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Eritrea Annual Report

 International Federation
of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

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**This report covers the period:
1 January – 31 December, 2012**

Photo: IFRC



Overview

As reported at mid-year, in 2011, the government of Eritrea issued a directive to all non-state development partners operating in Eritrea to cease operating by end 2012. Humanitarian agencies in Eritrea closed their offices during the first quarter of 2012. The Red Cross Society of Eritrea (RCSE), being registered as a local NGO pending its official recognition by government, was allowed to operate in the country although prohibited from receiving any foreign aid. At that point, there were indications that the government could pledge funds directly to the National Society through its annual budgetary allocation. Also, the NS was informed to only focus on disaster management-related activities, such as relief, first aid, disaster preparedness, and ambulance services, rather than development programmes as had been the focus of the National Society.

Following this development, a partnership briefing facilitated by IFRC was held in Nairobi between RCSE management and PNS in July 2012. The RCSE Management updated the partners on the latest developments and how it intended to move forward. Partners were positive about the government pledge to fund NS activities. However, they also recognized the need for continued technical support to the NS during the period of transition from a development to a disaster management role.

Two weeks after the partnership meeting, new developments emerged from the government with a new memorandum from the Ministry of National Development suggesting reviving its long-term partnership with UN and EU in Eritrea and therefore reversing the initial directive. These latest developments present a complete paradigm shift for the RCSE. Currently, the RCSE management has started to engage in dialogue with the government to clarify its new role amidst this latest announcement. The IFRC wishes to maintain its presence there, in order to support the NS governance and other capacities, and support its eventual formal recognition by government.

Due to the change in situation IFRC and the Regional Representative went to meet with RCSE in Asmara to clarify the ongoing dialogue with the government as well as having meeting with EU representative, RC for UN and ICRC Representative. The meeting in Asmara was in the end of December 2013 and the final outcome was assurance from RCSE that IFRC will look at opportunities to first agree on the way forward for the ECHO WatSan proposal during the first quarter of 2013, and thereafter regarding IFRC office and a Representative to be placed in country. There remains continued hope for the situation to change soon, so as to be able to re-establish contact with the national society and work together towards future cooperation.

Working in partnership

Under the conditions prevailing during 2012 and the sudden lack of clarity of role and mandate, the RCSE together with its partners (including IFRC), has had no choice but to put on hold all ongoing agreements, meaning no funds could be disbursed to the RCSE during 2012. As a result, no programme implementation took place during the reporting period.

Progress towards outcomes

In 2012, only carryover work to complete the EU-funded water and sanitation project was carried out. No activities against specific 2012-2015 LTPF objectives were initiated. The current limbo in the support programmes and the potential for a changed role of the NS may require modification of the existing LTPF.

Key Risks or Positive Factors

Key Risks or Positive Factors	Priority High Medium Low	Recommended Action
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> NS is not allowed to receive foreign aid, this has impeded all plans to fully implement 2012 plan and exhaust 2012 earmarked funding. Currently, dialog ongoing. 	H	Continue dialogue with government and NS.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continued delay of government recognition of NS creates uncertainty and undermines sense of a clear role for the NS. 	H	Continued advocacy on recognition, using zonal (HD) and global technical support.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lack of official recognition also means there is no legal framework through which the NS can operate, hence partners reluctant to have long-term partnership with NS. 	H	Continued advocacy on recognition, using zonal (HD) and global technical support.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Despite the identified need for IFRC presence in Eritrea, IFRC is unable to maintain an office in Eritrea due to limited funding for coordination and management and OD related activities. 	H	Proactive resource mobilization by the Regional and Zone offices including a possibility of fully funded delegate.

Financial situation

[Click here to go directly to the financial report.](#)

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 Disaster 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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The IFRC's work is guided by Strategy 2020 which puts forward three strategic aims:

1. Save lives, protect livelihoods, and strengthen recovery from disaster and crises.
2. Enable healthy and safe living.
3. Promote social inclusion and a culture of nonviolence and peace.

Find out more on www.ifrc.org

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