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Emergency Plan of Action (EPoA) Cameroon: Train Crash

 International Federation
of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

DREF n° MDRCM024	
Date of issue: 4 November 2016	Expected timeframe: 2 months Expected end date: 3 January 2016
DREF allocated: CHF 64,175	
Total number of people affected: 1,300	Number of people to be assisted: 1,066
Host National Society(ies) presence (n° of volunteers, staff, branches): More than 50 permanent staff, 40,000 volunteers with 18,000 active volunteers across 58 branches and 339 local committees.	
Red Cross Red Crescent Movement partners actively involved in the operation: French Red Cross, ICRC, IFRC	
Other partner organizations actively involved in the operation: Government (including National Fire Brigade and Public Hospitals)	

A. Situation analysis

Description of the disaster

On 21 October 2016, a bridge collapsed in Manyai, a village located some 68 km from Yaoundé, the capital city of Cameroon, disrupting traffic between Yaoundé and Douala. The highway Yaoundé-Douala is a very busy road connecting the Douala seaport in Cameroon to the other countries of the Central Africa sub-region. After the highway became inaccessible in the early hours of Friday 21 October 2016, travellers in Yaoundé and Douala chose to use the only train operator in Cameroon, as their only affordable means of transport. In response to an unprecedented number of travellers, CAMRAIL authorities decided to add additional wagons to the trains in Douala and Yaoundé, thereby doubling the usual capacity; as reported by the Cameroon Minister of Transport on the National Television Channel.



Cameroon Red Cross volunteers remove wounded people from the rubble. Photo Ayissi Nouma

The overloaded train (reports say that approximately 1,300 passengers on board a train that usually carries 600) left Yaoundé at 11 am bound for Douala, and derailed at Eseka train station, some 119 km from Yaoundé. Government sources declared that some 75 people were killed, and approximately 600 wounded, some seriously. The accident occurred around midday, a business peak time in such places, and local vendors usually sell produce along the platform.

The President of the Republic of Cameroon decreed free treatment for those wounded and who were dispatched to hospitals in Douala and Yaoundé. To cope with the emergency, at least 20,000 sachets of blood were needed, and the National Order of Physicians appealed for contributions from the public, as they could not afford to pay for blood. Dead bodies have been transported to the hospitals in Yaoundé, and many of them have not yet been identified even 10 days after the accident. Some bodies are very difficult to identify due to the nature of the accident and recovery of bodies has been hampered due to ongoing rains.

Summary of the current response

Overview of Host National Society

Following the announcement of the train derailment in Eseka, Cameroon Red Cross immediately deployed a team from its headquarters to the field to conduct a rapid assessment of the situation and provide first aid to the wounded. The team was led by the Secretary General of the National Society, while the National Disaster Management Coordinator took a secondary untarred road from Yaoundé to Eseka, since the highway Yaoundé-Douala was cut off in Manyai the same day following the collapse of a bridge. The Cameroon Red Cross (CRCS) team arrived the scene of the accident at the same time as the National Fire Brigade and government authorities. The National Society mobilised 60 first aid workers (15 from Douala, 4 from Eseka and 41 from Yaoundé) to provide first aid and assist in the retrieval of dead bodies.

Over the next 48 hours following the crash, CRCS first aid workers treated 561 wounded people, provided them with first aid treatment and prepared them for transfer to Yaoundé and Douala hospitals. The transfers were undertaken by the Government. The CRCS team recovered 55 dead bodies, including five children younger than ten years as well as two expatriates. There were more dead bodies trapped under the collapsed train, but CRCS volunteers did not have any appropriate equipment to remove them. The National Society also mobilised two resource people (two RDRT members and former delegates) to assist first aid workers during this response.

Overview of Red Cross Red Crescent Movement in country

The IFRC's Country Cluster Office for Central Africa is based in Yaoundé, the capital city of Cameroon. This proximity makes it easier to provide support to Cameroon Red Cross. ICRC and the French Red Cross are also based in Yaoundé, and regular Movement Coordination meetings are organised with them in Cameroon at least once per month. For this operation, IFRC has facilitated the publishing of the DMIS report and a web story about the event on IFRC website¹. ICRC has provided support through the replenishment of body bags, stretchers and gloves as well as access to a land cruiser used in the response.

Overview of non-RCRC actors in country

Immediately after the announcement of the disaster, the government set up two crisis committees, one in Douala and the other in Eseka. While the crisis committee in Douala has been tasked with the safe transfer of passengers to Douala, the one in Eseka, coordinated by the Senior Divisional Officer (SDO) of Eseka, is responsible for information management at the scene of the accident. The National Directorate for Civil Protection has dedicated a toll-free number in Eseka to help family members call and get information about their relatives. The Government has also deployed a psychosocial support expert to Eseka to assess the situation and provide psychosocial support to survivors, families of affected people, witnesses and accident stakeholders. The President of the Republic of Cameroon has decreed free treatment of wounded people who have been dispatched in hospitals of Douala and Yaoundé. Dead bodies have been transported by government to the hospitals in Yaoundé. The President of the Republic has also declared the day of 24 October 2016 as National Mourning Day in memory of the people who were killed in the accident and has commissioned an investigation to determine the exact cause of the disaster.

