Clarification on Yellow Fever Cases in South Sudan

The World Health Organization would like to provide clarifications on a publication on its website on 10 April 2020 concerning a yellow fever cases in South Sudan.

Following the declaration of a yellow fever outbreak in Moyo district, Uganda which borders Kajo-Keji in early 2020, the Ministry of Health rapid response team with support from WHO participated in a cross-border rapid response team investigation in Kajo-Keji between 12 to 18 February 2020.

Two suspected yellow fever cases were identified in Kajo-Keji in the course of the investigation. The initial tests conducted at the National Public Health Laboratory in Juba tuned out negative. However, further tests which were conducted in the regional centre for yellow fever diagnosis in Uganda confirmed Yellow fever in the two cases which suggests ongoing transmission of yellow fever in the area as at the time the samples were taken.

The necessary guidance and recommendations will be made to the Ministry of Health for appropriate action. WHO would like to reiterate that the declaration of an outbreak is the prerogative of the Government of the Republic of South Sudan and not WHO.

Yellow fever is an acute viral hemorrhagic disease, transmitted via bites of infected mosquitoes, that has caused large epidemics in the yellow fever belt in Africa and the Americas. The symptoms of yellow fever include fever, headache, jaundice, muscle pain, nausea, vomiting and fatigue. The "yellow" in the name refers to the jaundice that affects some patients. Although an effective vaccine has been available for 60 years, the disease is still a serious public health threat.

South Sudan last experienced a yellow fever outbreak in November 2018, in Sakure Payam in Western Equatoria Region.

For more information please contact:
Dr Wamala Joseph, +211923362401, wamalaj@who.int
Ms Jemila M. Ebrahim, +211 921 647 859, ebrahimj@who.int