

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

GUINEA: CHOLERA

17 August 2004

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 181 countries.

In Brief

This Information Bulletin (no. 1/2004) is being issued for information only. The Federation is not seeking funding or other assistance from donors for this operation at this time.

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All International Federation assistance seeks to adhere to the Code of Conduct¹ and is committed to the Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Disaster Response² in delivering assistance to the most vulnerable. For support to or for further information concerning Federation programmes or operations in this or other countries, or for a full description of the national society profile, please access the Federation's website at <http://www.ifrc.org>

The Situation

On 11 August 2004, the Ministry of Health of Guinea has declared cholera epidemic in the country. Cases of cholera have been reported in different places since June, and with its persistence, there is fear of an outbreak of the epidemic before the end of the rainy season. According to information from the Ministry of Health, 154 cases of cholera resulting into 19 deaths were recorded on 3 August. The situation has since aggravated; on 10 August, 224 cases were recorded with 27 deaths giving a mortality rate of 12.5%.

Zones	Cases	Deaths	Mortality rate (%)
Kindia	84	10	11.9
Boffa	45	6	13.3
Coyah	15	2	13.3
Conakry	10	1	10.0
Total	154	19	12.3

Source: Ministry of Health; Statistics for 3 August 2004

¹ Code of Conduct - <http://www.ifrc.org/publicat/conduct/code.asp>

² Humanitarian Charter - <http://www.sphereproject.org/>

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Previous cases of cholera epidemic date as far back as 1970. Other outbreaks followed in 1978, 1986, 1994, 1995 and 1998. It has been observed that the disease occurred especially during rainy seasons. The numbers of victims during these years total up to 72,359 cases with 2,254 deaths; the mortality rate ranges between 0.38% and 18%. Between 2002 and 2003, 1,361 cases were recorded with 142 deaths.

Red Cross and Red Crescent action

The Red Cross Society of Guinea³ began sanitation campaigns with their own resources as soon as the first signs of the epidemic were observed. It immediately alerted the eight concerned committees: five in Conakry and three in Coyah, Kindia and Boffa). Twenty-four volunteers started door-to-door social mobilization activities to sensitize the communities for a coordinated fight against the epidemic. They cleaned six market places and disinfected 24 latrines as well as 17 homes of cholera victims in an area called Natoto. The volunteers are also sensitizing the community about other epidemic diseases.

Coordination

The Ministry of Health organized a round table discussion with its partners during which it officially declared the cholera epidemic in Guinea. The objective of this meeting was to make adequate preparations for an effective response against the disease. The partners also decided to increase epidemiological surveillance and mobilisation of resources in view of pre-positioning of medicines and mobilisation of the population to fight against the epidemic. The Ministry of Health held another coordination meeting with its partners on 12 August to plan for a concerted response.

For longer-term programmes, please refer to the Federation's Annual Appeals:

- Guinea Annual Appeal 01.24/2004⁴
- Mano River sub-regional programmes Annual Appeal 01.27/2004⁵

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³ Red Cross Society of Guinea - <http://www.ifrc.org/where/country/check.asp?countryid=77>

⁴ Guinea Annual Appeal - http://www.ifrc.org/cgi/pdf_appeals.pl?annual04/012404.pdf

⁵ Mano River Annual Appeal - http://www.ifrc.org/cgi/pdf_appeals.pl?annual04/012704.pdf