

Emergency Plan of Action (EPoA) Central African Republic: Ebola virus disease preparedness

DREF operation	Operation n° MDRCF018
Date of issue: 30 August 2014	Date of disaster: N/A
Operation manager (responsible for this EPoA): Pierre Danladi, CAR operations manager	Point of contact (name and title): Viviane Nzeusseu, Central Africa Regional Health Coordinator
Operation start date: 29 August 2014	Expected timeframe: 3 months
Overall operation budget: 48,697 CHF	
Number of people affected: 0	Number of people to be assisted: 3 targeted regions
Host National Society(ies) presence (n° of volunteers, staff, branches): 200 volunteers	
Red Cross Red Crescent Movement partners actively involved in the operation: N/A	
Other partner organizations actively involved in the operation: Ministry of Health (MOH), WHO	

A. Situation analysis

Description of the disaster

A fast-spreading outbreak of Ebola virus disease is affecting several countries in West Africa. The Ebola virus outbreak in Guinea since February this year which later spread to Liberia, Sierra Leone and Nigeria has continued to cause untold hardship and hundreds of deaths (over 1,000 reported) in those countries and the number of cases is expected to increase exponentially. In Liberia and Sierra Leone it has been declared out of control thus the declaration of state of emergency. Efforts to stop the ongoing spread and bring the epidemic to an end are gaining in commitment and capacity; however the risk for further spread, both within the affected countries and more widely is also a real possibility and needs to be planned for appropriately.

The virus has continued to spread across borders in West Africa. This is the first time an outbreak of this size is being experienced in West Africa.

To date, no treatment or vaccine is available for Ebola virus disease, which kills between 25% and 90% of victims, depending on the strain of the virus. The disease is transmitted by direct contact with blood, faeces or sweat, or by sexual contact or unprotected handling of contaminated corpses.

Since the confirmation of the Ebola virus disease in Guinea, the IFRC with the National Societies have developed response strategies, which include supporting the National Societies of the affected countries, countries with a physical border to the affected countries and those who are at risk. With the World Health Organization's (WHO) recent announcement of the outbreak as a global health emergency, the world-wide focus on the disease and the steps taken by local and national authorities are likely to increase and to tighten controls and movements around outbreak areas.

The IFRC is providing technical assistance at the regional, zone and global level supporting the National Societies not currently affected but at risk. Supporting activities include:

- Preparedness for potential cases to be able to respond rapidly to stop transmission in new areas.
- Preparedness for response through volunteer training in communication around epidemics and behavioural change.
- Supporting Ministries of Health in prevention activities and social mobilisation.
- Pre-positioning personal protective equipment and related training.
- Adaption and dissemination of information, education and communication material linked with community social mobilisation activities.
- Consideration of lessons learned from the EVD response to date to inform the preparedness plans.

The proposed preparedness activities in the Central African Republic (CAR) follow the regional response framework's support to neighbouring National Societies.

Summary of the current response

Overview of Host National Society

The country has never experienced an outbreak of Ebola before and possess little if no experience in the response to such an epidemic. However in the past three years, the National Society has trained its volunteers in preparing and responding to epidemics such as Cholera (in 2011), yellow fever, meningitis and measles (2013). The volunteers are familiar to the manuals for the management and handling of epidemics within the community. They are often called upon by the health authorities in the epidemiological surveillance and outreach activities in communities, in the event of any epidemics.

Preparedness activities to respond to a potential outbreak of the Ebola virus is necessary to train both staff and volunteers in coping with the disease.

Movement Coordination

All planned activities carried out by the Central African Red Cross Society (CARC) to prevent and be able to respond to Ebola are designed and implemented with the support of the IFRC Regional Representation for Central Africa.

Overview of non-RCRC actors in country

The Ministry of Health has activated the Committee in charge of epidemics preparedness and response. At the same time, the health cluster, which includes the CARC, WHO, as well as national and international NGOs working in the health sector, has recently developed a response plan that includes several components, amongst which are the strengthening of epidemiological surveillance and social mobilization. Given its ability to work throughout the territory even in times of conflict, the CARC co-chairs the mobilization sub-committee. As such, it is involved in the designing and dissemination of key messages within communities.

Needs analysis, beneficiary selection, risk assessment and scenario planning

Needs Assessment

At present, no case of the Ebola virus has been reported in CAR, although a few suspected cases were reported as negative. However, confirmed cases were reported in neighbouring countries with the CAR, including the DRC and Nigeria. The country's authorities fear an import from neighbouring countries because of significant commercial trade between Cameroon and Nigeria. In addition, the Bangui - Douala air space is the only opening between the CAR and other African countries. As such, the outbreak of an Ebola epidemic would be fatal for CAR in the current humanitarian crisis context, where almost all health facilities are non-functional and inaccessible.

The population has learnt about the disease from the national and international media however, a real information campaign to raise awareness is not yet operational.

Risk Assessment

The Ministry of Health, in partnership with WHO, have implemented epidemiological surveillance teams at border entry points (airports, sea ports and land borders). The current response plan has provisions for the management of confirmed cases, but makes no mention of provisions for the protection of health workers and volunteers.

The country is facing ongoing conflicts between the Anti-balaka Christian militias and the Muslim militias. The National Society will ensure that all staff and volunteers will be adequately protected and briefed on security before carrying any preparedness activities in view of a potential Ebola outbreak.

B. Operational strategy and plan

Overall objective

The overall objective is to prepare the Central African Red Cross Society staff and volunteers through training and awareness raising, social mobilisation activities alongside the Ministry of Health and ensure prepositioning of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) when possible, in coordination with other actors. The social mobilisation activities will increase knowledge of risk and promote prevention behaviour.

