

ANNUAL REPORT



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

BURUNDI

16 April 2004

In Brief

Appeal No. 01.01/2003 ([Click here to access the 2003 Appeal](#))

Appeal target (revised): CHF 285,300 (USD 215,800 or EUR 185,400);

Appeal coverage: 148.2% ([Click here to access the Final Financial Report](#)).

Appeal 2004: Burundi no. 01.01/2004 ([Click here to access the 2004 Appeal](#))

This Annual Report reflects activities implemented over a one-year period; they form part of, and are based on, longer-term, multi-year planning.

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Overall analysis of the programme

The political and military situation dominated the Burundian scene in 2003. The transition from a Tutsi to Hutu government took place on the 1 May as planned. Although the efforts to have all the rebels peace agreement are progressing positively, the process is still extremely fragile. The security situation is still of great concern and the demobilization and disarmament is being implemented very slowly. An African Union peace keeping force (AMIB) of 3,500 soldiers has been deployed to the country.

This political and security situation directly impacted the deterioration of socio-economic factors. Population growth, access to land for subsistence farming, the population below the poverty line, vulnerability to natural disaster (seasonal drought and floods), crime and banditry, pillaging and looting strongly eroded the coping mechanisms of the population. Sexual violence has become a weapon of war and intimidation; children are particularly vulnerable and suffer both violence and deprivation of basic rights such as education. Many children are also forcibly recruited and used as child soldiers.

The health situation is also deteriorating with increased HIV/AIDS prevalence and rampant spread of other epidemics particularly, malaria. The health and social infrastructures have less capacity to tackle the challenges such as conflicts, population movement, poverty, poor hygiene and sanitation, malnutrition and food insecurity.

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The recent decision by the government to facilitate access to anti-retroviral treatment (ART) to all public service employees is however a good sign.

By the end of 2003, signs of general improvement in security have increased access to all provinces and subsequently, the voluntary repatriation of refugees has started. The level of return of refugees from Tanzania has increased from 21,989 in May to 81,201 in December 2003 (this includes 36,237 returnees facilitated by the UNHCR and 44,964 persons repatriated spontaneously). A lot more population movement has been observed on the border of Tanzania and the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). The Monuc forces have also facilitated voluntary repatriation of FDD/CNDD combatants from the Democratic Republic of Congo and more are expected to come. The situation in 2003 is as below:

- 281,052 internally displaced people in sites
- 100,000 temporarily displaced per month, with a potential additional 20,000 in future
- 81,201 returnees from Tanzania, with a potential additional 200,000 in future
- 37,938 refugees (majority from the DRC, with a potential additional 40,000 in future)
- 700,000 food insecure, with a potential additional 400,000 in future
- 788,124 children in need of special protection, with a potential 400,000 in future
- 8,350 prisoners, with a potential additional 500 in future
- 374,309 Burundian refugees remain in neighbouring countries: 353,132 in Tanzania, 19,970 in DRC and 1,207 in Rwanda. A further 200,000 refugees who left Burundi in the 1970s are in settlements in southern Tanzania.

The programme of restructuring the [Burundi Red Cross Society](#) continued according to the Plan of Action established at the first Annual Task Force meeting held from 8 to 13 April 2002. All national society and the Federation staff were laid off and the recruitment of new senior management officers with revised job descriptions done. The Federation delegation was integrated into the national society structure and most of the assets handed over according to the rules to Burundi Red Cross. An agreement was prepared between the Federation and the national society to clarify the roles and responsibilities of both organizations, as well as their relationship for smooth cooperation. Other agreements were also prepared to strengthen the relations with ICRC and the Spanish Red Cross. However, differences between the task force members and the leadership of the Burundi Red Cross in April over the recruitment process for the post of the Secretary General led to a crisis and the eventual suspension of the restructuring process.

Organizational Development

Goal: Burundi Red Cross is a well-functioning national society that renders efficient service to the community according to the basic principles and humanitarian values of the Movement, and formulates and implements good quality programmes that respond to the needs of vulnerable people at branch level.

Objective 1: To institute an effective decentralization through the establishment of operational structures at branch and headquarters levels.

