

# Information bulletin



International Federation  
of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

## Liberia: Insect infestation

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This bulletin is being issued for information only and reflects the current situation and details available at this time. The Federation is not seeking funding or other assistance from donors for this operation. The Liberian Red Cross Society (LRCS) will, however, accept direct assistance to provide support to the affected population.

Caterpillar insects invaded some communities in the Zota District of Bong County, Central Liberia, affecting a total of 8,223 persons. The insects have destroyed farm lands with potential food security risk and outbreak of water related diseases. The Liberian Red Cross Society (LRCS) in collaboration with other partners including government has intervened to reduce the impact of the disaster. The national society has carried out an assessment of the situation, distributed and repaired hand pumps to prevent outbreak of water related epidemics. The volunteers are also carrying out health and hygiene sensitization activities in the affected communities. Government and other partners have also been spraying the affected communities. The national society hopes to intensify its intervention activities working in close collaboration with government agencies and other partners.



Contaminated water source/LRCS

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[<click here to view the map of the affected areas,](#)  
[or here for detailed contact information>](#)

## The Situation

On 15 January local and national media reported that unidentified caterpillars had invaded several communities in the Zota District of Bong County, Central Liberia. Following this media report, the local chapter of LRCS in the area along with the National Disaster Management Coordinator immediately moved into the area to conduct a rapid assessment of the situation. The team had the mandate to assess and report on the actuality of the information, develop immediate response actions, and put in place proper mechanism to address the situation on their level before the Headquarters sends a support team. According to the local Chapter, 12 new communities have been affected in 3 districts (Suakoko, Sanoyea, and Salala) with a total population of 8,223 persons. Media reports also say that the population of the worms/caterpillars in previous affected areas has immensely reduced as a result of the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO)/Ministry of Agriculture spraying exercise. The situation as it looks is not alarming as being reported, yet it requires attention as it is likely to result into a threat particularly in food security, water and sanitation and other livelihood priorities.

The local chapter of the Red Cross in the County is collaborating with other partners including government to finding solution to the disaster. Other partners who have intervened so far include Concern Worldwide which

has completed spraying the caterpillars in Leilei in the Suakoko District and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) which has donated 15 pumps, 1,000 jerry cans, 13 cartons of chlorax and 30 pieces of plastic buckets through the government of Liberia. The Ministry of Agriculture continues to spray in affected communities in the Zota District.

## Red Cross and Red Crescent action

The local chapter of the national society along with National DM Coordinator carried out a preliminary assessment of the situation. Based on the report of the assessment, the Red Cross has rehabilitated one hand pump and constructed another in Larwei, one of the affected communities with a total population of 1,650 inhabitants. The Liberian Red Cross Society (LRCS) has also distributed 537 pieces to the same number of families in five most affected communities of Larwei, Kolonta, Denyea, Malangai and Shankpallai covering a total population of 7,443 persons. The National Headquarters has also prepositioned 150 bottles of (0.5 liter per bottle) of household chlorax at the local chapter for household chlorination exercise during the week. As the Red Cross mobilized and deployed its team of volunteers to carry out health and hygiene promotion sensitization activities in the 5 most affected communities in the district, the national society is also working in close collaboration with the Ministry of Health through the County Health Team. They will be conducting initial assessment and develop a common plan of response action. These activities are being carried out to prevent outbreak of diseases such as cholera, diarrhea and malaria.



Spodoptera spp /Credits FAO

The activities of the national society in this regard are being challenged by lack of spare parts for hand pumps and lack of funds to repair damaged pumps. The Red Cross is also constrained by limited logistic support to carry out effective monitoring of the situation including water and sanitation intervention. There is lack of insecticide and required tools in stock to carry out spraying exercise in the affected communities.

However, the LRCS will continue its humanitarian intervention to reduce the impact of the disaster on the affected communities. The following plan of action has been developed by the national society's Disaster Management team:

- Continuous monitoring and follow-up of the situation;
- Liaise with relevant partners including government, and the United Nations Agencies to maintain common strategy and follow-up with their interventions;
- Conduct a detailed sectoral assessment of the situation including food security, health, livelihood and water and sanitation;
- Carry out household chlorination;
- Collaborate with the County Health Team to distribute jerry cans;
- Attend coordination meetings with stakeholders;
- Continue sharing information with our partners;
- Rehabilitate mal-functioning hand pumps in affected communities and construct shallow well in other affected communities without hand pumps.

### How we work

*All International Federation 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 is committed to the [Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Disaster Response \(Sphere\)](#) in delivering assistance to the most vulnerable.*

The International Federation's activities are aligned with its Global Agenda, which sets out four broad goals to meet the Federation's mission to "improve the lives of vulnerable people by mobilizing the power of humanity".

