



SEYCHELLES: CHIKUNGUNYA EPIDEMIC

**MDRSC001
10 March 2006**

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

CHF 35,518 (USD 26,887 OR EUR 22,695) HAS BEEN ALLOCATED FROM THE FEDERATION'S DISASTER RELIEF EMERGENCY FUND (DREF) TO PURCHASE EQUIPMENT AND REPELLENTS FOR VECTOR CONTROL RESPONSE FOR 4 MONTHS.

UNEARMARKED FUNDS TO REPAY DREF ARE ENCOURAGED.

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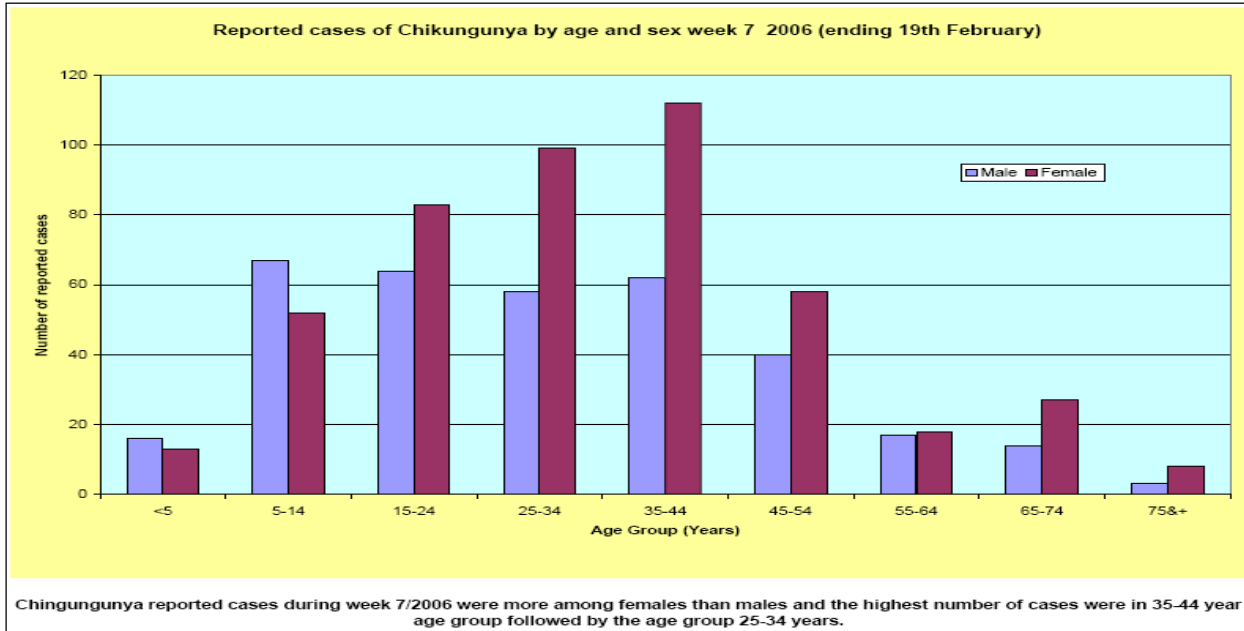
All International Federation assistance seeks to adhere to the Code of Conduct for the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and Non-Governmental Organizations (NGO's) in Disaster Relief and is committed to the Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Disaster Response (Sphere) in delivering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

The situation

Since the beginning of January 2006, the Indian Ocean Islands of Mayotte, Mauritius and the Seychelles have reported 924, 2,553 and 5,461 cases of Chikungunya¹ respectively. Estimations from a World Health Organization (WHO) mathematical model indicate that up to 157,000 people may have been affected by the Chikungunya virus in La Réunion since March 2005, including 22,000 people during the week of 13 to 19 February 2006. Preliminary conclusions from the ongoing Chikungunya epidemic in La Réunion Island revealed, for the first time, a mother-to-child transmission of the virus, and a direct cause of mortality in 5 out of 53 cases. In Seychelles, the most affected are women between the ages of 15 and 54 years, as shown in the graph below.