Achievements

New technical heads at the national headquarters were recruited in the early part of 2003 as part of the restructuring process of the national society led by a Task Force awaiting the recruitment of a Secretary General before assuming their jobs. However, the process stalled following a dispute over the recruitment process for a Secretary General; the candidate chosen by the task force was not endorsed by the president of the national society and its National Committee who preferred to maintain the outgoing Secretary General. This led to a breach in confidence and trust over the mandate of the Task Force and all efforts at mediations by several African bodies of the Movement did not resolve the problem forcing the restructuring programme to be put on hold by the end of December 2003.

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Following a request by the government of Burundi to understand this blockage between the Burundi Red Cross and its partners within the Movement, and after consultation with the task force members, ICRC and Federation representatives met with the authorities and presented the background of the crisis. Similar contacts were made with the humanitarian community, especially the United Nations agencies and the NGOs coordination body in Burundi, who were working in partnership with the national society.

All other expected achievements under the objective are still suspended and will hopefully be pursued in 2004 should a solution to the impasse be obtained. This included

- information and dissemination campaigns to sensitize the public and the recruitment of new members the national society;
- restructuring of existing branches and the establishment of new committees;
- training and capacity building for headquarters staff, the new branch leaders and volunteers;
- clarification of roles and responsibilities of operational local branches;
- formulation of branch activities with technical assistance and coordination from the headquarters and their implementation with the involvement of volunteers; and
- adoption of a mid and long-term strategic plan for the national society at the general assembly scheduled for 2003, which would have served as a basis for the elaboration of a Cooperation Agreement Strategy (CAS).

Impact

Following the stalemate occasioned by the crisis between the management of the Burundi Red Cross and the task force, over the recruitment of the Secretary General and unsuccessful attempts at mediation, all programmes planned for 2003 were subsequently put on hold. This is very regrettable given the level of humanitarian needs in the country. New contacts were established between the governance of the Federation and Burundi Red Cross during the International Statutory meeting in Geneva in December 2003, to resume dialogue in 2004. Although the restructuring programme will remain on hold until a politically negotiated solution is found, the task force has contemplated a long term strategy to ensure a sustainable approach rather than a short term vision which proved unsuccessful in the past.

Constraints

The President and the National Committee of the Burundi Red Cross still maintain their preference for the outgoing Secretary General. The lack of trust and confidence between the two parties prevailed until the end of the year; more dialogue and willingness probably with external mediation is needed to resolve the crisis.

Objective 2: To separate governance and management, strengthen the capacity and involvement of members of the national committee to deal with major problems related to governance; to have management take responsibility of day to day affairs of the national society, and to establish a volunteers management policy.

Achievements

The Burundi Red Cross has not held a General Assembly for the last 35 year; thus the governance crisis is quite unique. This means that the National Committee members in place (composed of only four people) have all been all nominated by the President but do not function according to the requirements of the Statutes. For example, they do not meet regularly but are called upon by the President at his discretion when a situation requires their endorsement. This was the case in April 2003 when the National Committee met to discuss the Secretary General position and maintained their position leading to the blockage of the restructuring process.

In July 2003, the task force sent a letter to all local branch leaders informing them of their (task force) mandate detailing the work they had done so far, the background of the crisis and the current stalemate. Consequently, several provincial leaders requested for a meeting with the President of the national society. This was eventually held on 11 October 2003 with all provincial leaders in which the situation and possible local solutions were discussed. The meeting also resolved to hold a General Assembly in August 2004. No other move had been noticed by the end of the year.

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All other expected achievements under the objective are on hold and will hopefully resume in 2004 should a solution to the impasse be found. This includes:

- the active role of the National Committee to support and collaborate with management for the advancement of the national society, the development of programmes and the mobilization of resources for local committees;
- the increment of members of Burundi Red Cross and the establishment of a database;
- the adoption of a policy on volunteerism;
- the implementation of a good management/coordination and planning of activities of members and volunteers, and the establishment of a volunteers' network in the country; and
- Organization of a general assembly in May 2003.

Impact

No progress can be reported on governance development, only the reverse. The National Committee has not been able to demonstrate their capacity to deal with serious governance issues. The task force decided to consult with all African bodies of the Movement (the Red Cross and Red Crescent Network of Eastern Africa (RC-NET), the Association of African French, the Spanish and Portuguese-speaking national societies (ACROFA), and the PanAfrican Conference) in view of contributing to a positive solution to the crisis. Unfortunately during the period, no solution had been found; the task force shared the situation with the government with no results either. The last option left would be to solicit the intervention of the Federation Integrity Task Force.

