

REQUEST FOR ASSISTANCE



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 PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF KOREA: MEASLES EPIDEMIC

28 February 2007

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 185 countries.

In Brief

This REQUEST FOR ASSISTANCE seeks CHF 557,486 (USD 457,404 or EUR 346,112) In cash, kind, or services to assist 10 million beneficiaries for three months. Funds will be linked to the operational plan and budget for the 2007 DPRK Health Programme but will be reported on in separate operation updates.

[\(Click here to link directly to the attached operational budget\)](#)

In response to the outbreak of measles in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK), the DPRK Red Cross (DPRK Red Cross), supported by the Federation, is supplementing the work of the Ministry of Public Health (MoPH), United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), and the World Health Organization (WHO in association with the mass immunization campaign that will begin mid-March 2007. The Red Cross will provide sufficient supplies of vitamin A for Phase 2 of the vaccinations as well as double the stock of ampicillin at *ri*-level health clinics in the provinces supported by the Red Cross health programme.



Some of the equipment currently used medical doctors at the ri-level clinics.

UNICEF, as a specialized agency for worldwide immunization, is leading the response in cooperation with the country's MoPH. The magnitude of the response calls for joint action from all of the health stakeholders in the country, with the MoPH and UNICEF having specifically requested assistance from the DPRK Red Cross and the Federation with this response.

The situation

Since November 2006, some 3,000 people in 30 counties in ten provinces within the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) have been diagnosed with measles. To date there have been four reported casualties (two children and two adults), directly due to the measles and related complications such as pneumonia and cardiac failure.

Measles is a highly contagious viral infection. Measles patients suffer from a full-body skin rash that first appears on the face gradually spreading to the trunk and extremities. The skin rash is preceded by common cold or flu-like

DPRK: Measles Epidemic; Request for Assistance (linked to Appeal MAA54001)



Some of the resources used during community-based first aid training.

symptoms. As of 27 February, some 1,013 measles patients have been admitted to various local health facilities throughout the country for treatment, with more people continuing to seek treatment. Confirmation of the measles outbreak was announced on 16 February at a joint meeting organized by the Ministry of Public Health (MoPH), attended by representatives from the Federation, the DPRK Red Cross Society, WHO, and UNICEF.

Indications of the disease were first reported in Ryanggang Province's Pujon Ri, Kimhyongjik County in November 2006. The disease was initially diagnosed as rubella, based upon clinical symptoms of patients who were first identified as having the disease on 6 November in Pujon Ri, and in some northern areas including Ryanggang Province. As the disease was unable to be contained within these areas, it has subsequently spread throughout the country. According to the country's MoPH, confirmation of the measles could only be made in the middle of February after receiving diagnostic kits from the WHO.

The incidence of measles throughout the country is accompanied by a risk of an increased number of cases and the further spread of the infection to other parts of the country. A measles outbreak in a country like DPRK, where the overall health and nutritional status of the population has deteriorated in the recent past due to economic constraints and natural disasters coupled with the compromised health infrastructure, has serious consequences. The international guidelines in this situation requires a nationwide measles immunization campaign along-with Vitamin A supplements to decrease the morbidity and mortality rate of the illness.

Joint Action Plan

UNICEF is leading the response in cooperation with the country's MoPH. The magnitude of the response requires joint action from all of the health stakeholders in the country. The MoPH and UNICEF have therefore also requested assistance from the DPRK Red Cross Society and the Federation with this response.

According to a joint plan of action developed by the Ministry of Public Health, UNICEF and the Federation, the proposed measles immunization and vitamin A supplementation campaign will be carried out in two phases, keeping in view the national cold chain capacity. All the supplies will be air-lifted to the country in order to commence with activities as early as possible.

Phase 1 is scheduled to commence 15 March involving the immunization of some six million infants and children throughout the country ranging in age between six months and 15 years of age. The estimated costs of carrying out Phase 1 activities of USD 2,007,345 (CHF 2,457,260) will be fully covered by UNICEF. Sufficient supplies of vitamin A (Retinol 100,000 IU) are available with UNICEF in DPRK to cover the needs in Phase 1.

