

DREF operation update



International Federation
of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

Gabon: Chikungunya and Dengue fever epidemics in Franceville, Lastourville and Koulamoutou

DREF operation n° MDRGA004
GLIDE n° EP-2010-000111-GAB
Update n° 1
06 October, 2010

The International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent (IFRC) 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 and Red Crescent emergency response. 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.

Period covered by this update: 04
May to 30 June 2010.

Summary: CHF 153,013 was allocated from the IFRC's Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF) on 22 June, 2010 to support the Gabonese Red Cross National Society in delivering assistance to some 49,009 beneficiaries.

Following the Chikungunya and Dengue outbreak that occurred in Franceville, Lastourville and Koulamoutou (Gabon), the International Federation provided technical and financial support to the Gabonese Red Cross Society through DREF allocation and the deployment of an RDRT member from the Central African Republic (CAR) to Gabon. The NS has been conducting a number of activities aimed at stopping the spread of the epidemics and alleviating their effects. These activities include door-to-door sensitization, destruction of breeding grounds, cleaning of the environment (weeding and cleaning of gutters), and distribution of insecticide-treated mosquito nets (ITMN). This operation is expected to be implemented in 4 months, and completed by 30 October 2010. In line with Federation reporting standards, the Final Report (narrative and financial) is due 90 days after the end of the operation (by 30 January 2011).



Red Cross volunteers distributing mosquito nets in Lastourville / Dr Gbagba – CAR Red Cross and RDRT/ERDAC member

The major donors to the DREF are the Irish, Italian, Netherlands and Norwegian governments and ECHO. Details of all donors can be found on: <http://www.ifrc.org/what/disasters/responding/drs/tools/dref/donors.asp>.

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The situation

In April 2010, Gabon started witnessing the outbreak of two epidemics: Chikungunya and Dengue Fever. About 443 people were tested positive with Chikungunya, and 108 with Dengue Fever, while 15 people presented both infections. The analysis conducted revealed that 51% of the samples taken were contaminated with Chikungunya, against 13% for Dengue fever. From June to July 2010, new foci of Chikungunya and Dengue fever were discovered in Moanda and Mounana. These are two mining towns not too distant from Franceville. There is a considerable social and commercial interchange between Franceville, Moanda and Mounana, which represents a serious risk for the spread of epidemics. However, the action currently taken by the Red Cross is limited to Franceville, Lastourville and Koulamoutou.

Coordination and partnerships

Government set up a crisis committee that brings together all the stakeholders of the health sector in Gabon, including the Red Cross. The Gabonese Red Cross volunteers have been working hand-in hand with the teams of the National Institute for Epidemiological Surveillance. The UNHCR put a 4WD vehicle at the disposal of Gabonese Red Cross to enable the National Society (NS) to supervise the action against Chikungunya and Dengue in Lastourville and Koulamoutou.

Red Cross and Red Crescent action

Progress towards outcomes

Emergency Health	
Objective 1: Contribute to the improvement of the health situation of the populations exposed to the Chikungunya and Dengue epidemics in Franceville, Lastourville and Koulamoutou	
Expected results <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Red Cross volunteers serve as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> sentries of the community and coordinate an early alert system; a link between the health centre and the community/prevention; a communication channel between the community, the Red Cross and the authorities; 80% of the population recognize the signs and symptoms of Chikungunya and Dengue Fever and go to the nearest health centre upon the first alert; 80% of the population implement simple individual and environmental hygiene rules, and know how to destroy mosquito breeding grounds; 80% of the population receive insecticide-treated mosquito nets; Strengthening of partnership between the Gabonese Red Cross and the Ministry of Health, partners such as WHO and UNICEF. 	Activities planned <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Training of 100 volunteers in information, education and communication (IEC) to have an effect on behaviour change through permanent campaigns in their communities. Promotion of individual and environmental hygiene notably through the destruction of mosquito breeding grounds, the drainage of stagnant waters, collection and disposal of household wastes, wastewater disposal, cleaning-out of gutters, spraying of houses and vicinities, weeding of grass around houses, dissemination of simple messages on cleanliness; Sensitization of beneficiaries to sleep under mosquito nets; Draw up a list of those who received mosquito nets; Distribution and hang up of insecticide-treated mosquito nets; Monitor the effective and proper use of mosquito nets; Provide social support to the population; Advocacy with administrative authorities and partners.
Objective 2: Strengthen the capacity of the National Society to prepare for, mitigate and control the outbreak of epidemic diseases.	
Expected results <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The branches and volunteers of the Gabonese Red Cross Society are capacitated to systematically prepare for and respond to future epidemic outbreaks to mitigate mortality 	Activities planned <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organization of a 3-day workshop for 26 participants; Evaluation of activities undertaken so far to respond to the disaster

and morbidity in the affected communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Initiation of development of the Plan of Action and contingency plans in the branches affected by epidemic outbreaks.
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Progress:

One hundred volunteers have been trained in information, education and communication (IEC) for the change of behaviour, on the basis of 50 volunteers in Franceville, 25 in Lastourville and 25 in Koulamoutou. The trained volunteers continued to sensitize populations through door-to-door approach. They visited 3,000 households sensitizing about 25,000 people within the reporting period. The same volunteers also disinfected 1,100 latrines, treated 50 water points, identified and oriented 388 suspected cases of Chikungunya and Dengue Fever to the nearest health centres, sprayed 350 garbage areas, and distributed 8,500 insecticide-treated mosquito nets (ITMN), on the basis of 4,000 in Franceville, 2,000 in Lastourville and 2,500 in Koulamoutou. They distributed two mosquito nets to each family with a maximum of five members, and three for households with more than five members. The volunteers participated in the hanging-up of 1,058 mosquito nets. An evaluation of how these ITMN are being used revealed that 529 out of the 1058 that have been hanged-up are used properly. The volunteers are currently investigating why the remaining ITMN are not properly used, and will definitely come out with a solution.

Challenges:

Although Gabonese Red Cross is aware that the epidemics has extended to two new localities (Moanda and Mounana), they lack the means required to take action. Moreover, most houses of the localities affected are built in swampy areas, and this makes it very difficult to eradicate the epidemics by spraying houses and their surroundings. In addition, Franceville, Lastourville and Koulamoutou are located 600 to 700 km from Libreville, the capital of Gabon, and the roads are generally in a very bad state. It would be advisable to plan any travel to those localities by train.

How we work

All IFRC 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 the [Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Disaster Response \(Sphere\)](#) in delivering assistance to the most vulnerable.

The IFRC's vision is to inspire, encourage, facilitate and promote at all times all forms of humanitarian activities by National Societies, with a view to preventing and alleviating human suffering, and thereby contributing to the maintenance and promotion of human dignity and peace in the world.

The IFRC's work is guided by [Strategy 2020](#) which puts forward three strategic aims:

1. Save lives, protect livelihoods, and strengthen recovery from disaster and crises.
2. Enable healthy and safe living.
3. Promote social inclusion and a culture of non-violence and peace.

Contact information

For further information specifically related to this operation please contact:

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