



Two years after carrying out a similar visit to Alexandria, Egypt, in February 2005, Dr Gezairy, the Regional Director for the Eastern Mediterranean Region, visited sites implementing the IMCI strategy in Khartoum, Sudan, from 24 to 26 February 2007. Sites included Khartoum University and urban [Integrated Management of Child Health \(IMCI\)](#) implementing the strategy in urban and rural health facilities. Dr Gezairy also met with H.E. the President of the Republic of Sudan, H.E. the Federal Minister of Health, the Chancellor of Khartoum University and other senior health officials. This visit emphasizes the priority accorded to child health by the Regional Office and support to the IMCI strategy, which is recognized as the primary child health care strategy to improve child health in the Region.



After meeting with the Chancellor of the University of Khartoum and the Dean of the Faculty of Medicine, Dr Gezairy visited the Paediatric Department, where he observed an ongoing IMCI teaching session with students and discussed with both senior teaching staff and students about their attitudes towards the new teaching approach. Both the teaching methodology and the holistic syndromic approach brought by IMCI were highly appreciated, as was the emphasis on a more public health and community-oriented teaching. Dr Gezairy stressed the added value of IMCI, an "integrated" primary health care approach which had anticipated the current emphasis on "integrated primary health care". The Regional Director underlined the importance of highlighting prevention in medical teaching programmes in addition to clinical care—this requiring proper orientation of teaching staff—, accrediting medical schools—based on evaluation and their community-oriented approach— and expanding the IMCI pre-service training initiative from the existing 7 medical schools to the remaining 16 in Sudan. Finally, Dr Gezairy recalled the historical background of collaboration between WHO and the University of Khartoum, observing that IMCI had opened new doors to such collaboration.



Key messages from the visit: The visit was successful in identifying the key challenges and opportunities for IMCI implementation in Sudan. The visit was also a good opportunity to share experiences and lessons learned from other countries.