Figure 1: Reported cases of Chikungunya in Seychelles by age and gender (Source: Ministry of Health)



Red Cross and Red Crescent action taken so far

The Seychelles Red Cross Society is a member of the national Chikungunya task force, established by the Government. This task force met to define the strategies for intervention and the roles and responsibilities of each member of the task force. The Seychelles Red Cross intervention is being supported by the Federation in addition to two sister national societies, French Red Cross's Regional Platform for Intervention in the Indian Ocean Islands (PIROI) and the German Red Cross.

The following four strategic interventions were recommended by the task force:

- Vector control through destruction of larva using appropriate insecticides and larvicides, and social mobilisation of communities to clean up the environment;
- Reduction of exposure to mosquito bites through the use of appropriate mosquito repellents, wearing long-sleeved shirts and long trousers, and the use of mosquito nets;
- Information on the Chikungunya epidemic prevention and control to the communities in the most affected areas, focusing on the most vulnerable groups;
- Management of suspected cases through early detection and referral to the nearest health centre.

¹ Chikungunya is a viral disease transmitted to humans by the bite of infected mosquitoes (mosquito-borne), usually *Aedes aegypti*—a day-biting mosquito. Symptoms of chikungunya include sudden onset of fever, chills, headache, nausea, vomiting, joint pain, and rash. It typically is not fatal- http://www.cdc.gov/travel/other/2006/chikungunya_mosquito.htm

Pathogenicity: Self limiting febrile viral disease; characterized by arthralgia or arthritis typically in the knee, ankle and small joints of the extremities, high fever, followed by a maculopapular rash; buccal and palatal enanthema can occur; nausea and vomiting may occur; mild haemorrhaging may be present especially in children; unapparent infections are common, immunity is long lasting- http://www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/new_e.html

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Epidemiological and vectoral surveillance is also being reinforced as part of the Chikungunya epidemic prevention and control activities.

The needs

The Seychelles Red Cross Society has taken into account the existing data and information, and has focused its emergency response (including communication strategy and advocacy activities) accordingly. The national society's volunteers are participating in spraying activities in collaboration with other task force members, providing half of the required work force. They are also engaged in door-to-door visits (community mobilization and sensitization) to create awareness and are involved in the distribution of mosquito repellents.

The operation

Objective: To contribute towards the reduction of the Chikungunya epidemic in Seychelles.

Expected results:

- Vector control interventions (spraying) have been implemented in Seychelles leading to a reduction of breeding grounds for insects and larvae, and consequently the population of insects.
- Incidence of Chikungunya in Seychelles and surrounding islands is reduced as vulnerable groups are protected against mosquito bites.

Activities to attain the objective:

- Mobilization and deployment of volunteers in vector control activities, including spraying;
- Distribution of mosquito repellents to pregnant women, older people and low income groups engaged in outdoor employment;
- Conducting social mobilization and sensitization to communities on the Chikungunya epidemic.
- Conducting information campaigns through radio spots and leaflets.

Coordination

The Seychelles Red Cross Society is a member of the national Chikungunya task force set up by the Seychelles government, through the Ministry of Health. As a member of the task force, the national society is responsible for conducting assessments, door-to-door visits, spraying and environmental health activities, while the local government is cleaning up open sites which have been used to dump garbage.

The regional delegation in Nairobi facilitated the successful application to the Federation's Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF) for an allocation of CHF 35,518 to enable the Seychelles Red Cross Society conduct its emergency response. The delegation also continues to play the lead and coordination role in the response operation which is being conducted alongside the government, the French Red Cross and the German Red Cross. The regional delegation's disaster management department is providing technical support to the national societies, mainly through provision of technical documentation and information.

The French Red Cross has donated 2,000 mosquito nets and funds to produce flyers and posters. The German Red Cross is supporting an information campaign through leaflets and media communication through local radio stations.

Budget outline

259 units of complete protective clothes	27,454
700 units of mosquito repellents	8,064
Total (in CHF)	35,518

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