

MALI

EPIDEMIC PREPAREDNESS AND RESPONSE

Communities at the heart of our work

Epidemics begin and end in communities. When communities are engaged and trained in epidemic preparedness and response, they can find and stop outbreaks which will ultimately save lives, restore services and help build resilience.

Early detection, early action at community level

Ongoing insecurity and violence, chronic food insecurity, natural disasters and displacement has created major humanitarian and health needs. The country has long struggled to contain preventable infectious diseases such as malaria, pneumonia and diarrhoea as well as zoonotic diseases. Mali's child mortality rate is among the highest in the world, with one in ten children dying before their fifth birthday.

Mali Red Cross, with support from the International Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) and funding from USAID, has been helping communities prepare and prevent the spread of diseases. Volunteers are sensitizing communities about health risks, with a focus on diseases including diarrhoea, malaria, measles and yellow fever. Focused in Kayes and Koulikoro regions, Red Cross works with governments, communities, local responders and humanitarian partners to collectively prepare and respond to epidemics.

Through an extensive network of community-based volunteers, Mali Red Cross is providing critical information, surveillance and referrals in the local and hard-to-reach areas in coordination with other actors including the Ministry of Health, Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries. This is designed to help stop diseases from spreading by detecting them early and at community level, before an outbreak occurs.

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OUR WORK



Preparing communities

We are ensuring communities have critical information about the spread of diseases and how to prevent them, systems to detect outbreaks, and mechanisms that ensure information sharing and community engagement. Activities include:

- Engaging communities through house-to-house visits, school clubs and group discussions.
- Strengthening community-based referral systems.
- Engaging, training and collaborating with community influencers, such as leaders, imams and traditional healers



Preparing first responders

Mali Red Cross has almost 11,000 volunteers across the country which gives extraordinary reach into communities. In their supporting role to the Government of Uganda, they are often central to emergency responses amid outbreaks. Activities include:

- Contingency planning with government and key partners
- Strengthening systems for response to enable a fast, scaled-up response
- Strengthening partnerships with different sectors, including Ministry of Health, Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries
- Training and readying community-based volunteers.



Preparing stakeholders

Epidemics not only threaten lives but all aspects of society, including trade, transportation and education. We work with a variety of key stakeholders and the media in epidemic preparedness and response. Activities include:

- Helping prepare a variety of sectors to respond (including those affected by both animal and human health)
- Mapping critical data to help responders make informed decisions when a health crisis hits.
- Training media to communicate lifesaving information to affected populations.



More information: <https://media.ifrc.org/ifrc/community-epidemic-pandemic-preparedness>

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