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Emergency Plan of Action Final Report

Republic of Congo: Ebola Virus Disease Epidemic Preparedness

 International Federation
of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

DREF operation	Operation n° MDRCG015
Date of Issue: 11 April 2019	Glide number:
Operation start date: 13 June 2018	Operation end date: 13 October 2018
Host National Society: Congolese Red Cross	Operation budget: CHF 83,438
Number of people at risk: 17 million	Number of people assisted: 43,043 people (approx. 8,609 households)
N° of National Societies involved in the operation: One (1), Congo Red Cross Society	
N° of other partner organizations involved in the operation: Four (4), Government (MoH), WHO, UNICEF and IFRC	

A. SITUATION ANALYSIS

Description of the disaster

On 3rd May 2018, more than 56 suspected, probable and confirmed cases of Ebola Virus Disease (EVD) were reported in the Equateur Province of the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). As of 7 June, there were a total of 59 confirmed, probable and suspected Ebola cases, of which 27 people had died. The World Health Organization (WHO) had, by then, declared an EVD outbreak on 8 May in the Bikoro health zone of Equateur province in DRC and some nine countries bordering the affected country were alerted and highlighted as being at-risk of a potential spread of said outbreak. Of these nine countries, the Republic of Congo (RoC) was then mentioned amongst the priority countries, where WHO and the Ministry of Health (MoH) engaged in preventive actions to reduce the impact of an eventual outbreak in the country.

In view of the above, on 13 June 2018, the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) through its Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF), allocated a CHF 83,438 grant to fund a three months long [EVD preparedness operation](#) to contribute to avoiding

the spread of the EVD into the Republic of Congo by conducting preparedness and prevention activities in at-risk localities sharing border with Equateur province, epicenter of the 9th EVD outbreak in DRC. The DRC's Minister of Public Health declared the end of this epidemic on 24 July 2018.



Sensitization sessions were conducted in most entry points from the DRC, especially along the Congo River. / Photo by Congolese Red Cross

Apart from logistics challenges that delayed implementation of planned activities, resulting in a one month no-cost extension of operation timeframe effected through publishing of an [Operation Update](#) on 11 September 2018, all activities were implemented, including the lessons learned workshop that took place in Brazzaville on 10 October 2018.

The major donors and partners of the DREF include the Red Cross Societies and governments of Australia, Austria, Belgium, Britain, Canada, Denmark, Finland, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Luxembourg, Monaco, the Netherlands, Norway, Spain, Sweden and the USA, as well as DG ECHO, the UK Department for International Development (DFID), AECID, the Medtronic and Zurich Foundations and other corporate and private donors. On behalf of Congo Red Cross Society (CRC), the IFRC would like to thank all partners for their generous contributions.

Summary of response

Overview of Host National Society

During this operation, the Congolese Red Cross was able to carry out several actions, including:

- Identification of entry points from DRC for proper sensitization. The following entry points were identified:
 - In Brazzaville Prefecture: Bacongo, Makelekele, Potopoto and Talangai
 - In Plateaux Prefecture: Makotipoko and Bouemba
 - In Likouala Prefecture: Dongou and Liranga
 - In Cuvette Prefecture: Mossaka and Loukolela
- Selection and training of volunteers for sensitization activities. The National Society (NS) mobilised and trained 51 volunteers and 8 supervisors during 3 training sessions in identified risk areas, namely Brazzaville, Plateaux and Likouala.
- Purchasing and distribution of planned relief items
- Sensitization activities. Using the door-to-door and mass sensitization approach, trained Red Cross volunteers and supervisors were able to reach 43,043 people in targeted localities with messages on good hygiene practices, how to identify suspected Ebola Virus Disease (EVD) cases and refer them to the nearest health centre.
- A lessons learned workshop was conducted on 12 October 2018 and indicated general satisfaction of both Red Cross staff and volunteers as well as the beneficiaries who also attended the workshop.

Overview of Red Cross Red Crescent Movement in country

During implementation, the host NS only received financial and technical support from IFRC Office in Yaoundé. French Red Cross which is present in Country attended the lessons learned workshop at the end and promised to support the host NS in subsequent initiatives in response to EVD.

Overview of non-RCRC actors in country

Apart from what was already described in the *DREF* [emergency plan of action](#) published on 14 June 2018, there has not been any new development from non-Red Cross Red Crescent actors in country.

Needs analysis and scenario planning

The new developments in DRC confirmed that it was really timely to conduct EVD preventive action in RoC. In fact, immediately after the end of the 9th EVD epidemic, the 10th was declared barely a few days later, even though not in the same localities. Vigilance is recommended to ensure that this new outbreak does not spread to neighbouring RoC.

