



## **AFRICA/SOUTH SUDAN - Emergency cases of measles complicated in addition to 1,500 of malaria**

Yirol (Agenzia Fides) - The risk of the spread of the measles epidemic recorded in the county of Yirol West, in South Sudan (see Fides 01/07/2013) continues. After the appeal launched by the NGO Doctors with Africa Cuamm, last month the South Sudanese Ministry of Health agreed to coordinate, in collaboration with WHO and UNICEF, a vaccination campaign extended to all 25,538 children of the 7 Payam of the county, aged between 6 months and 5 years of age. The initiative was launched with the logistical and technical support of Cuamm which, together with local authorities, is coordinating the activities in the area. So far, a major difficulty concerns the condition of the roads, which hinders and slows down the reaching of very large areas and sparsely populated areas. The county of Yirol West, which has about 135,000 inhabitants, has at present a County hospital and a network of health centers. Among them, the only structure with a cold chain for vaccines is the hospital, where since the beginning of 2013 there have been over 200 cases of measles: 83% are children under 5 years of age, while 22% are not even a year old. Pending completion of mass vaccinations in 7 Payam, the basic units of the county and health authorities are committed to minimizing the severe complications of measles associated with malaria, expected in these months after the start of the rainy season. In this period the infection, which is spread by air, tends to spread more rapidly among people forced to spend many hours inside huts. Quick action is needed because in the next 3 months there will be 250 cases of measles, in addition to the 1,500 cases of malaria expected in the hospital in Yirol. (AP) (Agenzia Fides 06/08/2013)