

# 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 لجمعية الصليب الأحمر والهلال الأحمر

## THE GAMBIA

2 April 2004

### In Brief

**Appeal No.:** 01.37/2003 ([Click here to access the 2003 Appeal](#))

**Appeal target:** CHF 259,398 (USD 177,986 or EUR 176,364)

**Appeal coverage:** 70.7% ([Click here to access the Final Financial Report](#))

**Appeal 2004:** The Gambia no. 01.34/2004 ([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 [Gambia Red Cross Society](#) has been experiencing a trying year, going through a process of restructuring and redeveloping after a serious decline in the capacity of the organization during the last three years. The overall efficiency of the national society's humanitarian work has been curbed and financial support towards the planned programmes has declined. The national society's governing bodies, however, have been committed to a thorough and ambitious restructuring process with the Federation's active support. The Gambia Red Cross financial accounts for the last three years (2000-2002) have been audited. The auditors' management report will serve as a very useful tool for the national society. A new secretary general was recruited and a new finance director is expected to join in early 2004 together with programme and administration staff.

In spite of the many shortcomings, the Gambia Red Cross contributed considerably to the success of the national measles vaccination campaign in November and December with 687,316 children in the target age group vaccinated. The national society also assisted more than 200 families hit by storms and fires in September.<sup>1</sup> The fight against HIV/AIDS has continued. The national society's youth accomplished a series of "Bantabas" (youth camps) and a membership drive has been initiated.

The restructuring process is still on-going. It will be crucial to consolidate the gains made in 2003 but this will also require continued support by the long-term partners, as well as strong coordination with newer ones. The national society's efforts and good will are to be commended and encouraged if the most vulnerable of Gambia are to be reached.

<sup>1</sup> Detailed reports for the measles vaccination campaign and squall relief operation are available from the regional office.

## **Health and care**

The project concentrated on two of the highest HIV/AIDS prevalence areas in the country - Central River Division (CRD) and Upper River Division (URD). The project targeted young people, who represent one of the most vulnerable groups, with varied backgrounds, including; the out-of-school youth and the youth job seeking youth, leaving them stranded in cities, further exposing them to high risk behaviours such as commercial sex.

Due to limited funds, the project plan was reduced. The revised project contained the following three main activities:

- A series of training-of-trainers' workshops for 120 participants.
- A three months' campaign (June to August) with a "filter down" method (trainers to link leaders to members to public) that should include all links in the seven branches.
- A controlled campaign in a limited geographical area (one town area in each of CRD and URD) and during a short time period (June), carried out mainly by the trainers. Knowledge, attitude and practice (KAP) surveys measured impact and a special activity report was used to facilitate impact measuring and reporting requirements.

**Goal: To complement current efforts made by other key players in the Gambia to reduce new HIV/AIDS and STDs through prevention activities promoting behaviour change.**

**Objective: Activities undertaken by the Gambia Red Cross Society to promote HIV/AIDS and STDs related behavior change and increased access to condoms in Central River and Upper River Divisions are reinforced**

### **Expected result**

**Knowledge is increased and behavior improved regarding HIV/AIDS and STDs among youth, as a result of targeting Popular Opinion Leaders, while involving persons living with HIV/AIDS (PLWHA) in the process.**

### **Training-of-trainers' workshops**

- One hundred twenty (120) participants selected as trainers, mainly from Central River Division and Upper River Division; 80 volunteers spent their days on lecturers on topics such as HIV/AIDS prevention and control, voluntary testing and counselling, behavioural change and blood donor recruitment.
- Group work on developing strategies for local activities and discussions took place on ways and means to engage volunteers and link members in the local community.
- The training workshops were very well received (daily workshop evaluations were made) and the trainers showed great enthusiasm in planning activities in their respective home communities.

### **The "filter-down" campaign**

- Lack of capacity during the second half of the year has hindered the health department from a required follow-up on achievements and constraints.

### **The CRD/URD campaign**

- Activity report and the KAP survey formats introduced to the teams of trained educators.
- One hundred three (103) speeches/lectures and focus group discussions carried out in the two towns
- Three demonstrations/marches, one drama show and 65 house-to-house visits were held in the Brikamaba town area (CRD).
- A total of 208 activities were carried out; in the CRD 111 and the URD 97, reaching a total of 5,391 persons; 3,660 in the CRD and 1,731 in the URD.
- During the activities, 1,208 brochures and leaflets were distributed and 19,545 condoms handed out.

## **The Gambia; Appeal no. 01.37/2003; Annual Report**

For a detailed impact account, please refer to the Programme Update No. 2

### **Constraints**

- Late arriving cash transfer and considerable strain on project coordinating staff at the headquarters and other key volunteers in some of the branches led to lengthy delays (by more than two months) in the implementation and follow-up of the so called filter-down campaign. The staff and the volunteers were supporting the government in the 2003 general census
- Although well received and with considerable impact, the intensive campaign weeks in CRD and URD could have achieved more. In a follow-up meeting with all participating staff and volunteers, the following comments and recommendations were made:
  1. TV/video equipment would make the activities more attractive and effective.
  2. Means of transportation are needed to facilitate the movement of the teams.
  3. More volunteers need to be trained which would make the work quicker and faster.
  4. Funds should be available to provide refreshments (*Ataya* - green tea) to the youth participating in the activities.
  5. Refresher trainings are periodically organized.
  6. The training-of-trainers workshops should include training on counselling and guidance.
  7. HIV/AIDS information corners should be established in each branch office.