Risk Analysis

The main risk for this operation was linked to an EVD alert reported on 9 August 2018, in the locality of Mboki, located about 1,000 km in the East of the Central African Republic -- the tests results, conducted by the *Institut Pasteur* in Bangui, were fortunately negative.

B. OPERATIONAL STRATEGY

Proposed strategy

The overall purpose of this DREF operation was to contribute to avoiding the spread of the EVD in the Republic of Congo by conducting EVD preparedness and prevention activities in at-risk localities sharing border with Equateur province, epicentre of the 9th EVD outbreak in DRC. This was done in line with recommendations and directions provided by WHO and the MoH in Republic of Congo.

CRC strategy to reach goal consisted in preparing the health services and the volunteers to carry out preventive actions to avoid any importation and spread of EVD in Congo. The following activities were planned and implemented as laid out in the emergency plan of action:

- Identification and training of volunteers;
- Purchase of equipment and inputs;
- Information, education and communication with the population to help prevent and reduce stigma, including collecting feedback on community perception, beliefs and rumours;
- Provision of technical support and counselling on community-based surveillance;
- Community commitment;
- Support for epidemiological investigations and measures against epidemics with MoH;
- Referral of any case of fever to nearby health centres;
- Coordination (participation in coordination committee meetings, ensuring monitoring, evaluation and reporting).

C. DETAILED OPERATIONAL PLAN



Health

People reached: 43,043

Male: 20,221

Female: 22,822

Health Outcome 1: Communities living in localities at risk (Likouala, Central Cuvette and Plateaux) are informed about EVD and observe good practices with regard to Ebola prevention and detection measures.

Indicators:	Target	Actual
Number of people reached with Ebola awareness messages	50,000	43,043

Health output 1.1: The risks of EVD importation are reduced in border areas thanks to the involvement of CRC's volunteers in social mobilization and community-based surveillance

Indicators:	Target	Actual
Number of households visited	10,000	8,609
Number of people reached with Ebola awareness messages	50,000	43,043
Number of volunteers trained in community surveillance	55 volunteers and 8 supervisors	51 volunteers and 9 supervisors
Number of supervisors trained and deployed	8	9
Number of cases referred to Integrated health centres (CSI)	NA	0

Narrative description of achievements

- In order to achieve the set objectives, three (3) training sessions were conducted for 51 volunteers and 9 supervisors from the four (4) targeted divisions. The sensitization of communities was implemented in the 4 divisions as planned. Some localities like Bouemba could not have activities implemented because the local committee is not operational.
- A total of 51 volunteers were trained instead of the planned 55, because the locality of Bouemba does not have a functional local committee as indicated above. As such, the training for four (4) volunteers supposed to be held for this local committee did not take place. On the other hand, nine (9) supervisors were trained instead of the planned eight (8) because the workload in Brazzaville was huge and a supplementary supervisor was needed.
- Three (3) awareness sessions were planned to be held per week for two weeks; however, this was revised to five (5) sessions for the two weeks, as per field needs. As such, a total of 10 awareness sessions were conducted.
- A total of 43,043 people was reached with hygiene promotion and EVD awareness and prevention in targeted localities as shown in the following table:

Divisions/Localities	Men	Women	Boys	Girls	Total
Brazzaville					
Makelekele	717	938	479	491	2625
Bacongo	571	701	405	433	2,110
Poto-Poto	4,983	3,956	1,473	952	11,364

Talangaï	1,023	1,335	857	934	4,149
Likouala					
Liranga	500	800	600	725	2,625
Dongou	350	745	655	840	2,590
Cuvette					
Mossaka	1,350	1,692	2,021	2,504	7,567
Loukolela	1,504	2,016	2,003	2,632	8,155
Plateaux					
Makotipoko	200	500	530	628	1858
Grand Total	11,198	12,683	9,023	10,139	43,043

No EVD was registered in RoC during the operation timeframe; thus the NS did not refer any case to the nearest health centre.

