

INFORMATION BULLETIN



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

DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO AND REPUBLIC OF CONGO: MARBURG HAEMORRHAGIC FEVER

27 April 2005

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

This Information Bulletin (no. 1/2005) is being issued for information only. The Federation is not seeking funding or other assistance from donors for this operation at this time.

This Bulletin is issued in conjunction with the Minor Emergency for Angola: Marburg haemorrhagic fever outbreak, no. 05ME021, and it intended to highlight the response in countries neighbouring Angola.

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All International Federation assistance seeks to adhere to the Code of Conduct and is committed to the Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Disaster Response in delivering assistance to the most vulnerable. For support to or for further information concerning Federation programmes or operations in this or other countries, or for a full description of the national society profile, please access the Federation's website at <http://www.ifrc.org>

The Situation

The recent surge in cases of Marburg haemorrhagic fever in Angola has alerted many neighbouring countries to the risk it poses. Many have responded by means of task forces or focus committees. Cross-border travel and high mobility of people can easily lead to a spread of Marburg fever to countries like the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) and the Republic of Congo (Congo). This potential risk has panicked many in these two countries, particularly in the border provinces of Bas Congo, Bandundu, Kasai Occidental and Katanga in DRC, and the provinces of Kouilou and Niari in Congo-Brazzaville.

**Democratic Republic of the Congo and Republic of Congo:
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Some cases that are suspected to be Marburg have been reported in Matadi (2), Kisantu (1) and Kinshasa (1), DRC; however, these are unconfirmed. There are currently no reported cases in Congo.

Red Cross and Red Crescent action

The governments of the Republic of the Congo (Congo) and the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) have each established a national crisis committee at the national and provincial levels, to enhance coordination of prevention activities in response to the Marburg outbreak in neighbouring Angola. The two national societies, the Congolese Red Cross and the Red Cross of the Democratic Republic of Congo, are each stakeholders in their respective national crisis committees.

Due to the closeness with the affected province in Angola, the Red Cross provincial and county (department) offices are in touch with health and administrative authorities to prepare awareness campaigns. Preliminary actions are concentrated in the provinces of Bas Congo (DRC) and Kouilou (Congo).

The following measures have been decided by the crisis committees at the national level:

- Strengthening of the epidemiological surveillance.
- Raising awareness in the border areas:
 - from Bas Congo up to Katanga, via Bandundu and Kasai Occidental in DRC, and
 - in Kouilou department and Niari in Congo.
- Production of educational material (leaflets and posters).
- Identification of a reception and treatment site in Kinshasa (Clinique Ngaliema).
- Equipping immigration police with a reception form.

For further information on the Minor Emergency no. 05ME021 covering the Marburg outbreak in Angola, please refer to the following:

- Minor Emergency no. 05ME021 - http://www.ifrc.org/cgi/pdf_appeals.pl?05/05ME021.pdf
- Bulletin no. 1 (11 April 2005) - http://www.ifrc.org/cgi/pdf_appeals.pl?05/05ME02101.pdf
- Bulletin no. 2 (15 April 2005) - http://www.ifrc.org/cgi/pdf_appeals.pl?05/05ME02102.pdf
- Bulletin no. 3 (22 April 2005) - http://www.ifrc.org/cgi/pdf_appeals.pl?05/05ME02103.pdf

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For longer-term programmes, please refer to the Federation's 2005 Annual Appeals:

- **Democratic Republic of the Congo**, no. 05AA035 - http://www.ifrc.org/cgi/pdf_appeals.pl?annual05/05AA035.pdf
- **Republic of Congo**, no. 05AA036 - http://www.ifrc.org/cgi/pdf_appeals.pl?annual05/05AA036.pdf

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