Phase 2 is scheduled to commence on 15 April, one month after the completion of Phase 1. Phase 2 will target some 10.2 million people nationwide ranging from 16 – 45 years of age. The estimated cost for Phase 2 is USD 3,242,320 (CHF 3,968,557). In Phase 2, measles vaccines will be provided by UNICEF and the WHO while the Federation will provide the vitamin A component. The DPRK government will cover the in-country transport and distribution costs of the immunization campaign.

The needs

Immediate needs

Immunization: UNICEF is fully covering the immunization needs in Phase 1. In Phase 2, UNICEF will partially cover immunization needs with available funds (*Central Emergency Response Funds (CERF), Rapid Response Mechanism*), with the remaining immunization needs covered by the WHO. The MoPH will provide transport and distribution support for both phases

Vitamin A: The vitamin A (Retinol 100,000 IU) required for Phase 1 is already in the pipeline/country with UNICEF. There is a need, however, for vitamin A (Retinol 200,000 IU) for Phase 2 targeting 10.2 million people. The undisputed role of vitamin A in reducing the morbidity and mortality in measles cases makes it very important component of measles immunization campaign. The MoPH approached the DPRK Red Cross and the Federation for assistance with this component based on their historic supportive role in carrying out activities intended to improve the health status of the general population.

Treatment of measles related complications: Measles can affect many body systems and mostly occur due to the secondary infections of the respiratory system and/or gastrointestinal tract. Illnesses therefore need to be effectively treated. UNICEF has allocated its reserve stock to the village health centers in order to facilitate necessary care. As the Federation's stock of essential medicine had depleted, in order to accommodate an additional patient load, the Federation decided to concentrate on quickly providing an additional supply of ampicillin for the health clinics. This is often the first medicine to run out of stock and which is key to the treatment of possible measles related complications.

Technical Support: Technical support required to implement and manage this nationwide immunization campaign will be provided by the WHO technical mission. The WHO will also assist the MoPH with an investigation into the source of the outbreak, as well as support diagnostic and treatment capacity.

Longer-term needs:

- **Social mobilization:** the motivation and mobilization of the communities to increase routine immunization uptake in general and measles in particular.
- **Improving the knowledge of health care workers (HCW),** to improve early diagnosis and prevention of complications of disease.
- **Improving the health care infrastructure,** through improved and uninterrupted availability of supplies and rehabilitated physical environment.

Coordination

The MoPH, UNICEF, WHO and the Federation are coordinating all the related activities during regular meetings held at the MoPH office. The health and nutrition coordination meeting held on 23 February addressed the measles campaign in detail and participants from UNFPA, ECHO, and WFP were briefed on the strategy and funding plans. UNICEF made a brief presentation on the current situation and the way-forward. The DPRK Red Cross is in daily contact with their focal point at the MoPH.

Red Cross/Red Crescent Action: The proposed operation

Objectives and activities planned

Overall objective: To contribute towards the reduction and containment of the current measles outbreak in DPRK.

Activities planned to reach this objective:

- The DPRK Red Cross and the Federation in cooperation with the MoPH and UNICEF, as part of the joint nationwide measles immunization campaign, will provide a sufficient amount of vitamin A drops (200,000 IU) to meet the needs of 10.2 million people aged 16 – 45 years during Phase 2 of the vaccination campaign.

DPRK: Measles Epidemic; Request for Assistance (linked to Appeal MAA54001)

- 2,258 health institutions in 64 cities/counties are provided with ampicillin vials for the treatment of patients of measles and its complications.

Thirty percent of the ampicillin will be kept as a strategic reserve by the national society and 70 percent will be distributed immediately to augment existing medicine supplies in health care facilities supported by the DPRK Red Cross and the Federation. The reserves will be mobilized upon the request of the MoPH/UNICEF in the event of a further increase of the disease in the country.

Communications – Advocacy and Public information

The MoPH is working closely with its provincial and city/county counterparts on necessary advocacy and public awareness activities using their country-wide household doctors' (HHD) network. The first aid posts managed by the DPRK Red Cross Society volunteers are being activated to work closely with the HHD to increase public awareness regarding measles prevention through simple hygiene promotion, vaccinations and vitamin A supplementation.

