NAMIBIA: POLIO OUTBREAK

The Federation's mission is to improve the lives of vulnerable people by mobilizing the power of humanity. It is the world's largest humanitarian organization and its millions of volunteers are active in over 183 countries.

In Brief

This DREF Bulletin is being issued based on the situation described below reflecting the information available at this time. CHF 55,247 (USD 45,609 or EUR 35,437) has been allocated from the Federation's Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF) to support the Namibia Red Cross in responding to the needs in this operation. This operation is expected to be implemented over 2 months, and will be completed by 31 August 2006. Further updates will be issued as the Operation evolves. Unearmarked funds to repay DREF are encouraged.

<Click here to go to the attached map>

This operation is aligned with the International Federation's Global Agenda, which sets out four broad goals to meet the Federation's mission to "improve the lives of vulnerable people by mobilizing the power of humanity".

Global Agenda Goals:

- Reduce the numbers of deaths, injuries and impact from disasters.
- Reduce the number of deaths, illnesses and impact from diseases and public health emergencies.
- Increase local community, civil society and Red Cross Red Crescent capacity to address the most urgent situations of vulnerability.
- Reduce intolerance, discrimination and social exclusion and promote respect for diversity and human dignity.

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All International Federation assistance seeks to adhere to the Code of Conduct for the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and Non-Governmental Organizations (NGO's) in Disaster Relief and is committed to the Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Disaster Response (Sphere) in delivering assistance to the most vulnerable.

For longer-term programmes in this or other countries or regions, please refer to the Federation’s Annual Appeal. For support to or for further information concerning Federation programmes or operations in this or other countries, or for national society profiles, please also access the Federation’s website at http://www.ifrc.org

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1 Namibia Red Cross- refer to http://www.ifrc.org/where/country/check.asp?countryid=122
**Background and current situation**

On 2 June 2006, the Namibian Ministry of Health and Social Services reported an outbreak of polio which has affected a total of 39 people to date, of which eight have died. The Ministry of Health and Social Services and the World Health Organization (WHO) identified the causative organism as the poliovirus 1 wild type. Namibia has been polio-free since 2001 but media reports indicate that the country was re-infected with a virus from India in 2005. The first case this year was reported from Aranos District, Hardap region. A quick survey was conducted by health personnel in the Okuryangava and Okahandja Park. It was discovered that the outbreak is mainly affecting adults. One Ward (A5) at Katutura State Hospital is currently being used to nurse the infected patients.

**Table 1: Reported cases in Namibia**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Cases</th>
<th>Deaths</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Oshikoco</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Otjzondjupa</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hardap</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Khomas</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Totals</strong></td>
<td><strong>39</strong></td>
<td><strong>8</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As a result of the outbreak, the Ministry of Health (MoH) and Social Services is conducting a precautionary polio immunization campaign aimed at children aged under five years. Mothers are being encouraged to take their children within this age group to state hospitals and clinics. A total of 14,000 children have already been immunized against polio. Three tranches of polio campaigns have been planned for June, July and August. The first polio vaccination campaign will start on 21 to 23 June; the second one will be on 18 to 20 July and the third on 22 to 24 August 2006. The first two campaigns will focus on all age groups while the last will target children under five and will include measles and vitamin A supplements.

**Red Cross and Red Crescent action**

From the onset of the outbreak, the Namibia Red Cross (NRC) has been participating in coordination meetings with the MoH in monitoring the situation. The national society has provided 30 volunteers to the MoH and Social Services to assist with administering the polio immunization. Volunteers are mobilizing communities by disseminating information on the disease and on how to identify signs and symptoms so as to seek early treatment. NRC has also assigned two vehicles, with drivers, to the MoH and Social Services to assist in responding to the outbreak. The Federation regional delegation in Harare has seconded an officer to provide technical support during the first tranche of National Immunization Days (NIDs), which starts on the 21 June 2006.

**The needs**

In consultation with the MoH, the NRC identified the following needs:

- **Transport**– to assist with nationwide immunization campaign;
- **Human resources**– to undertake activities during the campaign period and to offer curative services to the infected;
- **Finance**– to cater for fuel costs as well as food.

**Proposed Red Cross action**

To effectively provide assistance in this outbreak, the NRC has planned the following activities:

- **To mobilize and train 136 volunteers who will participate in social mobilization activities.** Social mobilization volunteers will use the toolkit from MoH and will also identify and refer people with signs and symptoms of polio to the treatment centres.
- **To provide and train a further 272 volunteers who will participate in the immunization campaign.** Volunteers have been involved in immunization campaigns in the past.
- **To provide 14 vehicles, including fuel, for use by the volunteers in the six provinces during the three rounds of immunization campaigns.** The vehicles will also be used to assist the government in the immunization campaign.
Coordination
The MoH and WHO are responding to this polio outbreak. The MoH is providing curative services to the infected while the Namibia Red Cross will provide volunteers for the campaign. NRC also attends all coordination and planning meetings.

Budget outline
See below

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item (s)</th>
<th>No. of units</th>
<th>Unit price</th>
<th>No. of days</th>
<th>Total cost (NAD)</th>
<th>Total cost (CHF)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Immunization</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fuel- cars</td>
<td>14 vehicles</td>
<td>500</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>63,000</td>
<td>9,692</td>
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<td>Volunteers and staff allowances</td>
<td>272</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>73,440</td>
<td>11,298</td>
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<td>Social mobilization</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Fuel</td>
<td>6 provinces</td>
<td>3,000</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>162,000</td>
<td>24,923</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>Sub-total</td>
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<td>335,160</td>
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<td>PSR (6.5%)</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>3,584</td>
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<td>Grand total</td>
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<td><strong>55,247</strong></td>
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The maps used do not imply the expression of any opinion on the part of the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies or National Societies concerning the legal status of a territory or of its authorities.

Map data sources: ESRI, Federation, SALB