### **Coordination**

- There is a continuous contact between the Gambia Red Cross and the National AIDS Secretariat, which can provide IEC material, expertise and general support. Coordination with other humanitarian organizations is above all taking place within TANGO, a coordinating office for NGOs in Gambia, and the Stepping Stones Program.<sup>2</sup>

## **Disaster Management**

**Goal: The Federation's "Characteristics of a Well-Prepared National Society" has become a reference working document for Disaster Preparedness and Response personnel of different National Societies.**

**Objective: Vulnerable communities develop disaster prevention and preparedness mechanisms mainly through small-scale projects relating to food security.**

This program has not been implemented due to lack of funds.

## **Organizational Development**

**Goal: The Gambia Red Cross is an increasingly well-functioning national society.**

**Objective: Financial management and resource development capacities of the Gambia Red Cross are strengthened**

Although the Gambia Red Cross has still a long way to go, the national society should bring about a positive change, with an attention given to organizational development plans and new projects for implementation.

### **Restructuring process**

- A new Secretary General was appointed on 20 September 2003 and is now moving ahead with a new structure to help decentralize responsibilities.
- Acute financial situation has forced the Gambia Red Cross to speed up the restructuring of the national society by laying off almost all staff members and re-hiring only project staff with secured funding.

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<sup>2</sup> A World Bank financed HIV/AIDS program involving several organisations, with GRCS responsible for activities in certain districts in Western Division

## **The Gambia; Appeal no. 01.37/2003; Annual Report**

- Terms of references have been completed for three new key positions (finance manager, programme manager and administrative assistant) which will be the secretary general's members of the Senior Management Team.
- A committee has been appointed to prepare for revision of the national society's statutes.

### **Finance development process**

- An Audit Report covering 2000 - 2002 has been carried out by an external auditor and shared with key partners. The auditors' management report will serve as a very useful tool to the national society.
- The Secretary General has requested an audit in the first quarter of 2004 to assess performance for 2003.
- A long overdue dispute with the authorities on social security payments has been settled.
- The government has resumed its financial support to the national society although with a nominal amount.
- The headquarters' budget has been revised and ongoing projects were being checked to determine whether they are on track and maintaining their activities within the approved budgets: regarding ongoing bilateral projects, the British Red Cross financed *Diarrhea project* has been finalized, the Federation *HIV/AIDS project* is reported on above. The Spanish Red Cross sponsored *HIV/AIDS project* has entered into a second phase. *Empress Shôken project*, a training Course in disaster management has been implemented and the ambulance services are expected to resume early 2004.
- An agreement has been signed to support the Gambia Red Cross within its organizational and financial development as follows:
  - Recruitment of a finance manager.
  - Development of an action plan based on the recommendations made by Deloitte & Touche.
  - Training for the finance staff.
  - Assist in the implementation of a finance procedures manual.
  - Introduce computerized accounting and budgeting systems.

### **Resource development process**

- Membership cards have been printed and the campaign is ongoing.
- A legal advisor has been assigned to look into the contracts signed between Gambia Red Cross and the Red Cross house tenants to revise and update them, recover arrears and find new tenants.
- A very much-appreciated donation of second hand clothes from Icelandic Red Cross has contributed significantly to the economy of the national society. A new administrative system has been put in place to ensure that the sales are done correctly.
- The Red Cross house is almost fully occupied. Together with sale of used clothes the income is supporting the national society's core costs.
- The issue regarding lack of records and management tools of the Gambia Red Cross fundraising boxes has been raised. Thus it was agreed that a new administration system should be introduced with a log for all boxes and a rotating staff roster for collections.

### **Constraints**

- Lack of necessary infrastructure, such as; transport, access to electricity and office equipment and supplies severely hampered the implementation of the national society's activities.
- The lack of sustainable income is the biggest threat to the future growth and development of the Gambia Red Cross.
- Since most of the staff has been laid off on accrued annual leaves, the headquarters is run with low capacity.
- The national society has not managed to successfully recruit a finance manager. Their two previous selections have been turned down and thus the need to open new recruitment procedures.

### **Federation Coordination**

The Sub-Regional Office and the Technical Advisor have assisted the Gambia Red Cross in coordinating its contacts with partners. Mission reports have been shared with the ICRC and key partners and an active dialogue maintained. The Sahel Regional Working Group has been made aware of the plight of its sister national society and has offered assistance, both technical as well as political, to help the national society manage its relationship with the government. The formula of using a part time technical advisor with regular links to the Sub-Regional Office has proven to be a cost-effective and a successful way of helping the national society get back on its feet. The Sub-Regional Office is assisting the Gambia Red Cross through technical support and guidance within health, disaster response and organizational/finance development.

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