Constraints

Failure of all efforts in mediation and delays in solving governance problems of the Burundi Red Cross will hold back its planned activities even in 2004. This situation is very regretful since the Red Cross should play an important role in the deteriorating humanitarian situation in Burundi. Most local partners do not understand the crisis and the national society's branches are nearly becoming non-functional.

Objective 3: To put in place policies, procedures and systems with a view to realizing efficient coordination of the national society's activities at all the levels; the resources allocated for programme or project implementation are well managed.

Achievements

A plan of action approved in April 2002 and revised in April 2003 was unfortunately never implemented. No progress can be reported on this objective which has been suspended till a solution to the prevailing crisis is found. This includes:

- preparation of documents on policy and implementation of procedures and systems related to management and coordination issues;
- provision of efficient and continued coordination of branch activities; the development of efficient communication between the national committee, the headquarters and branches through appropriate information systems;
- preparation of administrative and financial procedures manual to be used systematically at all levels;
- implementation of recommendations of an external audit.

Impact

Some branches have met with the ICRC delegation in Burundi and expressed their interest and readiness to contribute towards a solution to the crisis but no results had been registered at the end of 2003.

Constraints

The heavy political agenda in the country does not allow local stakeholders to allocate sufficient time towards finding a sustainable solution to the problem with Burundi Red Cross.

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Objective 4: Production of reliable information and dissemination of the basic principles and humanitarian values; to create public awareness and knowledge of the Movement, the International Humanitarian Law, and of the activities of the Burundi Red Cross in the country through a reliable communication system.

Achievements

The national society has not developed any new activities under this objective but has completed some bilaterally supported programmes with FAO, UNFPA and UNICEF according to the terms of the contract.

All other expected achievements under the objective are on hold and will hopefully be pursued in 2004. These include:

- recruitment of a qualified communications officer at the headquarters;
- development and implementation of a communications policy;
- procurement of communications material and equipment for the office
- organization of information and dissemination campaigns for sensitizing the general public on the Movement, the basic principles and humanitarian values, International Humanitarian Law, the emblem and the activities of Burundi Red Cross; and
- acknowledgement of progress for better visibility, protection of the emblem and safeguarding the integrity of the national society.

Impact

The image of the Burundi Red Cross in the country continued to deteriorate during the year and some articles came out in the local press criticizing the role of the Red Cross Movement. All local Burundi Red Cross partners were informed of the situation by the task force. However, ICRC programmes continued in many provinces in Burundi for the benefit of the population. Some activities were handled directly by ICRC to target groups such as the military and local authorities.

Constraints

The security situation in Burundi jeopardized plans to reach branches for conducting dissemination activities.

Disaster Management

Goal: To build capacity for Burundi Red Cross to respond effectively to the needs of the vulnerable and the populations affected by the current armed conflict.

Objective: To define and implement a national policy for disaster management, and to develop an intervention plan for Burundi Red Cross that will be included in the government plan. Train, equip, and supervise the intervention teams to prepare them to respond effectively to emergency situations.

Progress

Due to lack of internal stability, the programme did not meet the conditions for gaining confidence from partners for an effective disaster management plan or effective partnership. None of the expected results have been achieved; there was no implementation. These include

- training and the equipment of five brigades of 20 volunteers;
- establishment of effective partnerships in disaster management and protection of civilian population; and
- the development, adoption and implementation of a Burundi Red Cross intervention plan.

The Federation closed its assets in the country after checking the stock balance of non-food items from previous operations and consultation with the respective donors. The stock was given to Catholic Relief Services (CRS) and OCHA to assist in the distribution to identified vulnerable populations. The exercise, which was successfully completed by August 2003, is broken down as follows:

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ITEMS GIVEN TO OCHA	BENEFICIAIRIES
Clothes	6,290 women and girls
Clothes	5,375 children
Clothes	600 men
Ladies shoes	35 women
Bed nets (one per family)	12,100 families
Mosquito nets (one per family)	12,100 families
ITEMS GIVEN TO CRS	BENEFICIAIRIES: 4,847 families
Kitchen Sets	10,326 sets
Soap (200gms bar)	124,593 pieces
Collapsible 20 litres Jerry cans	19,715 pieces
Blankets	20,425 pieces
Tarpaulins 6 x 4 metres	10,779 pieces
Khangas	16,211 pieces

Impact

The risk of the wearing out of relief items in the warehouse was serious and justified the decision of the Federation. It was regrettable that the Burundi Red Cross could not handle this operation but it was felt more important that the objectives of the donation be respected beyond internal difficulties and that some vulnerable population be reached through the distribution.

