

# MINOR EMERGENCY



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

## ANGOLA: MARBURG HAEMORRHAGIC FEVER OUTBREAK

Minor Emergency no.  
05ME021  
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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

**CHF 65,000 HAS BEEN ALLOCATED FROM THE FEDERATION'S DISASTER RELIEF EMERGENCY FUND (DREF) TO RESPOND TO THIS OPERATION. UNEARMARKED FUNDS TO REPAY DREF ARE ENCOURAGED.**

This Bulletin (no. 2) is issued in relation to Minor Emergency no. 05ME021 dated 05 April 2005 – refer to [http://www.ifrc.org/cgi/pdf\\_appeals.pl?05/05ME021.pdf](http://www.ifrc.org/cgi/pdf_appeals.pl?05/05ME021.pdf)

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.

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For longer-term programmes, please refer to the Federation's 2005 Annual Appeal for Angola, no. 05AA008 - [http://www.ifrc.org/cgi/pdf\\_appeals.pl?annual05/05AA008.pdf](http://www.ifrc.org/cgi/pdf_appeals.pl?annual05/05AA008.pdf).

### The situation

As of 14 April, 235 cases of the Marburg virus have been notified with 215 resulting in deaths. Only 44 cases have been confirmed on the basis of laboratory analysis of blood specimens. Blood specimens from the deceased Cuban doctor of Meditex clinic in Luanda tested negative for Marburg virus. The test was also negative for the second alert from the same facility, a nurse, whose condition is now improving.

## **Angola: Marburg haemorrhagic fever outbreak; Minor Emergency no. 05ME021; Bulletin no. 1**

On 7 April, a surveillance mobile team encountered resistance from the community in one neighbourhood in Uige city, with stones reportedly being thrown at the specialists. WHO suspended on 8 April its case-finding and contact follow up operations in order to carry out some investigations. A meeting between traditional community leaders, Sobas, the governor of the province and partners was organized in order to improve understanding of the teams' activities. On 9 April, Sobas led the mobile teams back into the communities and work has been carried out normally since then.

Individuals that were in contact with suspected or confirmed cases are defined as "Contacts" (they must have been in physical contact with a case, with clothing and bed clothing or have slept in the same house for a month). They do not necessarily become infected but require monitoring. The complete identification and follow up of all contacts will allow stopping the spread of the virus. So far 484 contacts are being closely monitored, 361 in Uige province alone, 93 in Kwanza Sul, 20 in Luanda and 10 in Zaire. Surveillance mobile teams of the MINSa, WHO and MSF are actively searching remaining contacts to complete the epidemiological tree, a picture of the virus spread.

Findings from a WHO-CDC-MSF joint assessment argued against the temporary closure of Uige provincial hospital and recommended a series of measures to be immediately implemented to reduce the risk of infection in the hospital. The assessment made a series of recommendations aimed at preventing transmission of the virus at the hospital for example; cleaning and disinfecting should be thoroughly performed and personal protection equipment should be supplied in adequate quantities. Provided that the recommended set of measures is implemented promptly, the hospital should be kept functioning. WHO will be supporting the management of the hospital with a new team of specialist who should travel to Angola the week beginning 17 April 2005.

Social mobilization and interpersonal communication teams are now active and have access to the communities. The TV and radio spots are being broadcast nationwide. In Uige, 18,000 leaflets are being distributed by trained teams from the government and the Angola Red Cross<sup>1</sup>. An additional one million brochures will be printed and then distributed in Luanda, and all provinces at risk. The highly effective scouts have been mobilized to the province and in Luanda.

### **Coordination**

In response to the UN flash appeal for USD 3.5 million launched on 7 April, pledges announced by donors in Luanda amount so far to over USD 1.7 million. Additionally, bilateral supply of equipment was made by USAID and the Italian, Portuguese and Spanish embassies. WHO and UNICEF will both send five international social mobilization specialists to Uige to support ongoing activities throughout the province; two of them are fluent in local languages and will adapt messages to specific communities.

The WFP Air passenger service is operating a twice-weekly flight to Uige. As well, the air service is being used to transport much needed equipment and materials to the province. Within the UN system WHO will continue to closely monitor the situation to identify any changes. This, as well as any other related information, will be communicated as soon as it comes to light.

