



International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies
Fédération internationale des Sociétés de la Croix-Rouge et du Croissant-Rouge
Federación Internacional de Sociedades de la Cruz Roja y de la Media Luna Roja
الاتحاد الدولي لجمعيات الصليب الأحمر والهلال الأحمر

Press release

Red Cross deploys Ebola preparedness team to at-risk border area of Guinea-Bissau

Accra, 28 May 2015 – The International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) has sent a team of experts to Guinea-Bissau after a rash of confirmed Ebola cases in neighbouring Guinea.

Two epidemiologists and a preparedness coordinator arrived in Guinea-Bissau on the weekend to trace contacts and prevent and prepare for a possible Ebola outbreak in the small West African country.

“The risk is imminent so we are preparing now to be ready should the worst happen,” said Youcef Ait Chellouche, deputy head of IFRC’s regional Ebola operation.

At least one sick person is believed to have recently crossed the border several times from Guinea to Guinea-Bissau. Efforts to trace that person have so far been unsuccessful.

After more than 200 days of no cases in the northwestern Guinean prefecture of Boke, five cases were recently reported. Boke is on the border with Guinea-Bissau and many people cross the border daily to tend their fields or go to work.

“We already have a plan for trained volunteers to start social mobilization activities, and soon we will begin training teams in how to conduct safe and dignified burials,” said Ait Chellouche.

“With the support of the International Committee of the Red Cross, we have sent four safe and dignified burials team kits to Guinea-Bissau to be placed in at-risk areas. The kits contain all the materials needed to keep our teams safe should they be called in to respond,” he added.

As part of its operations to prepare at-risk countries in the event the Ebola outbreak should spread beyond the three main affected countries, in October 2014, IFRC released 49,168 Swiss francs from its Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF) to the Red Cross Society of Guinea-Bissau. These funds were used to train 130 volunteers in social mobilization and contact tracing. The Red Cross is also planning to raise community awareness of Ebola through national radio programmes and printed materials.

“Community engagement is the key to successfully fighting Ebola, and this will be one of our priorities,” said Ait Chellouche.

The International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) is the world’s largest volunteer-based humanitarian network, reaching 150 million people each year through its 189 member National Societies. Together, IFRC acts before, during and after disasters and health

emergencies to meet the needs and improve the lives of vulnerable people. It does so with impartiality as to nationality, race, gender, religious beliefs, class and political opinions. For more information, please visit www.ifrc.org. You can also connect with us on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), [YouTube](#) and [Flickr](#).

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