National Society Volunteers will be involved at all levels of the response, from epidemiological surveillance to the management of dead bodies and isolation camps, ensuring proper training and resources are in place for their safety. Sensitization sessions will be conducted in 3 regions, namely Bangui, Lobaye (bordering with Democratic Republic of Congo), Membre Kadei and Nanamembre (these two belong to the same region bordering with Cameroon).

Proposed strategy

The areas where the proposed preparedness strategy is focused are based on past experience from previous outbreaks in Uganda, Democratic Republic of Congo, etc., as well as from recent experiences in Guinea, Liberia, Nigeria and Sierra Leone. The proposed strategy is in line with the IFRCs strategy for neighbouring countries of Guinea, in consultation with the public authorities and focuses on:

- Preparedness for response through volunteer training in communications around epidemics and behavioural change;
- Coordination support to National Societies to integrate activities with Ministries of Health and other key actors (e.g. Centre for Disease Control, Médecines Sans Frontières);
- Supporting Ministries of Health in prevention activities and social mobilization;
- Pre-positioning personal protective equipment and related training as to how to use it;
- Adaptation and dissemination of information, education and communication materials linked to community social mobilisation activities.

Operational support services

Human resources

The National Society will train and mobilise 200 volunteers for activities within this Emergency Plan of Action. In addition 1 RDRT will be deployed to support in the preparedness of key activities. It is important that volunteers and staff not engage in treating or handling suspected cases or deaths at a community level without proper training and support services.

Logistics and supply chain

The materials for this operation will be purchased locally, except for Personal Protection Equipment (PPE).

Communications

Visibility of the work of Red Cross volunteers will be ensured during the operation through local media and visibility material. A proper documentation and reporting to allow for lessons learnt will be ensured as well. The National Society will provide regular updates on the operation.

Communication and community awareness will focus on decreasing fear and raising awareness on the transmission methods and alertness of communities for an appropriate response. Key stakeholder groups and opinion leaders (taxi drivers, religious leaders, traditional birth attendants, community leaders and teachers) will be targeted as change agendas on social mobilisation and communication activities. Where possible and relevant, cross border communication and information sharing will be undertaken amongst neighbouring National Societies and Ministries of Health.

Planning, monitoring, evaluation, & reporting (PMER)

While continuous monitoring is being covered by the National Society local branches, the CARC at the head quarter level in close cooperation with the IFRC regional office will monitor the progress of the operation and provide necessary technical expertise. The monitoring and reporting of the operation will be undertaken by the National Society. Brief weekly updates will be provided to the IFRC on general progress of the operation, and regular monitoring reports will provide detailed indicator tracking.

Administration and financial management

The National Society has a permanent administrative and financial department, which will ensure the proper use of financial resources in accordance with conditions to be discussed in the Memorandum of Understanding between the National Society and the IFRC.

Management of financial resources will be effective according to the procedures of the national society and DREF guidelines.

Contact Information

For further information specifically related to this operation please contact:

- **Central African Red Cross Society:** M. Antoine Mbao Bogo; President, Tel: (236) 236 50 14 11/02 09 09/20 57 57; Fax: (236) 61.35.61; Email: sn_crca@yahoo.fr
- **IFRC Regional Representation:** Denis Duffaut, Regional Representative for Central Africa; Yaoundé; phone: +237 22 21 74 37; email: denis.duffaut@ifrc.org
- **IFRC Zone:** Daniel Bolaños Gonzalez, Disaster Management Coordinator, Phone:+254 20 2835213; email: daniel.bolanos@ifrc.org
- **In Geneva:** Cristina Estrada, Operations Support, Phone: +41 22 730 4260, email: cristina.estrada@ifrc.org
- **Regional Logistics Unit (RLU):** Rishi Ramrakha; Phone +254 20 283 5142, email: rishi.ramrakha@ifrc.org

For Resource Mobilization and Pledges:

- **IFRC West and Central Africa:** Elisabeth Seck, Resource Mobilization Officer; phone:+221 33 869 36 60; email: elisabeth.seck@ifrc.org

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

- **IFRC Zone:** Robert Ondrusek, PMER Coordinator, Africa phone: +254 731 067277; email: robert.ondrusek@ifrc.org

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.

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DREF OPERATION

30.08.2014

Central African Republic: Ebola Preparedness (MDRCF018)

Budget Group	DREF grant budget
Shelter - Relief	0
Shelter - Transitional	0
Construction - Housing	0
Construction - Facilities	0
Construction - Materials	0
Clothing & Textiles	0
Food	0
Seeds & Plants	0
Water, Sanitation & Hygiene	0
Medical & First Aid	5,000
Teaching Materials	0
Utensils & Tools	0
Other Supplies & Services	0
Emergency Response Units	0
Cash Disbursements	0
Total RELIEF ITEMS, CONSTRUCTION AND SUPPLIES	5,000
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	8,000
Transport & Vehicle Costs	5,150
Logistics Services	0
Total LOGISTICS, TRANSPORT AND STORAGE	13,150
International Staff	6,000
National Staff	0
National Society Staff	2,000
Volunteers	150
Total PERSONNEL	8,150
Consultants	0
Professional Fees	0
Total CONSULTANTS & PROFESSIONAL FEES	0
Workshops & Training	5,050
Total WORKSHOP & TRAINING	5,050
Travel	5,500
Information & Public Relations	6,375
Office Costs	0
Communications	1,500
Financial Charges	1,000
Other General Expenses	0
Shared Support Services	0
Total GENERAL EXPENDITURES	14,375
Programme and Supplementary Services Recovery	2,972
Total INDIRECT COSTS	2,972
TOTAL BUDGET	48,697



Central Africa Republic: EVD preparedness