Needs analysis, beneficiary selection, risk assessment and scenario planning

Following the immediate assessment conducted by Cameroon Red Cross, there are gaps that need to be covered. The CRCS deployed 60 volunteers since 21 October 2016; and these volunteers have been collecting dead bodies, providing first aid to wounded people, and referring them to Government services for their proper transfer to the Yaoundé and Douala hospitals. There is an urgent need to pay per diems to those volunteers to enable them to continue their humanitarian activities.

In addition, the volunteers in the field (60 volunteers and 6 supervisors) need psychosocial support to help them debrief and live with what they witnessed during this traumatising accident. The 66 volunteers and supervisors will each have two sessions with a psychologist during which they will be properly debriefed and provided with guidance as needed.

Hospitals in Yaoundé and Douala have declared a blood shortage because of the accident, and are appealing for additional blood stocks. Cameroon Red Cross has a tradition of facilitating blood donation. The National Society will mobilise at least 1,000 blood donors, and the blood will be collected by government hospitals for the treatment of wounded people. Sandwiches, drinks and taxi fares will be provided for these blood donors.

So far, the CRCS has already used part of their emergency relief items for this operation. The DREF allocation will be used to replenish the items that have already been used or will be used. Those items include 66 first aid kits, 20 stretchers, 5 box of gloves, 660 masks, 66 lamp torches, 66 pairs of boots, 66 raincoats, 66 hand-washing sanitizers, 25 camping beds, 60 aprons for volunteers, 6 jackets for supervisors, 2 vacuum mattresses and 200 blankets. Note that body bags are being replenished by the ICRC.

¹<http://www.ifrc.org/en/news-and-media/news-stories/africa/cameroon/cameroon-red-cross-response-team-provides-emergency-support-following-train-accident-72626/>

Risk Assessment

The major risk for this operation is if the Yaoundé – Douala road remains closed for a longer period and if supervisors cannot use the main road, additional cost and time will be required for detours through untarred roads.

B. Operational strategy and plan

Overall objective

The overall aim of this operation is to contribute to the assistance to people affected by the Eseka train crash by providing psychosocial support and mobilising the populations for blood donation.

Proposed strategy

This DREF will support Cameroon Red Cross to provide assistance through the following activities:

- Pay incentives to the Red Cross volunteers who were mobilised to carry out search and rescue activities in Eseka. Volunteers were mobilised from Yaoundé, Douala and Eseka, and were supervised in the field by a team from the CRCS headquarters in Yaoundé
- Mobilisation of blood donors for one month in support of the blood collection efforts being made by Government in hospitals and health centres in collaboration with national and international partners
- Refer Red Cross volunteers to health centres where they can receive psychosocial support following the shocking period they have gone through trying to save lives
- Replenish the first aid materials that were used during the life-saving interventions of Red Cross volunteers.
- A lessons learned workshop will assess Red Cross work during this operation and draw lessons for future interventions. These opportunities will be used to brief CRCS volunteers and staff on DREF guidelines.

Operational support services

Human resources

60 Red Cross volunteers and 6 supervisors were mobilized for the operation. The operation will be supported by the Central Africa CCST.

Logistics and supply chain

- Procurement plans: The items deployed are available on the Cameroonian market will be purchased by Cameroon Red Cross. Items not available in Cameroon will be purchased internationally through IFRC logistics.
- Warehouse and storage plans: The National Society has a small warehouse at their headquarters in Yaoundé that can be used for storing the items that will be replenished.
- Transport and fleet needs: Fuel will be needed for CRCS vehicles deployed for this operation.

Information technologies (IT)

Since the appearance of the disaster, the CRCS and IFRC have been using telephone extensively for communications considering the enclaved nature of the site of the accident. Provisions are made in the budget to cover those costs.

Communications

National and international media will be approached to ensure proper coverage of Red Cross interventions.

Planning, monitoring, evaluation, & reporting (PMER)

A two-day lessons learned workshop will be organised at the end of the operation.

Administration and Finance

See attached budget

C. DETAILED OPERATIONAL PLAN

Health & care

Needs analysis: Psychosocial support will be provided to Red Cross volunteers involved in the operation, and also to the bereaved families. Most hospitals in Douala and Yaoundé have expressed the need for supplementary blood to treat wounded people. The NS will mobilise at least 1,000 blood donors for this operation. The first aid and relief items used will be replenished.

Population to be assisted: The population targeted by this operation include Red Cross volunteers, the bereaved families and wounded people presently in government hospitals. The total number of people targeted is 1,066 (66 Red Cross volunteers and supervisors, and 1,000 wounded people).

