

www.ifrc.org  
Saving lives,  
changing minds.

# Emergency appeal

## Sierra Leone: Cholera Epidemic

 International Federation  
of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

### Preliminary Emergency appeal n° MDRSL003 GLIDE n° [EP-2012-000041-SLE](#) 16 August 2012

This Preliminary Emergency Appeal seeks CHF 1,151,632 in cash, kind, or services to support the Sierra Leone National Society (SLRCS) to assist 1'440'000 beneficiaries for 6 months, and will be completed by the end of February 2013. A final report will be made available by May 2013 (three months after the end of the operation).

CHF150'000 was allocated from the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent (IFRC) Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF) to support this operation. Unearmarked funds to replenish DREF are encouraged.

**Summary:** A new outbreak of cholera in Sierra Leone has spread to eight districts, with the largest concentration of cases in the Western Area where the capital is located. Three of these districts were also affected by the previous outbreak in March 2012 (MDRSL002). As of August 12 2012, 9,059 cases of cholera and 159 deaths had been reported, representing a continuing significant rise in cases.

The government of Sierra Leone through the Ministry of Health and Sanitation (MHS) is stepping up efforts to contain the disease, which has re-emerged strongly and attained epidemic proportions. This outbreak and spread is related to poor sanitary conditions, acute water shortage, contamination of water sources and migration from affected regions to other regions. The number of confirmed cases has increased in the last couple of weeks, and predictions of heavy rains and possible flooding are likely to accelerate the spread and intensity of the outbreak. The number of cases reported by the MHS may not fully reflect the situation, as some cases in rural areas are not recorded, and only 24 of the 47 affected health centres have managed to report on confirmed cholera cases.

Sierra Leone Red Cross Society has mobilized volunteers for immediate cholera awareness and hygiene promotion activities. The previous cholera response operation funded by DREF was carried out by SLRCS from 20 March – 21 June 2012. This operation mainly focused on hygiene promotion activities, and clear evidence of behaviour change at community level was reported. The recent epidemic has spread to new geographical areas and new strains of cholera have been identified. The SLRCS is planning social mobilization for cholera awareness and hygiene promotion at community level gaining from the improved skills and capacities of staff and volunteers built in the last operation, and reinforcing with significant water and sanitation hardware component improving water sources and latrine facilities in communities as per the learning from the last response.

The planned operation targets 360,000 households in 4 districts (Kambia, Port Loko, Tonkolili and Moyamba) and involves 400 community based volunteers and 40 volunteer supervisors, with technical support from 2 regional disaster response team (RDRT) members throughout the operation. Volunteers will distribute educational materials, and conduct drama performances to promote good hygiene practices. They will also



Volunteers preparing for cholera activities. (Photo: Sierra Leone Red Cross)





