Challenges

- The budget for the training sessions for volunteers and supervisors was not sufficient to cover all 4 divisions of Congo. As such, a grouping of volunteers and supervisors of Plateaux and Cuvette Divisions in Ngo district, gateway city of these two divisions, was chosen to host the training session. Thus, the budget line for the training of volunteers underwent a consensual adjustment with the support of RDRT and IFRC Yaoundé CCST Disaster Coordinator.
- The NS faced difficulties in accessing some remote areas among the selected localities to reach the number of households / people targeted with awareness on Ebola. As such, the NS requested and obtained a no-cost timeframe extension of one month to be able to conduct awareness in all planned localities. This extension also allowed supervision of activities launched in these localities and to recover the invoices for the working advances from the local committees.
- Looking at the remaining period of implementation and the difficulties in reaching the more isolated localities outside Brazzaville, an amendment of the operational action plan was envisaged to comply with the 24 days of sensitization. As such, instead of 3 days a week, volunteers were required to work 5 days a week for 5 weeks.

Lessons Learned

- During implementation, the NS noted good community support for the operation, the involvement of local authorities and partners, availability of volunteers, the effective support of IFRC in the implementation of activities, which helped them implement the planned activities with ease. Unfortunately, difficult and expensive means of transport to riparian areas (Plateaux, Cuvette and Likouala Divisions) and the late transfer of funds to be paid to suppliers who delivered the materials and inputs (logistics) were deplored.
- Given the huge difficulties the NS faced in accessing the riparian localities, the NS is requesting support for future operations, to purchase of a means of transport (engine boat or canoe) for its local headquarters in Mossaka and Loukolela for subsequent interventions.

Health Output 1.3: Community-based prevention of EVD and health promotion are provided to the target population

Indicators:	Target	Actual
Number of people reached with Ebola awareness messages	50,000	43,043
Number of social mobilization activities organized	06	10
Number of volunteers deployed for field monitoring	8	9
Number of meetings held with local leaders	16	12

Narrative description of achievements

- The NS attended 12 out of the planned 16 meetings and held 3 face to face meetings with strategic partners such as the MoH, WHO and UNICEF.
- During this operation, Congolese Red Cross volunteers visited 8,609 households and provided them with messages on EVD awareness and prevention.

Challenges

Nothing to report.

Lessons Learned

Although the beneficiaries who attended the lessons learned workshop commended the efforts made by Congolese Red Cross to raise their awareness about the EVD danger surrounding them, they recommended that sensitization should continue beyond the timeframe of the DREF operation as this will help them keep in mind the need to adopt risk-free behaviours. Any financial support to enable the NS continue sensitization and community-based EVD surveillance is therefore highly appreciated.

International Disaster Response

Outcome: Effective and coordinated international disaster response is ensured

Indicators:	Target	Actual
Number of RDRT deployed for the operation	1	1

Output 1: Deployment of surge capacity

Indicators:	Target	Actual
Number of volunteers deployed for the operation	63 (55 volunteers and 8 supervisors)	60 (51 volunteers and 9 supervisors)
Number of NS staff deployed for the operation	18	12

Narrative description of achievements

An RDRT from Togolese Red Cross was deployed to support the Congolese Red Cross with the implementation of this operation for one month. The contribution of this person was instrumental as the operation came at a time when the host NS was waking up from a rather long period with no meaningful project being implemented.

The RDRT also helped train the 51 volunteers and 9 supervisors who were involved in the operation.

In addition, the Host NS deployed 12 of their staff for the operation. The planned number was 18, but this was not possible as adjustments were made to the budget to help implement critical activities of the operation such as sensitization of remote riparian communities.

Challenges

Nothing to report.

Lessons Learned

The RDRT member left at a time when the Host NS still needed him to support implementation. It is therefore recommended that for subsequent operations in RoC, RDRT members be deployed for at least 2 months to ensure that they fully accompany Ns in implementation.

Influence others as leading strategic partner

Outcome: The IFRC secretariat, together with National Societies uses their unique position to influence decisions at local, national and international levels that affect the most vulnerable

Indicators:	Target	Actual
Number of communication materials produced	1	1

Output 1: IFRC and NS are visible, trusted and effective advocates on humanitarian issues

Indicators:	Target	Actual
Number of radio spots produced	1	2
Number of translation works produced	3	2

Narrative description of achievements

The Host NS supported media coverage during the operation, producing 2 radio spots that were broadcast over national radio stations.

Translation of documents from English to French and from French to English was done in Yaoundé to facilitate communication with the host NS.