Constraints

There was delay in the implementation of the operation due to some bureaucratic controls by the Burundi Red Cross; this happened when they were informed of the decision to distribute all non-food items.

Federation Coordination

Objective: Through constant dialogue, good coordination is achieved with the various partners with a view to building the capacity of the Burundi Red Cross.

Progress

The Federation's presence in Burundi is coordinated through the regional delegation in Nairobi since the end of the last delegates' contract in February 2003. The structural adjustments of the Federation presence in Burundi were completed in April with the termination of the contracts of the last seven employees. Support to the task force was coordinated by the Spanish bilateral delegate until she was relocated to Nairobi in July. The coordination between ICRC and Federation continued smoothly and regular exchanges were maintained between the ICRC delegation in Bujumbura and the ICRC Cooperation delegate based in Kigali, Rwanda. This coordination also includes security, information sharing, and relations with other partners and the government.

Except for the briefing meeting held in early August 2003 with OCHA, UNICEF, FAO, UNFPA and the NGOs coordinating body, RESO, no direct contacts were made with external partners in 2003.

Five meetings of the monitoring cell of the task force were organized between January and April. The second meeting with all its members was organized on the 3 April 2003 and issued recommendations to pursue the work including a revised chronicle of activities to be implemented by the General Assembly in 2004. Several telephone conferences and email exchanges took place including the desk officer in Geneva to ensure better communication and understanding of the situation.

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A memorandum of partnership between the Burundi Red Cross and the Federation was prepared by the national society's leadership. Unfortunately, the crisis with the task force did not provide the conditions for the full implementation of the plan. In view of protecting the assets and liabilities of the Federation, the head of regional delegation undertook the clearing up of all contractual agreements, the disposal of equipment and relief items and the suspension of all financial support to the national society until the resolution of the crisis.

Donor support did not need to be increased since the balance of funds from the 2002 appeal was sufficient to cover the limited activities of the task force which took place in 2003.

Other expected achievements under this objective have not been implemented. These include:

- the mechanism for consultation with bilateral and multilateral partners with a view to achieving one CAS (this will last until a General Assembly has been organized and a strategic development plan designed and adopted officially);
- support to the process of building and strengthening the local branches and the development of programme priorities;
- elaboration and adoption of a strategic development plan for Burundi Red Cross; and
- training of new finance staff on finance management and the preparation of documents on financial and administrative procedures.

Impact

The Federation's role mainly focused on actively contributing to the work of the task force, facilitating the follow up and implementation of their decisions, liaising with Geneva based colleagues to keep them regularly informed of the situation. Despite the crisis with the leadership of the Burundi Red Cross, the task force remained united and continued to steer the process.

Constraints

Statutory meetings in Geneva and the implementation of the Strategy for Change in the Federation did not allow for adequate attention to the Burundi case. However, if the task force would decide to present Burundi Red Cross at the Federation Integrity Task Force, commitment has been made to immediately deal with the case.

International Representation

Goal: The Federation has a high profile as a key humanitarian actor and advocate in the region with the added advantage of a network of national societies able to deliver services at community level.

Objective: The Federation is an effective and reliable partner in support of Burundi Red Cross and in addressing the needs of the most vulnerable.

Progress

Advocacy and sensitization were always maintained with external partners; the government, United Nations agencies, donors and humanitarian NGOs despite the fact that the content of the message was not the one the Movement would have expected. Through the task force, the Federation regularly informed the partners of the evolution of the situation with Burundi Red Cross.

All other expected achievements under the objective are still suspended and will hopefully be pursued in 2004 should a solution to the impasse be found. This includes support to the national society in advocacy with an aim to creating a positive image of the national society and the provision of support to the national society's activities at the local level.

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Impact

The international profile of Federation was maintained but its limited presence and the decreasing activities of Burundi Red Cross did not provide the best image among partners. However, the regional delegation was present and active in all regional coordinating bodies of the Great Lakes, particularly with OCHA, in view of being ready to resume activities in Burundi and to play a role in the contingency plan in the rehabilitation of the Burundi population.

Constraints

Due to the status quo with Burundi Red Cross, all future plans of a key humanitarian role in the country were seriously jeopardized and will require high level political intervention to resume at a good level.

