

# PROGRAMME UPDATE



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

## NIGER

30 January 2004

Appeal No. 01.39/2003

Appeal Target: CHF 318,177 (USD 218,318 or EUR 216,328)

Programme Update No. 2;

Period covered: August – December 2003

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### In Brief

**Appeal coverage:** 63.7%; See attached [Contributions List](#) for details.

**Outstanding needs:** CHF 115,544 (USD 91,800 or EUR 74,000)

**Related Emergency or Annual Appeals:**

- [Sahel Sub-Regional Programmes; Annual Appeal no. 01.39/2004](#)
- [Niger; Annual Appeal no. 01.37/2004](#)

**Programme Summary:** The [Red Cross Society of Niger](#) was occupied during the period responding to the needs of flood victims and collaborating with authorities to beat the spread of polio, especially from neighbouring Nigeria. A Cooperation Agreement Strategy outlining support to the national society to address its outmoded financial accounting system was signed with the Dakar Sub-Regional office, and appropriate software chosen as a first step toward modernizing the national society's financial management.

### Operational developments

Thousands of people were left homeless and in need of assistance in July and August 2003. The rains which caused heavy flooding also threatened to damage the neighbouring countries. In Niger, the most affected people were from six regions of Dosso, Talaberi, Maradi, Tahoua, Zinder and Agadez. Crops and livestock as well as homes were destroyed by the floods. The most vulnerable were the children and the elderly. In response to an appeal by the Niger government, the Red Cross of Niger responded by procuring five metric tonnes of maize and clothes which were distributed to 2,000 beneficiaries in four regions. More relief food and blankets were distributed by the national society.

As part of on-going plans to reinforce the national society's disaster response capacity, especially in border branches, a telecommunications technical mission was organized by the Federation's Sub-regional office (Dakar) in December for the installation of rehabilitated HF radios and computers. The enhancement of telecommunication capacity is expected to improve the national society's ability to communicate with its branches countrywide. Local personnel were trained on basic use and maintenance of the new equipment; installations conducted in 2002 were reviewed.

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Afghanistan, India, Pakistan, Egypt, Niger and Nigeria are the world's six remaining polio stricken countries. But a resurgence of cases in Burkina Faso, Ghana and Chad, which until now had been polio-free, has threatened the eradication drive and prompted WHO to schedule an emergency meeting for early 2004. Strains of the virus recently found in Niger and neighbouring countries have all been traced back to Nigeria. The Niger Red Cross has actively administered vaccinations in the fight against polio.

November saw the opening of the country's AIDS outpatient clinic in Niamey, a joint project by the government of Niger and the Red Cross of Niger (supported by the French Red Cross). In conjunction with the National Programme for the Fight against HIV/AIDS, the centre hopes to track and treat opportunistic infections, deliver anti-retroviral medicines and provide therapeutic assistance. According to a survey conducted in 2002 with support from UNAIDS, the HIV/AIDS prevalence rate in Niger was 0.87%. This means that about 90,000 people of the country's population of 11 million have the virus. The survey noted higher prevalence of the disease among truck drivers, commercial sex workers, inmates and migrant workers. HIV/AIDS prevalence of up to 50% was noted in three towns: Dinkou, Tahoua, and Komabangou. A report published by the state owned Sunday Sahel newspaper indicates that nearly one in three patients admitted at a local hospital in Tahoua are HIV/AIDS positive<sup>1</sup>. The Red Cross of Niger operates HIV/AIDS education and peer counselling in Tahoua, Niamey and Agadez.

The President of the Red Cross of Niger, who is also Chairman of the Sahel Regional Working Group, represented the member national societies at the annual meeting of the West and Central Africa Working Group, organized by the Federation Regional Delegation (Dakar). His familiarity with the development of the regionalization process was a major resource for the participants. The sub-regional office also facilitated the participation of two people from the Red Cross of Niger in the francophone Regional Disaster Response Team training, conducted in Mali in August.

### **Health and care**

Niger's health profile is alarmingly poor. Life expectancy at birth is estimated at 44.8 years, compared with an average of 48.8 years in sub-Saharan Africa. Illnesses affecting Niger's population include meningitis, polio, malaria, sickle-cell anaemia and HIV/AIDS. Health provisions are particularly limited in Niger. According to UNDP, there were only four doctors per 100,000 people in the mid-1990s. Given the continued pressure on public resources, it is unlikely that these rates have improved. Only 7% (1 of 14) of the rural population have access to health services, compared with 75% (11 of 14) of the urban population.

