



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

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CHAD: REFUGEES AND RETURNEES FROM THE CENTRAL AFRICA REPUBLIC

This Bulletin is for information only. While the Federation is not seeking any funding or other assistance from donors for this operation at this time, CHF 20,000 has been allocated from the Federation's Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF), and donor support to the DREF is encouraged.

The Disaster

A coup on Saturday, 14 March in the Central African Republic (CAR) toppled the Government, and resulted in a wave of looting which has caused insecurity and fear, with a disproportionate impact on vulnerable groups and the potential to cause a humanitarian crisis in the country. This coup is the culmination of a series of reoccurring civil strife and attempts aimed at toppling the Government, which have resulted in reprisals with severe consequences on the civilian population. The groups most at risk consist of some 15,000 persons, mainly women and children.

Red Cross/Red Crescent Action

In early February, the Chad Red Cross Society (CRCS) and a bilateral French Red Cross delegate took part in an initial evaluation of the humanitarian situation of these refugees and returnees, where a total of 6,241 Central Africans were counted as well as 7,902 Chadian returnees. These people have been installed in temporary camps in the Moyen Chari and Oriental Logone.

The volunteers of the CRCS's Sahr committee branch and the ICRC have built 6 latrines and 2 water points in these transit camps. An interagency committee has been set up with UNDP to co-ordinate the humanitarian activities for assistance to these displaced populations. The CRCS is an active participant of this committee, and the initial evaluation which was undertaken by the national society was very useful for planning further assistance. The national society has experienced senior staff within its headquarters and branch management, particularly in their Secretary General who has attended both FACT and regional response team training (ERDAC), and with long-standing experience in other operations in the region. Because of its effective track record, the CRCS has now signed a contract with UNHCR and WFP to assure the transportation of 1,000 Chadian returnees from the border of Central Africa Republic to their original home region of Am Timam.

The ICRC in Njamena appreciates and approves of the work and the responsibilities taken on by the CRCS and would encourage the CRCS to become further involved, with backing from the Federation and other operational partners in this refugee / returnee operation.

Government and other Partners' Action

- In January 2003, the Chadian Government distributed to the displaced victims of the conflicts in CAR 2,200 bags of sorghum.
- MSF has built 2 transit camps which host the refugees/returnees. The camps also provide health and drinking water distributed in water-bladders.
- UNHCR is currently in the locality of Goré studying the possibilities of a more permanent camp for the Central African refugees who continue to arrive.

Needs

The Chad Red Cross has requested the Federation to release CHF 20,000 from DREF to complement the assistance which it intends to carry out with local and UN partners in order to be able assist the populations victims of the current situation in the CAR.

Planned assistance to Chadian returnees:

- To facilitate the transportation of a total of 3,000 returnees which are not being taken care of by WFP from the border of CAR to their original village of Salamat.
- Provide agricultural, herding and construction kits to approximately 500 families (of the 3,000 people) to facilitate social reintegration within the community - the full list of the kits can be shared at a later stage.

Planned assistance to the Central African refugees:

With the help of UNICEF, some 2,939 children are being offered educational assistance, including social-cultural animation, play and educational activities. The aim is to provide work with some teachers that are among the refugee population, and to use this as a platform to sensitise the general population on sanitation measures. The children could then be mobilized and contribute to health and sanitation prevention in their camp.

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All International Federation Operations seek to adhere to the Code of Conduct and are committed to the Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Disaster Response (SPHERE Project) in delivering assistance to the most vulnerable.

For support to or for further information concerning Federation operations in this or other countries, please access the Federation website at <http://www.ifrc.org>

For longer-term programmes, please refer to the Federation's Annual Appeal.

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