



# GUINEA

## EPIDEMIC PREPAREDNESS AND RESPONSE

### Communities at the heart of our work

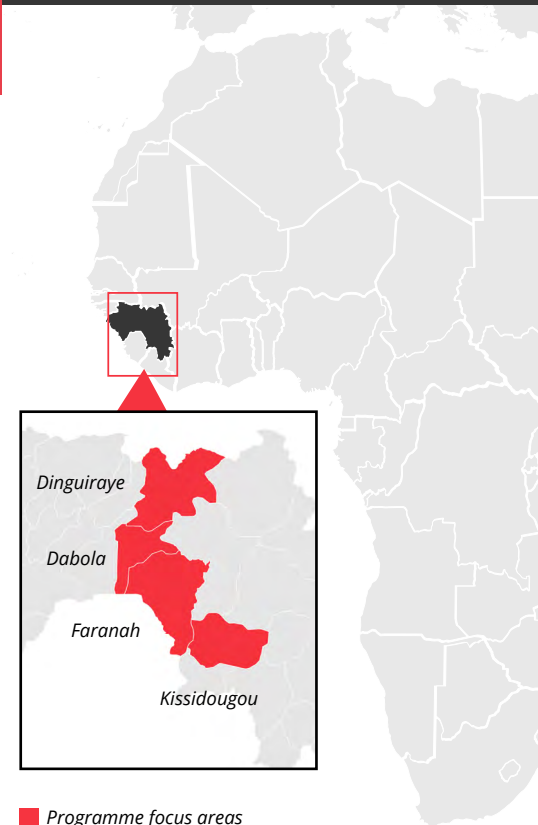
Epidemics begin and end in communities. When communities are engaged and trained in epidemic preparedness and response, they can stop outbreaks and ultimately save lives.

### Early detection, early action

Over half of the Guinean population lives below the poverty line, with alarming rates of food insecurity and malnutrition, particularly in rural areas. Between 2014 and 2016, the country faced the worst Ebola outbreak in history, which killed 2,544 people. The epidemic severely strained the health system, with a severe shortage of health workers.

The Guinean Red Cross, with support from the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) and funding from USAID, is helping communities to prepare and prevent the spread of diseases. Volunteers raise awareness of health risks, particularly with regard to diseases such as rabies, viral hemorrhagic fevers, yellow fever and COVID-19. Focused in the Faranah region, Red Cross works with governments, communities, local responders, and humanitarian partners to collectively prepare for, and respond to, epidemics.

Through its extensive network of community volunteers, the Guinea Red Cross is providing critical information, community-based surveillance, and referrals in hard-to-reach areas, in coordination with the Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Environment, the Ministry of Livestock and the National Health Security Agency.



■ Programme focus areas

**353**

confirmed cases included measles (318), acute water diarrhea (11), polio (4), meningitis (1), animal rabies (16), animal VHF (2) between January 2020 and December 2022.

**26,635**

household visits between January 2020 and December 2022.

**586**

volunteers and supervisors trained in epidemic control and community-based surveillance

## OUR WORK



### Preparing communities

We are ensuring communities have critical information about the spread of diseases and how to prevent them, systems to detect outbreaks, and mechanisms that ensure information sharing and community engagement. Activities include:

- Community engagement and health promotion through door-to-door visits and group discussions.
- Strengthening community-based surveillance systems for human and animal diseases.
- Engaging, training and collaborating with influential people in the community, such as religious leaders, traditional healers and body washers.

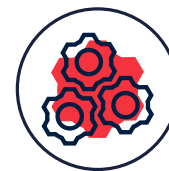


### Preparing first responders

The Guinean Red Cross has 6,000 volunteers throughout the country, enabling it to achieve a high level of community engagement. In their supporting role to the Guinean government, they are often central to emergency responses amid outbreaks.

Activities include:

- Developing Guinea Red Cross' multi-hazard plan and training Red Cross first response teams in close coordination with key partners.
- Strengthening response systems to enable a rapid and large-scale response.
- Training and strengthening of One Health Platforms and Health and Hygiene Committees.



### Preparing stakeholders

Epidemics not only threaten lives but all aspects of society, including trade, transportation and education. We work with a variety of key stakeholders to prepare for and respond to outbreaks. Activities include:

- Collecting key data and mapping intervention areas.
- Training stakeholders in the use of information systems to prevent, prepare for and respond to outbreaks.
- Training of media and first responders in communication in times of crisis.

## Rabies control campaign in the Faranah prefecture

In Guinea, canine rabies is endemic. Statistics available from the technical services of the Ministry of Livestock and the Ministry of Health indicate that between 2018 and August 2020, 1,823 cases of dog bites were recorded for 14 cases of human rabies. These figures are underestimated due to under-reporting of bite cases.

During the month of February 2022, seven (07) cases of bites by dogs that tested positive for rabies were recorded in the district of Banian, Faranah prefecture, through the Red Cross community-based surveillance system. This situation prompted the One Health platform to organize a rabies campaign in Bania and the surrounding sub-prefectures of Ballayah, Bambaya and Tiro. Red Cross volunteers raised awareness about rabies. Children and dog owners were given special attention because children are vulnerable to dog bites and the success of the dog vaccination depends on the support of the owners.

Volunteers reached 2,490 people with the rabies prevention messages and more than 200 dogs were vaccinated.



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