

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

CAMEROON: CHOLERA

6 June 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 based on the needs described below reflecting the information available at this time. CHF 58,262 has been allocated from the Federation's Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF) to respond to the needs of this operation; please refer to Minor Emergency no. 05ME026 dated 27 April 2005 (http://www.ifrc.org/cgi/pdf_appeals.pl?05/05ME026.pdf). Un-earmarked fund to repay DREF are encouraged. Based on further updates and details from assessment reports, or should the situation deteriorate, the Federation may consider international support through an Emergency Appeal.

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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

Since 28 March 2005, Bafoussam, western Cameroon, with about 321,000 inhabitants is seriously hit by a cholera epidemic which caused the Red Cross to deploy its volunteers on the field. This town is a strategic town in Cameroon because of its geographical location. It is a transit town in the northern part of the country that shares boundaries with towns like Foumbot and Mbouda where cholera is endemic.

Red Cross and Red Crescent action

Upon official announcement of the epidemic, volunteers from the Bafoussam local committee of the Cameroon Red Cross Society¹ - previously involved in home care and epidemiological surveillance activities - launched an information, education and communication (IEC) campaign for the benefit of the local populations.

¹ Cameroon Red Cross Society – <http://www.ifrc.org/where/country/check.asp?countryid=41>

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From 20-22 April 2005, the Cameroon Red Cross and the Federation Central Africa sub-regional office (BRAC/Yaoundé) deployed a joint team to evaluate the situation and put posters and folders bearing messages on "How to avoid cholera" at the disposal of the Red Cross local committee.

The first evaluation revealed that those affected are mostly women and children. The disease is quickly spreading in new localities; however, the lethality rate is low. The Red Cross has therefore reviewed the content of its training and reoriented its activities prior to the launching of the second phase of intervention. Concretely, the objective is to build a kind of security belt around Bafoussam which shares borders with towns where the cholera epidemic has reached a chronic stage like Foubot, Mbanganté and Mbouda.

The emergency phase started on 1 May 2005 with intensive communication for behaviour change and sanitation activities being carried out. As a result of that intervention, no new cases of cholera have been registered in Bafoussam since 16 May 2005.

Execution of the Emergency Phase

Activities	Period	Persons involved	Achievements
Training – Retraining on behaviour change	30 April	8 national and regional trainers	129 volunteers trained and retrained
Sensitisation	1-25 May	129 volunteers	13783 families sensitised
Sanitation	09-25 May	129 volunteers	29 water points cleaned
Environmental hygiene	09-25 May	129 volunteers	5 market places cleaned

Impact of the sensitisation activities carried out by Red Cross volunteers on the epidemic

The following diagram summarises the commendable impact of the door-to-door sensitisation and sanitation activities carried out by Red Cross volunteers and coordinated by the local health district:

Evolution of the cholera outbreak

Weeks	Number of cases	Deaths
Week 14 (28 March-3 April)	6	1
Week 15 (4-10 April)	29	6
Week 16 (11-17 April)	36	3
Week 17 (18-24 April)	36	0
Week 18 (25 April-1 May)	29	0
Week 19 (2-8 May)	2	0
Week 20 (9-15 May)	5	0
Week 21 (16-22 May)	0	0
Week 22 (23-29 May)	0	0
Week 23 (30 May-5 June)	0	0

These results will be reinforced through the activities scheduled for the second phase.

Plan of Action

General Objective: The vulnerabilities of the populations of the West Province to the cholera epidemic are reduced through the implementation of the ARCHI 2010 Approach.

Specific Objective: Facilitate the second phase after the emergency operation.

Expected Results

- construction of latrines is launched in Bafoussam, Mbanganté, Mbouda and Foubot.
- sanitation activities (cleaning the environment, destruction of vibrio breeding sites, chlorination of water points, and diffusion of simple messages to promote cleanliness) are carried out in Bafoussam.

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- ARCHI 2010 approach is implemented in the Bafoussam divisional committee of Cameroon Red Cross where cholera has become endemic, through identification and training of coaches from Bafoussam, Mbanganté, Foubot and Mbouda.

The coordinating team is comprised of the Federation head of Central Africa sub-regional office, regional health officer, and Cameroon Red Cross programme coordinator. The field team will be comprised of members of the Bafoussam divisional committee.

Agenda

Date	Activities	Expected Results
02 June 2005	Evaluation in Bafoussam: field visit	Meeting with authorities: Health Provincial Delegate, Heads of the Health District and centre Collection of statistics Assess the evolution of the epidemic Measure the impact of the activities of Red Cross volunteers on the epidemic
03 June 2005	Contact with Mbanganté, Mbouda and Foubot authorities to identify the sites where latrines will be built. Meeting with local Red Cross leaders.	Evaluate the extent to which local communities adhere to the latrine construction project and the implementation of the ARCHI 2010 approach. Identification of ARCHI coaches (2 per locality) taking into consideration their profile
04 June 2005	Training 8 coaches on the ARCHI 2010 Approach	Trained coaches are operational They replicate the lessons learned in their respective local branches and coach the management of volunteers at local level.
05 June 2005	Restitution with authorities of the Bafoussam divisional committee.	Discussion Recommendations Perspectives

All International Federation Operations seek to adhere to the Code of Conduct and are committed to the Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Disaster Response (SPHERE Project) in delivering assistance to the most vulnerable.

For support to or for further information concerning Federation operations in this or other countries, please access the Federation website at <http://www.ifrc.org/>

For longer-term programmes, please refer to the Federation's Annual Appeal for Central Africa sub-regional programmes (including Cameroon, Chad, Equatorial Guinea, São Tomé and Príncipe and the sub-regional office), Appeal no. 05AA038 (http://www.ifrc.org/cgi/pdf_appeals.pl?annual05/05AA038.pdf).

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