

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

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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 181 countries.

In Brief

This Information Bulletin (no. 2/2004) 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 Conduct 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

Due to a 3 August report indicating 154 cases of cholera, with 19 deaths, the Government of Guinea declared a cholera epidemic on 11 August. Following this declaration, the government monitored the situation; according to data through 10 August 2004, the number of cases rose to 224 with 27 deaths, a mortality rate of 12.5%. Only one new case was reported in Boffa since the last evaluation by the Ministry of Health. The combined cases of cholera in Guinea as of 18 August 2004 totals to 288 cases; see table below.

Zones	Cases	Deaths	Mortality rate (%)
Kindia	124	11	8.9
Boffa	46	6	13.0
Coyah	43	7	16.3
Conakry	75	7	9.3
Total	288	31	10.8

Source: Ministry of Health; Statistics for 18 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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Since the national crisis committee was put in place, the cholera situation in Guinea has been brought under control by the Ministry of Health leading to diminishing number of cases from week 33 (9 to 14 August 2004). The mortality rate dropped from 12.3% to 10.7% by week 34 as a result of the joint efforts of the government and its partners. The epidemic situation is less alarming at the moment; however, there is a pervasive risk that the disease will spread again. This is due primarily to the effects of the current rainy season, which will continue until the end of October. To prevent a further spread of the disease, increased community awareness and environmental sanitation activities are needed.

In Kindia, the disease is attributed mainly to the absence of potable water supply. In Conakry, it is believed that the most likely causes of the epidemic are the lack of hygienic environmental conditions and road construction works within the town.

As well, Sierra Leone has equally declared a cholera epidemic 19 August 2004; this is attributed to the cholera cases in Kambia, a border town with Guinea.

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.

- The national society participated in different meetings of the disaster response committee of the Ministry of Health.
- The Red Cross committees of Conakry are also carrying out on-going awareness campaigns and sanitation of public places (markets, car parks, public latrines).
- The Red Cross municipal committee of Matoto has currently assigned 24 volunteers to create awareness in the community and to handle the cleaning of six markets and public latrines there.
- The health agents assisted by the Mobile Health team of Matoto disinfected the shelters for the sick.
- Ten volunteers also support the teams working in the center for the treatment of cholera patients at Donka in Conakry.

As part of its regional cooperation, the Sierra Leone Red Cross Society, in conjunction with the Federation, gave two cholera kits to the Red Cross of Guinea to boost its efforts in fighting the epidemic. There was an official presentation of the medical kits to the Ministry of Health during the disaster response committee meeting held on 19 August 2004. In addition, the Federation Mano River sub-regional office in Abidjan assisted the Red Cross of Guinea technically in carrying out a field assessment of the epidemic situation from 17 to 21 August 2004; the assessment report is available from the sub-regional office upon request. To ensure that its task is fully implemented, the Red Cross of Guinea also intends to increase its prevention and sanitation activities in four areas (Conakry, Coyah, Kindia and Forécariah).

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

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Coordination

After doing a field evaluation, the Ministry of health intends to establish a cholera treatment centre (CTC) in the Island of Coyah where the situation is still dominant. The government has equipped the two functional CTC in Kindia and Conakry in collaboration with partners.

The Red Cross of Guinea has benefited from the following donations:

- The Government of Guinea gave the sum of GNF 50 million ⁴ (approximately CHF 25,000) intended mainly for the purchase of drugs and sanitation equipments, as part of its financial contribution and donations;
- Canadian Cooperation gave GNF 20 million;
- UNICEF gave GNF 10 million for publicity fees and the provided tents for the set-up of the Donka CTC;
- WHO offered GNF 2 million and various items (drugs, mattresses, spraying equipments, basins);
- MSF-Belgium offered a gift of medical suspensions and HTH (water treatment tablets); and,
- MSF-France assisted with the set-up of the Donka CTC.

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

- [Guinea Annual Appeal 01.24/2004](#)⁵
- [Mano River sub-regional programmes Annual Appeal 01.27/2004](#)⁶

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⁴ GNF – Guinean Francs: GNF 20 = CHF 1

⁵ Guinea Annual Appeal - http://www.ifrc.org/cgi/pdf_appeals.pl?annual04/012404.pdf

⁶ Mano River Annual Appeal - http://www.ifrc.org/cgi/pdf_appeals.pl?annual04/012704.pdf