

# ***TOGO: MENINGITIS***

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### ***The Disaster***

Every year in the dry season — December to April — meningitis appears in the Northern regions of Togo. This year's epidemic was particularly severe with more than 5,000 cases and 600 deaths: a mortality rate of 12%.

### ***Red Cross/Red Crescent Action***

The Togolese Red Cross Society (TRCS) informed the International Federation's Secretariat immediately, whereupon CHF 90,000 was released from the Disaster Response Emergency Fund and 30 hospital tents were donated by German Red Cross. TRCS purchased 10,000 doses of medicines and 10,000 syringes through WHO in Togo and ordered 200 camp beds and 60 stretchers in Ghana, as they were not available in country. The programme was thus considerably delayed.

TRCS distributed the medicines to the government health services in charge of meningitis patients in the three most affected regions: Savanes (3,000 doses), Centrale (2,000) and Kara (2,000). The tents, stretchers and camp beds were distributed to local Red Cross Committees.

- Savanes: eight tents, 80 camp beds and 10 stretchers,
- Centrale: three tents, 30 camp beds and five stretchers,
- Kara: four tents, 40 camp beds and five stretchers.

Red Cross volunteers sensitised the population in these three regions to participate in the vaccination campaign, resulting in a coverage of 80% by the end of June.

The remaining 15 tents, 50 camp beds, 40 stretchers, 3,000 doses and 3,000 syringes are being kept as emergency stock in TRCS headquarters in readiness for the next meningitis epidemic which is expected towards the end of this year.

Cash contributions were received from the Danish, Netherlands, Norwegian and Swiss Red Cross Societies together with an in-kind contribution of tents from the German Red Cross Society. These, together with the allocation from the Disaster Response Emergency Fund, meant that the needs were fully met and all objectives fulfilled.

## *Needs*

By the end of June, the outbreak of meningitis was under control and the needs for the planned operation had been met. Generous support allowed for the implementation of all activities and preparation for the next outbreak. TRCS volunteers will continue their campaign for health education and sensitisation in the three regions.

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