

# DREF operation final report



International Federation  
of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

## Benin: Cholera

DREF operation n° MDRBJ004  
GLIDE n° EP-2008-000149-BEN  
18, May 2009

The International Federation's Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF) is a source of un-earmarked money created by the Federation in 1985 to ensure that immediate financial support is available for Red Cross Red Crescent response to emergencies. The DREF is a vital part of the International Federation's disaster response system and increases the ability of national societies to respond to disasters.

**Summary:** CHF 28,500 was allocated from the Federation's Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF) on 9 October, 2008 to support the national society in delivering assistance to some 10,000 beneficiaries in the north of Benin. However, as sufficient funding was available from the DREF allocation made on 2 September, 2008 for response to Cholera in the south of the country (MDRBJ003), this allocation has been returned to the DREF. The expenditure is reported under the Final Report for MDRBJ003.



The Red Cross volunteers carried out sensitization activities in all the communities in the affected districts/Red Cross of Benin

The Red Cross of Benin mobilized and deployed its team of volunteers to carry out sensitization activities during the cholera outbreak in the north of Benin during the last quarter of 2008. With cases rising to 600 though with no death during the first week of October 2008, the Red Cross worked in close collaboration with government health agencies and the local communities in the referral of suspected cases to health facilities. With support from the International Federation, the national society intensified its intervention activities with the training and deployment of 100 Red Cross volunteers in the affected communities. The national society also procured and distributed cholera kit in the affected communities. The activities of the Red Cross volunteers contributed to the reduction in cases and quick recovery of treated and discharged cases. The Red Cross also sensitized the affected communities on good hygiene practice and the communities have improved their hygiene through regular sanitation exercise in their communities with support of the volunteers. Though the Red Cross of Benin targeted a total of 10,000 beneficiaries, with the support and cooperation of local leaders, the Red Cross messages reached a total of 14,627 persons during the operation. The Red Cross of Benin also strengthened the capacity of its local branches in the affected districts with the training of 100 Red Cross volunteers from these branches. The operation also improved the collaboration between the Red Cross of Benin, the communities and government health agencies.

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## The situation

During the third quarter of 2008, an outbreak of cholera in the north of Benin was reported by the Red Cross of Benin with government health authorities confirming cases few days after. By October 2008, the epidemics had spread from Malanville and Karimama to other neighbouring districts of Djougou and Bassila with a total of 600 cases reported in the affected districts while 90 cases were referred to health facilities in these districts. The outbreak was caused by poor hygiene and sanitation habits of the population. Lack of sanitation facilities, heavy rainfalls during the period and polluted sources of drinking water in the affected areas were also other causes of the epidemic, according to the local branches of the Red Cross and health officials in the districts.

The Red Cross, working in collaboration with local authorities, initially deployed its team of volunteers to assist in referral of cases and carry out sensitization activities among the affected communities. This had assisted in reducing the spread of the disease at the initial stage.

With the support of the Federation through the DREF allocation, the national society intensified its sensitization activities in the affected communities and other neighbouring communities. Based on the experience acquired in a similar operation during the outbreak of cholera in Cotonou, the Red Cross mobilized and trained 100 volunteers selected from the local branches in the affected districts. These volunteers in turn intensified their sensitization activities in the affected areas. The activities focused on good hygiene practice, health education, detection and referral of cases to health centres. The Red cross of Benin also procured and distributed cholera kit in the affected communities. The outcome of these activities coupled with that of the local authorities contributed to the reduction in suspected cases and also contributed to increased knowledge of the communities in good hygiene practice.

Though the operation was delayed due to some logistics constraints as some communities were not easily accessible because of the rain and bad state of roads, the Red Cross was able to carry out its sensitization messages to a total of 14,627 persons in the target communities. This achievement was made possible because of the collaboration of local traditional and religious leaders in the four affected districts.

