

East Sudan is home to more than 4.5 million people facing poverty, drought, famine and lack of adequate access to services including health. This situation has been worsened by the influx of populations from the neighbouring countries of Ethiopia and Eritrea.

The region has three states: Kassala, Red Sea and Gedaref.

The region has been coping with the devastating consequences of conflict in the recent past. By the end of 2011, some 68 000 internally displaced persons (IDPs) lived in different parts of East Sudan. Some areas have had limited access because of land mines and unexploded ordnances, particularly the localities of Telkuk and Hameshkoreb.

Moreover, recent years have seen natural disasters such as flooding and drought.

East Sudan has also been affected by outbreaks of communicable diseases. Surveillance reports showed a disproportionate burden of communicable diseases, with malaria accounting for 15% of outpatient consultations in 2011.

Cross-border population movements, and large numbers of migrant workers, contributes to the spread of communicable diseases. The influx of refugees from neighboring countries (around 2000 per month) causes an added burden.

Despite the ongoing efforts of the State Ministry of Health and partners to build the health delivery system, including the emergency preparedness and response capacity of the region, existing capacity is not sufficient given the magnitude of the problems.

In 2011, access to health care and utilization of available health services was low in East Sudan. Emergency obstetric care was only available in 63% of hospitals and the rate for facility delivery was only 16%.

□□□□ In photos: WHO's interventions in East Sudan

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Tuesday 23rd of April 2024 10:36:53 PM