#### Global Agenda Goals:

- Reduce the numbers of deaths, injuries and impact from disasters.
- Reduce the number of deaths, illnesses and impact from diseases and public health emergencies.
- Increase local community, civil society and Red Cross Red Crescent capacity to address the most urgent situations of vulnerability.
- Reduce intolerance, discrimination and social exclusion and promote respect for diversity and human dignity.

## Contact information

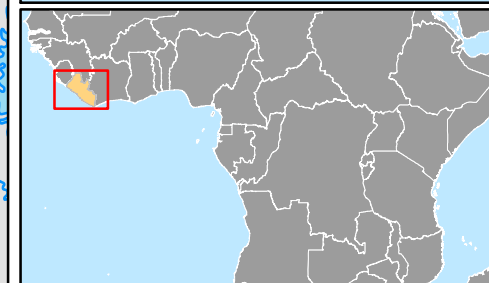
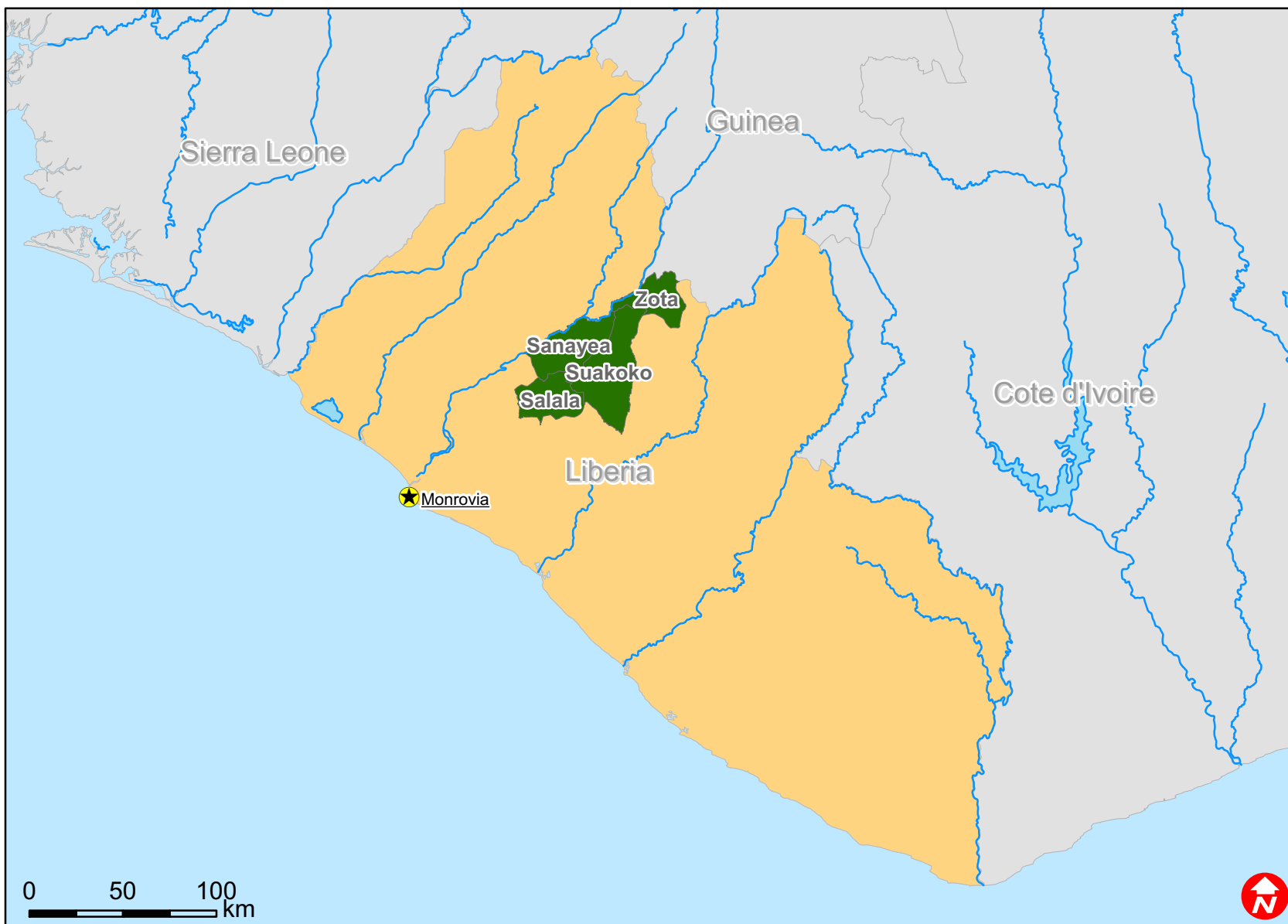
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[<map below; click here to return to the title page or contact information](#)



## Liberia: Insect infestation



- ★ Capitals
- Rivers
- Lakes
- Affected districts