

INFORMATION BULLETIN



International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies
Fédération Internationale des Sociétés de la Croix-Rouge et du Croissant-Rouge
Federación Internacional de Sociedades de la Cruz Roja y de la Media Luna Roja
الاتحاد الدولي لجمعيات الصليب الأحمر والهلال الأحمر

NIGERIA: FLOODING IN KADUNA AND NORTHERN STATES; CHOLERA CONTROL OPERATIONS

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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 180 countries.

For more information: www.ifrc.org

In Brief

This document is being issued for information only. The Federation is not seeking any funding or other assistance from donors for this operation at this time.

The situation

Since 10 September 2003, the Nigerian Red Cross Society (NRCS) has been leading the community mobilization response and awareness campaign to prevent further suffering from a suspected cholera outbreak. So far, an estimated 3,295 people have been affected with 42 deaths recorded in the remote location of Talata Mafara, Zamfara State, North West Nigeria. The NRCS with Federation support, has been responding to this outbreak and the situation has improved significantly within this reporting period.

Operational developments

Following the recent cholera outbreak in Zamfara state, Northern Nigeria, the Nigerian Red Cross Society immediately responded by providing assistance in assessment and information dissemination. It mobilized trained volunteers in sensitisation and awareness raising campaigns. As the situation deteriorated, it activated a plan of action for further volunteer recruitment, training and mobilisation. The NRCS launched an appeal to the Federation for supply of a cholera kit, which arrived 20 September. These items complimented efforts of local medical centres with hygiene supplies and Oral Rehydration Salts (ORS) distribution within the communities. There is a close monitoring of the situation to ensure the most effective response.

Red Cross and Red Crescent action

Overall objective: To meet the humanitarian needs of the most vulnerable through contribution to the control of the suspected cholera outbreak.

Objective 1: Strengthen response and control activities to assist in minimizing the effects of the outbreak.

Progress/Achievements

- Deployment of an experienced Zonal Health Officer to lead the response at local level and follow up on the Federation-supported plan of action.
- Advocacy, liaison and support to the local authorities.
- Supporting the Ministry of Health referral medical centres with medical items from the cholera kit.
- Supporting victims with transportation and referral to the medical centres for further assistance.
- Distribution of basic hygiene items and ORS to the most vulnerable in affected communities.
- Monitoring of the distribution by the Zonal and Branch Health Officers with local authorities' support.
- Regular situational reports to the Headquarters for further analysis and response.

Impact

Following an increase in activities, the table below demonstrates the number of new cases has reduced significantly with no reported cases in some areas. Case management has also improved. Local authorities and affected communities have appreciated the efforts of the NRCS to alleviate the suffering..

Table 1. Reports of cases and deaths by week

Week reported	Period reported	Number of new cases	Number of deaths	Total number of cases	Total number of deaths
Week 1	10-16.09.03	321	16	321	16
Week 2	17-23.09.03	2,568	19	2,889	35
Week 3	24- 30.09.03	209	0	3,098	35
Week 4	01- 07.10.03	164	7	3,262	42
Week 5	08-15.10.03	91	6	3,386	48

Constraints:

- The area is isolated (200 km from the Red Cross branch) with limited access to radio and other communication facilities.
- Heavy rains initially compounded the access and poor communications with the area.

Objective 2: Raise awareness and sensitise people regarding the situation through the NRCS volunteer base.

Progress/Achievements

- Increased volunteer capacity through rapid recruitment of more than 70 Red Cross volunteers.
- Training of more than 100 volunteers in two sessions and daily Zonal Health Officer support.
- Mobilisation of volunteers and local health workers in mass sensitisation and active case surveillance in high-risk areas and unaffected neighbourhoods.
- Use of culturally-sensitive leaflets reproduced in Hausa and English and using megaphone in transmitting messages.

Impact:

Over 100 rapidly trained volunteers actively responded to this situation. The volunteers are working hard to increase awareness and reach remote communities. The situation is now reported to be under control.

Constraints:

Recruitment of volunteers to ensure gender and cultural sensitivity was an initial challenge which the NRCS overcame.

Federation coordination:

The NRCS with the Regional Office contacted the local UN Offices for support. UNICEF supplied ORS. The ICRC has offered logistic and communications support while the Federation through the Regional Office are providing technical support. Reporting systems have been established in an effort to monitor and respond most effectively to the situation.

Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement -- Principles and initiatives

All through the response, the NRCS has ensured its activities adhere to the fundamental principles of the Movement and meet the needs of the most vulnerable. During selection of more volunteers, gender sensitivity was considered and an appropriate balance ensured. The organisation of the volunteer management is in line with ARCHI 2010.

National Society Capacity Building:

- Training of volunteers in Red Cross principles, cholera management and control and social mobilisation techniques.
- Sensitizing and creating awareness among branches at a Governance meeting in which representatives from all 37 NRCS were present. The information was also shared with Zonal Health and Disaster Preparedness Officers to ensure volunteer preparedness and effective response.
- Strengthening information reporting and response with support from Federation Health Delegate in the sub-region.

Communications – Advocacy and Public Information:

The Societies have continued to work with local authorities in advocating and supporting the response to this outbreak.

Future plan:

The current plan of action is to be implemented until 15 October and will be revised if necessary.

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All International Federation assistance seeks to adhere to the Code of Conduct and is committed to the Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Disaster Response (SPHERE Project) in delivering assistance to the most vulnerable.

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