

Information bulletin



International Federation
of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

Nigeria: Cholera

Information bulletin n° 1
GLIDE no.
02 September, 2010

This bulletin is being issued for information only and reflects the current situation and details available at this time. The Federation is not seeking funding or other assistance from donors for this operation. The Nigerian Red Cross Society will, however, accept direct assistance to provide support to the affected population.

The IFRC West Coast Regional Representation is providing technical and financial support through its emergency response programme to the Nigerian Red Cross Society in delivering immediate assistance to some 25,000 beneficiaries representing 5,000 households in two most affected states.

Summary: A cholera outbreak has been reported in some states in Nigeria mostly in the northern part of the country with over 7,000 persons with over 232 deaths since July 2010. The outbreak is caused by poor hygiene practices among the affected population and the flooding occasioned by the heavy downpour. With reported cases on the increase, the Red Cross is mobilizing its volunteers and collaborating with government agencies to assist the affected communities in curtailing the spread of the disease. The Red Cross plans to scale up its intervention through the training of volunteers to carry out sensitization activities and messages of good hygiene practices to the affected population. The action is aimed at reducing the suffering of the victims, their families and communities as well as curtailing the spread to other communities.

[*<click here to view the map of the affected area, or here for detailed contact information>*](#)

The Situation

Since 23 of July, 2010 a cholera outbreak reported in the Jere Local Government Area of Yobe State, northern Nigeria has so far spread to 10 other states across the country with over 7,000 people affected while 353 have died, according to the Nigerian Ministry of Health. In Bauchi State, a total of 72 deaths have been reported as at the last week of August 2010. Other affected states are Borno, Jigawa, Rivers, Cross River, Taraba, Kaduna, Adamawa, Gombe and Kastina. Government health officials attributed the outbreak to poor hygiene and flooding with more inhabitants vulnerable to the epidemic. According to the local branch of the Red Cross, community leaders in the affected areas are calling on government and other NGOs to come to their assistance in reducing the spread of the disease.

As the spread of the epidemic needs to be quickly curtailed, the Nigerian Red Cross Society through its volunteers (Mothers' Club, Health Action Teams) in the affected communities is conducting health education activities, distribution of ORS to households and carrying out sanitation activities in some communities while health officials in the affected areas have been providing medical assistance to the victims.

In 1996, there was a similar outbreak of cholera in Borno State, although government did a timely intervention and the Red Cross volunteers supported through the distribution of leaflets and carrying out of social mobilization to sensitize the masses on good hygiene practices.

Red Cross and Red Crescent action

With the increase in the number of reported cases, the local branches of the Nigerian Red Cross are working with local government authorities in sensitizing communities. The Red Cross volunteers have also been collaborating with the Ministry of Health to carry out water purification activities. The National Society hopes to intensify its humanitarian activities by mobilizing and training its volunteers in the affected communities. The volunteers will be equipped and deployed to carry out house-to-house sensitization activities on good hygiene practices, symptoms identification and steps to take if a case is detected as well as early referral to health facilities.

The International Federation, through its delegation in Abuja, Nigeria, continues to work closely with the National Society by supporting its staff and volunteers in all activities of the Red Cross and ensuring that management and operational issues are directed and implemented within the principles and core values of the Red Cross Movement to reach the needs of the most vulnerable.

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 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

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