



Samples being processed at the Public Health Laboratory in Port Sudan, September 2023

18 September 2023 – On 27 August 2023, WHO handed over to the Federal Ministry of Health critically needed equipment and supplies to upgrade the Public Health Laboratory in Port Sudan to National Public Health Laboratory (NPHL) status in place of the NPHL in Khartoum, which has been out of service since April 2023 due to the conflict in Sudan. The functions of the laboratory are critically needed for public health emergency preparedness and response, particularly during the rainy season when there is heightened risk of floods and disease outbreaks.

The supplies included freezers with -20 °C freezing capacity, RT-PCR kits, rapid diagnostic test kits and transport media, as well as extendable support for operational cost, including fuel for

power supply generators.

“WHO is fully committed to providing unwavering support to the Public Health Laboratory to ensure that Sudan has the capacity to prepare for and respond to epidemic-prone diseases,” Dr Nima Saeed Abid, WHO Representative in Sudan, said. “Public health laboratories are a cornerstone of health emergencies alert and response mechanisms and we are dedicated to furnishing them with equipment, machinery and supplies, and to capacitating staff with the required skills.”

The National Public Health Laboratory of Sudan, located in Khartoum, has not been providing its vital functions since April 2023 due to military occupation preventing access to the facilities. Sudan’s health authorities worked with WHO and health partners to upgrade laboratories in safer locations like Red Sea and Gezira states to provide public health laboratory functions. In the months since the conflict broke out in Sudan, the Public Health Laboratory in Port Sudan, Red Sea State, has been providing key diagnostic and detection services to confirm samples of suspected measles and rubella cases transported to Port Sudan from different states. The equipment and supplies provided to the laboratory will ensure that services will be scaled up for timely detection and response to disease outbreaks, particularly during the high-risk rainy season.

Additional equipment and supplies are in the pipeline, and staff capacity-building training is planned for National Public Health Laboratory staff in Port Sudan and the public health laboratory in Gazira.

The equipment and supplies were procured with the financial support of the European Union Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations (ECHO), USAID Bureau of Humanitarian Assistance (BHA), the Government of Germany, Government of Japan, and Kuwait.

WHO remains committed to continue providing technical support and capacity-building, as well as delivering critically needed supplies to rebuild the health system and protect the health of the people of Sudan.

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