

Contaminated water kills 20 in Kano

No fewer than 20 people, mostly children, died after taking contaminated water in Rikadawa village in Madobi local government area of Kano State. Gunza river is the source of water for the village.

When our reporter visited the village yesterday, many relatives of the victims narrated the agony they suffered as a result of the incident.

Malam Sale Rikadawa said he lost two of his daughters in the incident. "I was devastated with the outbreak, but I take it as a

Hassan A Karofi, Kano

destiny and glorify God for his mercies," he said.

The representative of the village head Alhaji Yusufu Ibrahim Rikadawa, said the incident occurred after all the three boreholes in the community broke down.

He said the community were forced to reverse to sourcing water from the Kunza river which led to outbreak of gastroenteritis in the village.

"Yes, it is true that we have lost over 20 people mostly children from the outbreak, the situation worsened as a result of absence of a befitting health centre in the community," he said.

He said the local government gave a helping hand immediately after the outbreak by mobilising for the repairs of one of the boreholes in the community, saying the effort helped in arresting the situation. He said the community made several appeals to the council for six months after the breakdown of the boreholes without any response.

But council chairman Alhaji Ibrahim Muazzam Madobi denied knowledge of any outbreak, saying that if the council is aware of such incident it would take measures to arrest the situation. He then asked communities to always report breakdown of boreholes to the council in good time so as to prevent any incident that could occur.

When our reporter visited the community's health centre, it was deserted as only one nurse is said to be deployed to the clinic. And when our reporter called at the state ministry of health, the commissioner, Hajiya Aisha Kiru, was said to be in Abuja for an official engagement.

Last month four people died in Kano metropolis as a result of gastroenteritis. She said this was as a result of poor eating habit and that 115 mostly children were then affected by the incident.

80% blindness in Sokoto

Sight Savers International, brought relief to the people of the state and beyond in preventable and curative eye cure services.

The former president, who was represented by the Director of Personnel at the Usmanu Danfodio University Teaching Hospital, Sokoto (UDUTH) Malam Bala Hassan, also said that with the support of the Sight Savers International, the state government treated more than 1,005 cataract patients while about 1,507 trachoma patients have also been successfully operated upon in 2006.

He said in 2007, 870 cataract patients and 3,090 trachoma patients were operated upon,

and that between 2005 when the programme began and now a total of 220,700 patients have been treated out of which 6,674 have been successfully operated upon.

In his address, the state commissioner of health, Alhaji Mohammed Jabi Kilgori said the state government was committed to the eradication of all eye problems in the state and this could be seen in the area of water supply which has tremendously improved, the approval of a new salary structure for health workers and the desire to make health care affordable to all within the shortest time possible.