

PROGRAMME UPDATE



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

POLIO AND MEASLES

27 June 2005

FOCUS ON YEMEN

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.

For more information: www.ifrc.org

In Brief

Appeal No. 05AA089; Programme Update no. 1, Period covered: May – June 2005; Appeal target: CHF 3,502,674 (USD 3,005,000 or EUR 2,307,281); Appeal coverage: 21.4%
([click here to go directly to the attached Contributions List \(also available on the website\).](#))

Programme summary: progress has been made in the participation of national societies in community mobilization for immunization services, together with a gradual transition from accelerated disease control initiatives in selected countries (measles mortality reduction and polio eradication) towards supporting sustainable routine immunization programmes, through the participation of national societies and the Federation as partners in the work of the Global Alliance on Vaccines and Immunization (GAVI).

Yemen had been free of polio since surveillance began in 1996, but since April 2005 the country has been facing an outbreak of the disease which first started with reports of cases in the west coastal Hodeidah Governorate. Previous experiences in polio eradication showed that such an outbreak can be quickly contained with high quality immunizations, reaching every child under five years old. According to UNICEF six million doses of the new vaccine have been shipped to Yemen as part of the emergency measures to stop the ongoing polio outbreak. The doses were used for the nationwide immunization campaign which was conducted during the last three days of May. The campaign included active monitoring by the Yemen Red Crescent Society which assumed this role on request of the Ministry of Health and Population and with the support of the International Federation. Contingency plans for a potential third campaign in July are being planned.

For further information specifically related to this operation please contact:

- Yemen Red Crescent Society: Dr Abbas Zabarah, Secretary General, Phone +9671298615; Fax +9671283131; email yemenrc01@ifrc.org or ifrcye06@ifrc.org
- Delegation: Mr. Peter Kurlandsky, Federation Representative, Phone +9671293226; Fax +9671481871; email ifrcye02@ifrc.org
- Geneva Secretariat: Mr. Evgeni Parfenov, Desk officer, Phone 41 22 730 4325; Fax 41 22 733 0395; email evgeni.parfenov@ifrc.org

For longer-term programmes, please refer to the Federation's Annual Appeal.

Background and Achievements Yemen had been free of polio since surveillance began in 1996, but since April 2005 the country has been facing an outbreak of the disease which first started with reports of cases in the west coastal Hodeidah Governorate. Confirmed cases in Hodeidah soared up to 100 by 12 May (at the rate of 3-5 new cases a day). The latest cases occurred across five governorates throughout Yemen, suggesting that the virus had spread across the country. Low immunization coverage rates may have facilitated the spread of the virus. Experts from the WHO and the Ministry of Public Health and Population (MoPHP) worked on establishing means to control the outbreak, and started supplementary immunization activities. The outbreak response was launched in late May by using the recently developed monovalent oral polio vaccine type 1. Yemen had already conducted a mass campaign from 11-14 April to cover 4.5 million children when the country was considered at high risk of re-infection from nearby Sudan.

Goal: Participation of Yemen Red Crescent Society (YRCS) in monitoring of and community mobilization for polio immunization services in Yemen.

Objectives. Participate in the emergency nationwide campaign to control the recent polio outbreak in the country, especially in the coastal governorate of Hodeidah; reach remote areas and particularly the typical YRCS target groups such as the poor and other marginalized groups, and ensure their vaccination; support, through effective monitoring, the government efforts to cover all areas to provide polio oral vaccines to 4.5 million Yemeni children under five years old.

Progress /achievements. By the end of April, the YRCS's Hodeidah branch sent its first report on the breakout of polio in the coastal governorate of Yemen, indicating the rising number of cases among vulnerable unvaccinated children and those living in poor hygiene areas. Some cases were also discovered in three other governorates including the capital Sana'a. The Federation's office in Yemen, well informed of the Red Cross and Red Crescent experience in this area, took the initiative to prepare a proposal to contribute to the nationwide operation and maintain the position of the national society as a key partner to the MoPHP during such events.

The YRCS had a series of consultation meetings with the MoPHP to coordinate relevant activities and identify roles to successfully accomplish the nationwide campaign against the polio breakout. Possible areas of intervention for the national society were reviewed according to the needs of the MoPHP. The Health Minister expressed the urgent need for an independent body to monitor the vaccination process and give feedback on the whole operation, with an emphasis on shortcomings and deficiencies. The Yemen Red Crescent welcomed this idea.

