivering interventions to break Guinea worm transmission. At the time, there were 20,581 reported cases of Guinea worm disease and in 2014 only 70 cases were reported, marking a 99% reduction.

I am pleased to announce, in 2015, through May, there were 0 confirmed cases of Guinea worm disease. The last confirmed case of Guinea worm was reported in October 2014. *Therefore, the Ministry of Health is proud to announce that South Sudan has gone 7 months without a confirmed case of Guinea Worm Disease! This is a remarkable accomplishment!* We would like to congratulate all the village volunteers, health workers and communities that have made this possible.

However, the task is not yet complete. Until there are zero cases of Guinea worm throughout South Sudan and the country is certified Guinea worm free, the government, the programme, and the communities will need to work tirelessly to detect and contain every case of Guinea worm. South Sudan's endemic and at-risk counties in the last two endemic states, Eastern Equatoria and Lakes, continue to receive strengthened surveillance and intervention delivery activities.

In non-endemic areas, surveillance activities are conducted through the Integrated Disease Surveillance and Response system (IDSR) and through other health networks in areas where facilities are not available. However, the surveillance does not stop there and the final push must be helped by all people; every organisation, health facility, church, mosque, business, and school throughout South Sudan.

In order to ensure that every rumor is investigated, every suspect is treated, and every case is contained throughout the country, the programme offers a SSP 500 reward for any individual reporting to a health facility or health worker with a case of Guinea worm disease. The person who reports the case receives SSP 100 for encouraging the person to go to the health facility and for providing information about the case.

Eradication of this painful scourge is within our reach. The Government remains committed at all levels and appreciates the continued support of The Carter Center, The World Health Organization, UNICEF, Rotary Club, among many others.

Let us work together in the final push to eliminate Guinea worm disease in South Sudan.



Headquarters, Ministerial Complex, Juba, South Sudan, P.O. Box 88, Juba.

Tel: +211 (0) 177 800 281 / +211 (0) 177 800 278