

CAMBODIA: Dengue Haemorrhagic Fever Epidemic

18 August 1998

appeal no. 24

situation report no. 01

period covered: 13 - 17 August 1998

As child morbidity and mortality figures continue their alarming rise, the Cambodian Red Cross and the Federation have begun the purchase of medical supplies and are starting clean-up and public education campaigns -- despite an acute shortage of funds that, if it continues, will seriously hamper efforts to contain the outbreak.

The context

Cambodia continues to grapple with a growing epidemic of Dengue Haemorrhagic Fever (DHF). According to the latest figures, 8,685 children have been admitted to hospital since the start of the outbreak and there have been 230 deaths. These figures represent an increase of 14% in the caseload and a 20% increase in mortality over the figures of late July (on the basis of which the Federation Appeal was launched).

Seasonal peaks of DHF in Cambodia usually occur in August and September; it is expected that this year the number of infected children will rise to at least 16,000 - making it the worst DHF epidemic in Cambodia's recent history.

DHF is a severe form of dengue fever, a viral disease spread through the bite of the *Aedes* mosquito, which has its habitat in urban and semi-urban areas. If untreated, DHF typically has a 10 % fatality rate.

Latest events

Kantha Bobha Paediatric Hospital in Phnom Penh is, on a daily basis, giving over 1,000 out-patient consultations to children whose parents fear that they have dengue type symptoms. Of these 100 are admitted with dengue, 50% of which show the full symptoms of DHF. Many children are being brought to the hospital only when they are in severe shock -- too late to be treated.

The Preah Sihanouk Hospital and other health facilities also continue to care for DHF patients. Clinical care is being reinforced by the in-service training of physicians and nurses by the Ministry of Health.

The National Program for DHF, in collaboration with Phnom Penh Municipality, is continuing the larvicide ('Abate') distribution and spraying campaign (to eradicate mosquitoes) in Phnom Penh city and other provinces.

The Ministry of Health in co-operation with the Governor of Phnom Penh City held a meeting with major international organisations and NGOs on 14 August to keep them informed about the situation.

Red Cross/Red Crescent action

The Cambodian Red Cross (CRC) and Federation Secretariat have initiated the following activities:

1. Procurement from within the region of medical supplies (largely IV fluids) and 3mt of larvicide (Abate).
2. Printing of 20,000 brochures on Dengue prevention/early symptoms/treatment. The brochure has been designed in co-operation with MoH/National Malaria Centre.
3. Printing of 10,000 posters on Dengue prevention.
4. A cleanup campaign - to reduce the breeding grounds for the mosquito - in primary schools (92 schools with a total of 20,000 children) was launched on 15 August by the President of the Municipality Red Cross Branch in co-operation with the Ministry of Education. Recently trained Red Cross volunteers as well as teachers and children participated in these campaigns; posters and brochures were also distributed. Activities were co-ordinated with the WHO/MoH spraying operation.
5. CRC is developing health education stories and songs on Dengue prevention which will be broadcast by Cambodian artists. It is planned to broadcast the TV and radio 'spots' this week (beginning 16 August).
6. CRC is planning to invite all provincial Development Officers for a 2 or 3 day training session on Dengue Fever. These Officers will then form the basis for provincial training for volunteers.

Outstanding needs

The Federation urgently needs further cash contributions to cover the costs of the operation. Whilst procurement is underway and a delegate has been proposed, without further support it will be impossible to distribute the drugs and to take the health education any further. We currently need at least a further 200'000 to continue this emergency operation. The Appeal is currently only 15% covered.

External relations - Government/UN/NGOs/Media

Close co-ordination has been maintained with the Ministry of Health, WHO, ICRC and other Phnom Penh based organisations. Moreover, the Appeal documents have been shared with all Embassies, UN offices, International Organisations and NGOs.

Media relations have been extensive in Cambodia with strong newspaper, radio and television coverage of the Appeal. Interviews with media have also taken place in Kuala Lumpur and Geneva.

Contributions

See Annex 1 for details.

Conclusion

The timeliness of the operation remains the single most important factor in reducing mortality and infection rates. Whilst CRC and the Federation have mobilised all necessary human and material resources (thanks to support received to date) further contributions are urgently needed.

Peter Rees-Gildea
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**CAMBODIA DENGUE
FEVER**

APPEAL No. 24/98

**PLEDGES
RECEIVED**

18/08/98

DONOR	CATEGORY	QUANTITY	UNIT	VALUE CHF	DATE
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CASH

REQUESTED IN APPEAL				658,000	
CANADIAN - RC		1,500	CAD	1,537	14/08/98
ICELANDIC - RC		200,000	ISK	4,187	14/08/98
JAPANESE - RC		3,100,000	YEN	31,942	14/08/98
SWISS - RC				30,000	07/08/98
AMERICAN RC		10,000	USD	15,000	18/08/98
SUB/TOTAL RECEIVED IN CASH				82,666 CHF	

**KIND AND SERVICES
(INCL. PERSONNEL)**

DONOR	CATEGORY	QUANTITY	UNIT	VALUE CHF	DATE
SUB/TOTAL RECEIVED IN KIND/SERVICES				0.00 CHF	

**NOT REQUESTED IN
APPEAL**

DONOR	CATEGORY	QUANTITY	UNIT	VALUE CHF	DATE
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SUB/TOTAL RECEIVED	0.00 CHF
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