The Red of Benin as auxiliary to government authorities worked in close collaboration with the Ministries of Health, Family Affairs, Interior as well as traditional heads of the affected communities. The Red Cross participated in all the coordination meetings. The National Society was assigned the lead role of sensitizing the people and also assisted health officials in identifying cases and referral to health centres. The national society also mobilized local chiefs to persuade the population to refer cases to health facilities. It also collaborated with the West Coast regional office of the International Federation in the area of technical support during the operation.

## Red Cross and Red Crescent action

The Red Cross of Benin with technical support from the West Coast office of the International Federation trained 100 volunteers selected from the affected districts. They were trained on the causes, symptoms, effects and prevention of cholera. They also received training on how to mobilize and sensitize the target communities on good hygiene practice. The national society distributed cholera kit in the affected communities. The Red Cross volunteers reached a total of 14,627 persons with their messages of good hygiene practice, sanitation and cholera symptoms and prevention. During this period, the Red Cross volunteers referred 16 suspected cases to health facilities and assisted in following up 42 discharged cases to ensure they continue their medication at home during the three months of the operation. The Red Cross volunteers in the affected communities have also been mobilizing the communities for regular sanitation exercise in their various communities.

For effective implementation of its planned activities, the Red Cross of Benin worked in collaboration with the Ministries of Health, Family Affairs, Interior as well as the local heads of the affected communities. This contributed to the success recorded in the area of coordination during the operation as issues bothering on duplication of task were not reported.

## Progress towards objectives

### Hygiene promotion

**Objective: To complement government's effort in the prevention and control of the disease by reducing the morbidity and avoiding mortality in the most affected communities in the northern part of Benin.**

#### Activities planned

- Participate actively in coordination meetings at the national and local levels in order to obtain relevant statistics;
- Train 100 Red Cross volunteers from three local branches and coaches to be deployed to support the activities planned;
- Distribute volunteer cholera kit to volunteers;
- Engage in community cholera control activities such as surveillance, referrals, sensitization, education and distribution of hygiene items in collaboration with the MoH and other stakeholders;
- Provide the volunteers and team with welfare, logistics support and protective materials as detailed in the attached budget;
- Promote and respect the Fundamental Principles of the Red Cross/Red Crescent Movement.

#### Expected outcomes

- All Red Cross activities are implemented in a coordinated way thus avoiding duplication of services with other actors. Red Cross experience is also shared with others at coordination meetings and during surveillance, reporting, response and advocacy activities at the national and district levels;
- 100 well trained and motivated volunteers have been able to reach the most affected people and have provided life saving support to those falling sick from the epidemic;
- 1 volunteer cholera kit and other disaster response materials are supplied to the volunteers;
- Hygiene and health education, early case detection and referral as well as sensitization have been useful in reducing the number of cases;
- The regional resource team from the West Coast regional office will have increased the capacity of the Red Cross of Benin by providing technical support and advice;
- Volunteers have been provided with welfare, insurance, protective materials and logistics assistance.

**Impact:** The effective collaboration between the Ministries of Health, Family Affairs, Interior and the Red Cross of Benin resulted in fruitful coordination of activities during the operation. The complementary effort of the Red Cross in the area of mobilization, sensitization and referral of cases contributed to the timely reduction of cases. The collaboration also assisted the government in getting accurate statistics on the epidemics which contributed to the effective intervention in terms of treatment. The coordination with other stakeholders also contributed to avoiding duplication of activities during the operation.

The trained 100 Red Cross volunteers carried out sensitization campaign in the affected districts. The target communities who were sensitized on good hygiene practices have enhanced their knowledge in this regards. Assessment carried out by the Red Cross after the campaign showed that beneficiaries are now carrying out weekly sanitation exercise in their communities with support from the Red Cross volunteers. The communities now look tidy and clean. The campaign carried out by the Red Cross volunteers and the distribution of the cholera kit also contributed to the reduction in the spread of the epidemic during the operation. By the third week of the exercise, reported cases had greatly reduced as a result of increased understanding of the epidemic by the community people thanked to the Red Cross sensitization activities. The community people now refer any person with suspected signs of diarrhea to health centre nearest to them. The monitoring of treated and discharged cases by the Red Cross volunteers in collaboration with government health personnel also impacted well on the communities. The home visits by the Red Cross volunteers ensured that the people already treated follow their medication which also resulted in their quick recovery.

