

DREF operation update



International Federation
of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

Brazil: Dengue Outbreak

DREF operation n° MDRBR003
GLIDE n° EP-2008-000042-BRA
Update n°1
7 July, 2008

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 and 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.

Period covered by this update: 04 April to 17 June 2008.

Summary: CHF 55,000 (USD 52,381 or EUR 34,375) has been allocated from the Federation's Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF) to support the national society in delivering immediate assistance to some 10,000 beneficiaries. Unearmarked funds to repay DREF are encouraged.

The State of Rio de Janeiro in Brazil is experiencing a dengue outbreak; according to the official data from the Ministry of Health, 162,701 cases have been reported with 123 confirmed deaths, until 28 May. In the city of Rio de Janeiro alone, 87,589 cases have been reported. The Brazilian Red Cross is mobilizing volunteers for outreach activities to raise awareness on dengue prevention for 10,000 people.

This operation is expected to be implemented over three months, and will therefore be completed by 3 July, 2008; a Final Report Will be made available three months after the end of the operation (by 03 October, 2008).

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**Almost 163.000 cases of Dengue;
Children are the most vulnerable.
Source: Brazilian Red Cross**

The situation

As of March, 2008, the state of Rio de Janeiro has been experiencing dengue and hemorrhagic fever outbreaks. Dengue fever is considered to be one of the main health problems in the world and can be caused by any one of four types of dengue virus.

On 28 May, 162,701 cases had been reported, with 123 confirmed deaths and an additional 116 under investigation. The most affected municipalities are Rio de Janeiro (87,589), Nova Iguaçu (10,865) and Angra dos Reis (10,591). 42 percent of the reported deaths are children between 0 and 15 years old; 45 of the deaths were caused by hemorrhagic dengue.

These numbers are twice as high as last year. Field hospitals have been set up by the military and a crisis committee has been formed by the Secretariat of Health Surveillance. The Ministry of Health has established a crisis committee to address the dengue epidemic in the city of Rio.

Currently, the numbers of cases per month is declining. However, medical facilities are still overwhelmed by the influx of patients suffering from dengue. The authorities have ordered that all the state hospitals stay open 24 hours a day so that the affected people can be attended.

Coordination and partnerships

The Brazilian Red Cross (BRC) is coordinating activities with the Rio de Janeiro branch, and is also mobilizing its personal to be sent to the affected areas. In addition, the Rio de Janeiro branch of the BRC is in contact with the local health centres to coordinate activities.

According to the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO), the Ministry of Health (Ministério da Saúde – MS) is working closely with the Rio de Janeiro branch of the Center for Strategic Information in Health Surveillance (Centro de Informações Estratégicas em Vigilância em Saúde – CIEVS) to implement the required control measures and identify priority areas for intervention. The Ministry mobilized 100 health professionals to the federal hospitals of Rio de Janeiro to support patient management activities, including clinical case management and laboratory diagnosis. Vector control activities were implemented throughout Rio de Janeiro State and especially in the Municipality of Rio de Janeiro. The fire department, military, and health inspectors from the National Health Foundation (Fundação Nacional de Saúde - FUNASA/MS) are assisting in these activities.

The Pan American Disaster Response Unit (PADRU) in Panama, the Lima Regional Representation, and Federation Country Office in Brazil are providing support to the National Society. A Regional Intervention Team (RIT) member specialized in Public Health in Emergencies (PHE) was sent to support the National Society in the implementation of its awareness raising activities.



The BRC elaborated posters with key preventive messages. Source: Brazilian Red Cross

Red Cross and Red Crescent action

The Red Cross developed a Plan of Action to increase community awareness among the most vulnerable communities.

Progress towards objectives

The initial Plan of Action (PoA) elaborated by the BRC for this operation aimed to increase awareness against dengue by performing community talks and house visits in the communities of Manguinhos, Jacarepaguá, Complexo do Alemão and Campo Grande. Due to the high levels of violence in most of the areas the revised plan of action has refocused the activities in the area of Jacareaguá and expanded on its strategy to reach beneficiaries indirectly through the distribution of educational material.

Emergency Health

Objective: Health risks due to exposure to dengue virus are reduced through the provision of preventive and community-level health education to 10,000 beneficiaries in Rio de Janeiro for three months.

Activities planned:

- implement a health promotion campaign within the affected population targeting 10,000 people in Rio de Janeiro;
- train 40 community-based volunteers on health promotion via hours of training;
- carry out data assessment in the most affected communities;
- coordinate with public officials and other social agencies;
- create and publish educational material;
- display educational materials in public locations;
- deliver 40 two-hour workshops covering basic knowledge regarding dengue prevention, transmission, and medical care;
- conduct 200 home visits;
- broadcast four Radio and one TV programs.



The BRC volunteers imparting talks in schools.
Source: Brazilian Red Cross

Progress and impact:

To date, the BRC has been able to visit schools in the area of Jacarepaguá, where 113 students in the ages of 10 to 16 years old were educated on risks and preventive measures to take in order to battle the infectious disease. During early June, the BRC hung posters on the Rio-Niteroi Bridge with key preventive messages and participated in a health fare where 65 people attended. The BRC contacted companies to obtain permission to hang posters in the bus-boats on the Rio-Nieroi.

By 14 June, the BRC had distributed 30,000 brochures, reaching approximately 90,000 people with information on how to prevent and treat the disease. Community talks were given in the area of Paula Ramos, two plays were presented in la Central de Brasil educating children between the ages of six and eight years old. During these presentations, 2,000 brochures were distributed as the BRC

installed a stand. Another seven community talks were given in the Escuela Tecnica Silva e Souza in Jacarepaguá, reaching 157 people. During the talks, brochures and visibility materials were distributed and further distributions were made in hospitals, schools, health centers and other public places.

A workshop was given in the school of Manguinhos reaching approximately 80 elementary school students, teachers and parents. On 14 June a stand on dengue prevention was set up during a BRC vaccination clinic, reaching 164 persons directly and approximately 500 more indirectly.

Challenges:

Challenges faced by the BRC included the difficulty to reach all the affected areas because of continuous rains and the forced cancellation of activities in several areas because of security concerns. Police raids and gang warfare made it impossible to reach most of the schools originally planned,

How we work

All International Federation 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 is committed to the [Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Disaster Response](#) (Sphere) in delivering assistance to the most vulnerable.

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".

Global Agenda Goals:

- Reduce the numbers of deaths, injuries and impact from disasters.
- Reduce the number of deaths, illnesses and impact from diseases and public health emergencies.
- Increase local community, civil society and Red Cross Red Crescent capacity to address the most urgent situations of vulnerability.
- Reduce intolerance, discrimination and social exclusion and promote respect for diversity and human dignity.

Contact information

For further information specifically related to this operation please contact:

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