Outcome 1: The immediate risks to the health of affected populations are reduced.																	
Output 1.1: Target population is provided with rapid medical management of injuries and diseases																	
Activities planned	Week/Month	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
Provide first aid to wounded people and dead body management																	
Purchase the items to be replenished (include 66 first aid kits, 20 stretchers, 5 box of gloves, 660 masks, 66 lamp torches, 66 pairs of boots, 66 raincoats, 66 hand-washing sanitizers, 25 camping beds, 60 aprons for volunteers, 6 jackets for supervisors, 2 vacuum mattresses and 200 blankets) are purchased and transported to the NS headquarters in Yaoundé.																	
Fuel Cameroon Red Cross vehicles for the operation																	
Transport the items to warehouse																	
Output 1.2: Psychosocial support provided to the people affected by this operation.																	
Activities planned	Week/Month	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
Identification of the beneficiaries (66 Cameroon Red Cross volunteers and supervisors)																	
Provide psychosocial support sessions to volunteers																	
Organise and facilitate a lessons learned workshop																	
Outcome 2: The gap of blood in the hospitals of Yaoundé and Douala is filled to enable the proper treatment of wounded people in hospitals.																	
Output 2.1: At least 1,000 blood bags are collected by the hospitals of Yaoundé and Douala with Red Cross support																	
Activities planned	Week/Month	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
Mobilise and sensitize blood donors (3 per week for 4 weeks)																	
Liaise with the appropriate hospitals for the collection of blood.																	

Budget

See budget attached

Contact Information

For further information specifically related to this operation please contact:

In the National Society

- **Cameroon Red Cross:** Bernard Ayissi Nouma Secretary General, Cameroon RC; email: ayissibernard@yahoo.fr, Tel +237 677 223556
- **IFRC Central Africa Office:**
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For Resource Mobilization and Pledges:

- **In Africa Region:** Fidelis Kangethe, Partnerships and Resource Mobilization Coordinator; Nairobi; phone: +254 731 984 117; email: fidelis.kangethe@ifrc.org

For Performance and Accountability (planning, monitoring, evaluation and reporting enquiries)

- **In Africa Region:** Penny Elghady, Acting PMER Coordinator, penny.elghady@ifrc.org; phone: +254 731 067277

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 (NGOs) 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.

The IFRC's work is guided by Strategy 2020 which puts forward three strategic aims:



Save lives.
protect livelihoods,
and strengthen recovery
from disaster and crises.



Enable **healthy**
and **safe** living.



Promote social inclusion
and a culture of
non-violence and **peace**.

DREF OPERATION

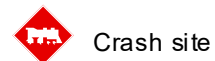
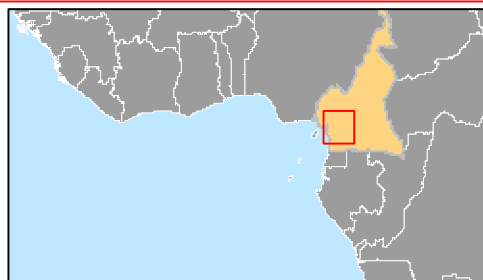
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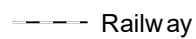
Budget Group	DREF grant budget
Shelter - Relief	0
Shelter - Transitional	0
Construction - Housing	0
Construction - Facilities	0
Construction - Materials	0
Clothing & Textiles	660
Food	0
Seeds & Plants	0
Water, Sanitation & Hygiene	0
Medical & First Aid	23,724
Teaching Materials	0
Utensils & Tools	0
Other Supplies & Services	1,073
Emergency Response Units	0
Cash Disbursements	0
Total RELIEF ITEMS, CONSTRUCTION AND SUPPLIES	25,457
Land & Buildings	0
Vehicles Purchase	0
Computer & Telecom Equipment	0
Office/Household Furniture & Equipment	0
Medical Equipment	0
Other Machinery & Equipment	0
Total LAND, VEHICLES AND EQUIPMENT	0
Storage, Warehousing	0
Distribution & Monitoring	3,500
Transport & Vehicle Costs	1,500
Logistics Services	0
Total LOGISTICS, TRANSPORT AND STORAGE	5,000
International Staff	0
National Staff	0
National Society Staff	7,900
Volunteers	8,596
Total PERSONNEL	16,496
Consultants	0
Professional Fees	0
Total CONSULTANTS & PROFESSIONAL FEES	0
Workshops & Training	6,395
Total WORKSHOP & TRAINING	6,395
Travel	2,660
Information & Public Relations	0
Office Costs	1,333
Communications	1,917
Financial Charges	1,000
Other General Expenses	0
Shared Support Services	0
Total GENERAL EXPENDITURES	6,910
Programme and Supplementary Services Recovery	3,917
Total INDIRECT COSTS	3,917
TOTAL BUDGET	64,175



Cameroon: Train Crash



Crash site



Railway