The operation afforded the local branches of the Red Cross in the affected districts the opportunity to strengthen their capacity in community sensitization against any potential epidemics. The 100 trained Red Cross volunteers were selected from these local branches and have been very active in mobilizing the communities for cleaning exercise even after the operation. The target community people have also enhanced their knowledge about the Red Cross and its mandate. Many of them now understand what the Red Cross is all about and how they can collaborate with Red Cross to improve their living condition.

Table showing the population of the target districts and number of persons reached with Red Cross messages:

Affected districts	Population	Number of persons sensitized by the Red Cross
Karimama	7,775	1,035
Malanville	36,056	6,142
Djougou	17,715	3,205
Bassila	25,441	4,245
<b>Total</b>	<b>86,987</b>	<b>14,627</b>

**Challenges:** The delay in the commencement of the operation was due to logistics constraints. Some of the affected communities were not accessible due to the deplorable state of roads. The communities also requested the assistance of the Red Cross in the provision of portable drinking water sources in their communities. Their main sources of water had been polluted by floods.

## Conclusion

### Lessons learned:

- Good collaboration with government agencies and the community leaders resulted in the success recorded during the operation;
- Many rural community dwellers need to be sensitized on good hygiene practice;
- Timely intervention in the future will impact more in reducing number of cases;
- Such an operation contributes a lot to building the capacity of local branches;
- The image and visibility of the Red Cross Movement has improved.

How we work	
<p><i>All International Federation assistance seeks to adhere to the <a href="#">Code of Conduct for the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and Non-Governmental Organizations (NGO's) in Disaster Relief</a> and is committed to the <a href="#">Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Disaster Response (Sphere)</a> in delivering assistance to the most vulnerable.</i></p>	
<p>The International Federation's activities are aligned with its Global Agenda, which sets out four broad goals to meet the Federation's mission to "improve the lives of vulnerable people by mobilizing the power of humanity".</p>	<p><b>Global Agenda Goals:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reduce the numbers of deaths, injuries and impact from disasters.</li> <li>• Reduce the number of deaths, illnesses and impact from diseases and public health emergencies.</li> <li>• Increase local community, civil society and Red Cross Red Crescent capacity to address the most urgent situations of vulnerability.</li> <li>• Reduce intolerance, discrimination and social exclusion and promote respect for diversity and human dignity.</li> </ul>

## Contact information

**For further information specifically related to this operation please contact:**

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**International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies**

MDRBJ004 - Benin - Cholera

Final Financial Report

Selected Parameters	
Reporting Timeframe	2009/10-2009/4
Budget Timeframe	2009/10-2008/12
Appeal	MDRBJ004
Budget	APPEAL

All figures are in Swiss Francs (CHF)

**I. Consolidated Response to Appeal**

	Goal 1: Disaster Management	Goal 2: Health and Care	Goal 3: Capacity Building	Goal 4: Principles and Values	Coordination	TOTAL
A. Budget	0					0
B. Opening Balance	0					0
Income						
C. Total Income = SUM(C1..C5)	0					0
D. Total Funding = B + C	0					0
Appeal Coverage	#DIV/0					#DIV/0

**II. Balance of Funds**

	Goal 1: Disaster Management	Goal 2: Health and Care	Goal 3: Capacity Building	Goal 4: Principles and Values	Coordination	TOTAL
B. Opening Balance	0					0
C. Income	0					0
E. Expenditure						
F. Closing Balance = (B + C + E)	0					0

**III. Budget Analysis / Breakdown of Expenditure**

Account Groups	Budget	Expenditure					TOTAL	Variance
		Goal 1: Disaster Management	Goal 2: Health and Care	Goal 3: Capacity Building	Goal 4: Principles and Values	Coordination		
	A						B	A - B
BUDGET (C)								
TOTAL EXPENDITURE (D)								
VARIANCE (C - D)								