Capacity of the National Society

The DPRK Red Cross is well positioned to respond to public health emergencies based on experience gained and capacity built through the society's ongoing health and care programmes. The DPRK Red Cross's drug distribution programme covers 56 cities and counties in four provinces, with a total population of 8.25 million. With support from the Federation, ECHO and the national societies of Denmark, Germany, Norway, Japan and Finland, more than 2,000 health institutions received drugs and medical materials such as basic, intensive care and household doctor kits, and coal for heating during the winter. Other activities include health awareness promotion and community-based first aid (CBFA).

Recently, efforts were made to ensure Red Cross volunteers and community health professionals (household doctors, midwives and nurses) have improved skills, awareness and knowledge on prevention of common and communicable diseases, and care of the people who are vulnerable to these most common diseases. Over the past year, the DPRK Red Cross in co-operation with the WHO and MoPH, revised teaching materials related to *infectious diseases control* and conducted 13 associated workshops for 260 household doctors (September-November). These workshops and materials focused on updating the professional skills related to the prevention and care of communicable diseases such as tuberculosis, malaria, HIV/AIDS and STDs, diarrhoea, typhoid and avian influenza.

Capacity of the Federation

The Federation delegation in Pyongyang is responsible for the co-ordination and management oversight of extensive multilateral support provided by international donors to large-scale, multifaceted programmes implemented by the DPRK Red Cross Society. The programmes represent a comprehensive approach to address vulnerability issues in the DPRK, through processes that combine technical capacity building within the national society with provision of direct support to people living in communities exposed to risk. The programmes seek to develop national society institutional capacities, while delivering protection and practical support. Programme support to the DPRK Red Cross is also provided through the Federation's East Asia regional delegation, Asia Pacific Service Centre in Kuala Lumpur and the Geneva Secretariat.

Monitoring and evaluation

Monitoring of programme implementation, supervision of activities and support to field staff within the DPRK Red Cross has been improved over the past year, with the newly developed monitoring mechanism of the national society engaging six monitors working well. Monitoring is further supported by the Federation's health delegate, health officer and health assistant.

A joint monitoring mechanism using a standard format will be employed. The vitamin A will be administered simultaneously with the measles vaccine during Phase 2. The measles vaccines will be monitored jointly by the MoPH, UNICEF and the WHO using the WHO standard telly sheets. These telly sheets will then be used for monitoring the administration of vitamin A as well. The same people will be tasked with administering immunizations and vitamin A.

DPRK: Measles Epidemic; Request for Assistance (linked to Appeal MAA54001)

The distribution and use of ampicillin injections will be jointly monitored by the national society and the Federation through its team of field monitors, health delegate and health officers, alongside the monitoring of essential drugs and equipment supplies.

Susan Johnson
Director
National Society and Field Support Division

Markku Niskala
Secretary General

[Operational budget below; click here to return to the title page.](#)

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 Federation's Global Agenda

The International Federation's activities are aligned with under a 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:

- *The DPRK Red Cross Society: Min Byong Gwan (secretary-general) phone: +850.2.381.8986; fax: +850.2.381.3490.*
- *Federation country delegation in DPRK: Jacob Timmer (head of delegation); email: jaap.timmer@ifrc.org; phone: +850.2.381.4350; fax: +850.2.381.3490.*
- *Federation East Asia regional delegation in China: Alistair Henley (head of regional delegation); alistair.henley@ifrc.org; phone: +86.10.6532.7162, fax: +86.10.6532.7166.*
- *Federation Secretariat in Geneva (Asia Pacific department): Ewa Eriksson (regional officer); email: ewa.eriksson@ifrc.org; phone: +41.22.730.4252; fax: +41.22.733.0395; or Sandra Rosner (senior assistant); email: sandra.rosner@ifrc.org; phone: +41.22.730.4456; fax: +41.22.733.0395*

BUDGET SUMMARY
Democratic People's Republic of Korea: Measles
Epidemic

| | TOTAL CHF |
|--|----------------------|
| RELIEF NEEDS | |
| Medical & First Aid | 391,848 |
| TOTAL RELIEF NEEDS | 391,848 |
| <hr/> | |
| PROGRAMME SUPPORT | |
| Programme Support (6.5% of Total) | 36,237 |
| TRANSPORT & STORAGE | |
| International Transport, Distribution & Monitoring | 129,402 |
| TOTAL OPERATIONAL NEEDS | 165,639 |
| <hr/> | |
| TOTAL REQUEST FOR ASSISTANCE | 557,486 |