Challenges		
General Assembly of the Host NS was to take place in 2017 but were delayed due to lack of funding. Also, Strategic Plan is outdated and should be revised. The National Society without a proper leadership and a strategic plan is unable to play fully their auxiliary role and to attract interest from RCRC and external partners. Movement partners have provided financial support to the host NS and General Assembly is scheduled to take place in May 2019.		
Lessons Learned		
The Host NS should make provision every year for the cost of organizing a General Assembly instead always expecting external support.		
Output 2: IFRC produces high-quality research and evaluation that informs advocacy, resource mobilization and programming		
Indicators:	Target	Actual
Number of lessons-learned workshops organized	1	1
Narrative description of achievements		
The planned lessons-learned workshop was held in Brazzaville on 12 October 2018. The host NS invited beneficiaries from all targeted localities, even though some could not attend due to transportation means limitation in RoC, those who attended showed gratitude and satisfaction for the work well-done by Congolese Red Cross, and expressed the wish to see the NS continue awareness raising even beyond the timeframe of the operation.		
Challenges		
Nothing to report		
Lessons learned		
Nothing to report.		

D. THE BUDGET

The overall budget for this operation was CHF 83,438 of which CHF 83,431 (99.99%) were spent. A balance of CHF 7 will be returned to DREF pot.

A 100% variance is noted under the **Logistics Services** budget line as the spent CHF 2,500 were not budgeted at planning stage. In addition, a 16% over expenditure is highlighted under **National Society Staff** as additional CHF 581 was spent due to additional per diem paid to NS staff on field mission, as some missions were extended due to needs. **Travel** budget line was equally over spent by CHF 1,523 (17%) due to additional field mission that was needed for activity follow up. Financial charges were over spent by CHF 902 (36%) because of unexpected exchange loss between CHF and XAF.

Contact information

Reference documents



Click here for:

- [Operation update](#)
- [Emergency Plan of Action \(EPoA\)](#)

For further information, specifically related to this operation please contact:

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For In-Kind donations and Mobilization table support:

- **Global Logistics Services** - Name, title, email, phone
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How we work

All IFRC 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 Humanitarian 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.

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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

DREF Operation

FINAL FINANCIAL REPORT

Selected Parameters			
Reporting Timeframe	2018/6-2019/2	Operation	MDRCG015
Budget Timeframe	2018/6-10	Budget	APPROVED

Prepared on 10/Apr/2019

All figures are in Swiss Francs (CHF)

MDRCG015 - Republic of the Congo - Ebola Virus Disease

Operating Timeframe: 13 Jun 2018 to 13 Oct 2018

I. Summary

Opening Balance	0
Funds & Other Income	83,438
DREF Allocations	83,438
Expenditure	-83,431
Closing Balance	7

II. Expenditure by area of focus / strategies for implementation

Description	Budget	Expenditure	Variance
AOF1 - Disaster risk reduction			0
AOF2 - Shelter			0
AOF3 - Livelihoods and basic needs			0
AOF4 - Health	83,438	80,559	2,879
AOF5 - Water, sanitation and hygiene			0
AOF6 - Protection, Gender & Inclusion			0
AOF7 - Migration			0
Area of focus Total	83,438	80,559	2,879
SF11 - Strengthen National Societies			0
SF12 - Effective international disaster management		2,872	-2,872
SF13 - Influence others as leading strategic partners			0
SF14 - Ensure a strong IFRC			0
Strategy for implementation Total		2,872	-2,872
Grand Total	83,438	83,431	7

DREF Operation

FINAL FINANCIAL REPORT

Selected Parameters			
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Budget Timeframe	2018/6-10	Budget	APPROVED

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MDRCG015 - Republic of the Congo - Ebola Virus Disease

Operating Timeframe: 13 Jun 2018 to 13 Oct 2018

III. Expenditure by budget category & group

Description	Budget	Expenditure	Variance
Relief items, Construction, Supplies	22,021	18,056	3,965
Water, Sanitation & Hygiene	10,925	10,145	780
Medical & First Aid	9,396	6,692	2,704
Teaching Materials	1,700	1,219	481
Logistics, Transport & Storage	3,750	6,269	-2,519
Storage	0	0	0
Transport & Vehicles Costs	3,750	3,769	-19
Logistics Services		2,500	-2,500
Personnel	29,625	29,232	392
International Staff	8,000	8,620	-620
National Society Staff	3,500	4,081	-581
Volunteers	18,125	16,532	1,593
Workshops & Training	5,750	5,807	-57
Workshops & Training	5,750	5,807	-57
General Expenditure	17,200	18,975	-1,775
Travel	9,000	10,523	-1,523
Information & Public Relations	2,600	1,931	669
Office Costs	600	619	-19
Communications	2,500	2,500	0
Financial Charges	2,500	3,402	-902
Indirect Costs	5,092	5,092	0
Programme & Services Support Recover	5,092	5,092	0
Grand Total	83,438	83,431	7