The Red Cross and UN staff and volunteers presently in the province of Uige are urged to reinforce preventive measures related to water and food consumption and basic hygiene. Most important, they should avoid physical contact with people in general and in particular those in health facilities

### **Red Cross and Red Crescent action**

The Angola Red Cross established an emergency commission at the headquarters to coordinate all the daily activities in cases of Marburg Hemorrhagic Fever outbreak. The emergency commission also maintains permanent radio communication with Uige branches. In Uige more than 45 volunteer are working together with ministry of health (MINSa) staff and volunteers in disseminating information about the fever and prevention. The provincial secretary of Angola Red Cross is part of the inter-sectorial emergency commission and participated in all the coordination meeting in Uige. The national society provided gloves, masks, used clothes and shoes to the affected households and medical supplies for support to the provincial hospital.

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<sup>1</sup> Angola Red Cross – <http://www.ifrc.org/where/country/check.asp?countryid=18>

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The Uige branch/delegation president is working with the sub-commission of mobilization at provincial level on sensitization and prevention. Most of the volunteers from Uige branch were part of the more than 500 activist trained and mobilized by MINSA to conduct an interpersonal, door-to-door campaign in the Uige. MINSA's training aims to ensure that effective messages prevention reach all areas of the province, including remote and inaccessible regions. As this moment more than 840 door-to-door visits had been conducted reaching more than 6,900 beneficiaries.

The emergency commission started coordination the morning of 14 April and the group includes provincial secretaries from Malange, Kwanza Norte, Kwanza Sul, Zaire, Cabinda and Bengo provinces. At least 20 volunteers for each province are working in collaboration with MINSA local authority in social mobilization activities and dissemination of IEC material. In Bengo provinces, Spanish Red Cross Society is provided a vehicle to transport 10 volunteers once a week to conduct social mobilization activities. The Federation health delegate in Angola has been working closely with the national society to ensure consistent support to volunteers in their prevention activities at national level and to coordinate the relations with Federation Harare Regional Delegation and Geneva Secretariat.

The Uige Red Cross branch has reported that three Red Cross volunteers and another one from Help Health Committee, a local NGO in Uige, died on 14 April. The volunteers have been working on social mobilization activities in the Cametery neighbourhood (in the city of Uige) where lightning struck a tree they were hiding from heavy rains, killing them instantly. The Federation has received the news with shock and sympathizes with the families. The head of southern Africa regional delegation has also conveyed her condolence message to the national society and the volunteer's families

The regional disaster management support team has sent alert messages to the national societies in the region, especially those neighbouring and doing business with Angola. Feedback has been received from Namibia and South African Red Cross Societies in relation to their contingency plans and their strategic branches at the borders are on alert.

The regional disaster management technical manager is visiting Angola to provide technical support and will be on the ground on 16 April. The main objectives of the support visit are:

- to ensure that volunteers are mobilized and trained in social mobilization and health education,
- to support the branch with some disaster management on-the-job training until the RDRT team is deployed, and
- to provide branch, local authorities and beneficiaries with coping mechanisms through social mobilization and protection awareness.

Federation Regional Delegation in Harare, with support from the Secretariat, has engaged a medical technician, due to arrive on 16 April. The medical technician is tasked with:

- Assessing the general situation in collaboration with the health delegate attached to Angola Red Cross and the regional disaster management technical manager.
- Supporting the health delegate in liaising with government and other stakeholders and positioning of the Angola Red Cross and the Federation in the field as required.
- Providing technical advice about the Marburg virus disease to and support Red Cross staff, volunteers and those from the local authorities.

### **The needs**

The Angola Red Cross is implementing a three-month operation support 50,000 beneficiaries, primarily through supporting the health facilities and through dissemination and awareness activities. The following items urgently needed are being procured:

- Re-hydration products
- Pulveriser, boots, masks, gloves etc
- Chlorine for water chlorination
- Disinfectant detergent for hands
- Megaphone for dissemination/awareness activities
- Per Diem and transport support for volunteers during mobilization /dissemination activities

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Following the results of the support visit of the regional disaster management technical manager and the medical technician, recommendations will be taken into account for further plan and revised budget.

**Budget Summary**

CHF 65,000 has been allocated from the Federation DREF. This will be used for operational materials (i.e. for operational support costs (i.e. volunteers), for coordination (i.e. health delegate, PSR), for technical support (i.e. medical specialist), and for other sundry cost not indicated here.

The Federation and the Angola Red Cross are reviewing the needs; a further allocation of DREF may be required, but no request has been made at this time.

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