A needs assessment was prepared at an earlier stage by each branch and was integrated in their proposals. The proposal was technically approved by the Federation's Secretariat which immediately released CHF 45000 from the Polio and Measles Global Appeal (05AA089) in support of the established plan of action. After consultations with the MoPHP the plan of action had to be slightly modified to fit with the new role of the national society as suggested by the Ministry.

Despite the change in the expected YRCS role in the vaccination campaign, the objectives and the plan of action did not have to be substantially modified. The initial objectives aimed at actual participation of YRCS volunteers in administering the vaccines to children in certain districts. But the needs of the MoPHP necessitated the participation of YRCS as an independent organization to monitor the process, and report successes and failures of the operation. As the practical experience has shown, on the second day of the campaign the branches started sending full reports to the MoPHP, identifying challenges and constraints.

The three-day nationwide polio vaccination campaign was launched at YRCS headquarter on 30 May and continued through the entire length of the campaign. It was inaugurated by the Prime Minister, accompanied by the Minister of Public Health and Population, the YRCS President, the Federation representative, representatives of WHO and UNICEF, staff/volunteers, and crowds of the local community. According to the plan of action, and in agreement with the MoPHP, the national society started its monitoring role from 31 May to 2 June 2005. Most of the branches continued monitoring activities for an additional fourth day to finalize the task of finding and reporting shortcomings. Several of the YRCS branches also stored the vaccine and took an active part in the immunisation run by the staff and the volunteers at the clinics as well; however the main role of the YRCS was supervising and monitoring in specific districts.

The YRCS was very active in the entire operation. Ten supervisors were selected from the Executive Board including the President, the Secretary General, and other senior staff and volunteers of the national society. Altogether 390 volunteers in 39 districts participated in the monitoring activities. The monitoring was carried out as planned, checking 5 - 10 houses selected randomly (out of each 50 houses). Ten volunteers headed by one supervisor were assigned to carry out monitoring in each of the 15 branches and sub-branches of the YRCS. Intensive monitoring allowed an increase in the immunisation coverage, and served to attract the population towards the importance of vaccination for the children.

The entire Yemen Red Crescent and the Federation delegation team were in one way or another involved in the campaign. Technical professional support was provided by the Federation's regional health delegate in Amman who, together with the YRCS health coordinator and the Federation team, participated in all phases of planning and implementation of this campaign.

Constraints

The unexpected nature of the outbreak of the disease left little time for preparation and training of the staff and volunteers of the Yemen Red Crescent. In spite of the fact that it was a new experience for the national society, its volunteers and staff showed good cooperation and coordination within their society as well as with the relevant state health authorities and structures. The lessons learnt will be of great importance for future similar activity, particularly the third phase of the polio campaign to be launched in the middle of July.

[Contributions list below; click here to return to the title page and contact information.](#)

Polio & Measles

ANNEX 1

APPEAL No. 05AA089

PLEDGES RECEIVED

27/06/2005

DONOR	CATEGORY	QUANTITY	UNIT	VALUE CHF	DATE	COMMENT
-------	----------	----------	------	-----------	------	---------

CASH

					TOTAL COVERAGE	
REQUESTED IN APPEAL CHF ----->				3,502,674		21.4%
OPENING BALANCE				398,311		
NEW ZEALAND - RC		18,036	NZD	14,681	08.06.05	
NORWEGIAN - GOVT/RC		150,000	NOK	28,350	14.03.05	
SWEDISH - RC		1,800,000	SEK	307,800	24.05.05	
SUB/TOTAL RECEIVED IN CASH				749,142	CHF	21.4%

KIND AND SERVICES (INCLUDING PERSONNEL)

DONOR	CATEGORY	QUANTITY	UNIT	VALUE CHF	DATE	COMMENT
SUB/TOTAL RECEIVED IN KIND/SERVICES				0	CHF	0.0%

ADDITIONAL TO APPEAL BUDGET

DONOR	CATEGORY	QUANTITY	UNIT	VALUE CHF	DATE	COMMENT
SUB/TOTAL RECEIVED				0	CHF	