**Goal: To contribute to the reduction of infant and childhood vaccine preventable diseases, and the spread of HIV/AIDS in Niger.**

**Objective: With the aim to reduce mortality and morbidity, with regard to HIV/AIDS and infant and childhood preventable diseases, in targeted zones, the national society's social mobilization and IEC<sup>2</sup> activities are strengthened at the community level.**

#### **Progress/Achievements**

This objective included the following components:

- response to emergency public health crises which can be prevented through vaccinations,
- sensitization of communities in under-served and hard to reach areas on prevention of childhood preventable diseases, and
- HIV/AIDS education to youth and target groups such as commercial sex workers.

During the period, the Red Cross of Niger participated actively in the nation's fight against the crippling polio virus. Niger is largely affected by polio and despite the fact that there were eight National Vaccination Day campaigns and three 'mop-up' campaigns held earlier during the reporting period, more campaigns are still

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<sup>1</sup> Source: UN OCHA Integrated Regional Information Network ([www.irinnews.org](http://www.irinnews.org))

<sup>2</sup> IEC - Information, Education and Communication.

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needed. A further National Vaccination Day campaign was conducted in the months of November and December 2003; additional campaigns have been planned for February and March 2004. A report of the campaigns held will be issued later.

### **Impact**

- Experience across the continent has clearly confirmed the impact of social mobilization on improving vaccine coverage. Social mobilization and vaccination statistics will be reported on in the annual report.

### **Constraints**

- Lack of solid micro-level planning to define priority activities and;
- Criteria for monitoring and evaluation and the organization of teams across time and vast regions to reach all villages and hamlets.
- Insufficient capacity. The national society has only one health professional with no assistant staff which makes it difficult to cover all programmes (emergency and on-going), including attending national coordination meetings at which the national society must be represented.

## **Organizational Development**

**Goal: To decrease vulnerability of people living in Niger through improved service delivery by the Red Cross of Niger.**

**Objective: The Red Cross of Niger has completed a comprehensive Strategic Development Plan, based on a national society capacity assessment, which is coordinated and agreed upon with key stakeholders both within and outside the Movement, leading to a systematic development approach which will allow the national society to progressively increase with strengthened financial management and resource development capacities to better meet the needs of the vulnerable.**

### **Progress/Achievements**

- The national society's OD needs were agreed upon by the national society's leadership in May. The national society requested the support of a technical advisor to assist them with the evaluation of their previous development plan which has now expired. Based on the results, the national society will prepare another development plan for discussion with partners.

### **Impact**

- The national society feels supported by the regional office and a clear understanding exists on the direction to pursue.

### **Constraints**

- Delay by the national society to clearly define terms of reference for the technical support it desires and;
- the regional office to advance on this objective has contributed to slow development. The arrival of the new regional development officer should facilitate a solution to this obstacle.

The on-going activities to improve the national society's financial management systems began in 2002. Below is a description of the detailed objectives under this organizational development component.

### **Sound financial management systems and procedures have been developed and resource development capacities are coordinated and planned**

Due to the shortcomings of the current financial system, a cooperation agreement with the national society designed. The issues that are being addressed are; the obsolescence of the current financial management systems and the absence of a maintenance contract. Thus, split accounting practices was signed in order to allow the installation of a new professional management software, training sessions of the finance personnel during the budget planning of the fiscal year 2004 and the introduction of management procedures revised with the help of a newly elaborated finance and administrative procedures manual.

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### **Accounting and budgeting software has been installed.**

The Red Cross of Niger in collaboration with the regional finance and resource development delegate chose SAGE SAARI software version 100 pack for its compatibility. SAGE SAARI is a firm well represented in most African countries. The presence of approved dealers for the software will enable rapid installation, training as well as after-sales support of the SAGE software packages. The purchase of the software was accompanied by an annual maintenance contract which will allow the national society to receive technical assistance, regular software updates among other services from the contractor. There was a need to purchase a floppy drive for backing up the management system.

The national society negotiated for special rates since many of the national societies in the region use SAGE SAARI software. Successful negotiations could lead to a 20% discount on the purchasing of the accounting Compta 100 pack software package and an additional 20% discount in technical assistance contracts. Other national societies likely to use the SAGE SAARI software include Senegal, Burkina Faso and Mali. This will promote harmonization of the tools and systems in place, as well as capacity building at the regional level through fostering knowledge-sharing possibilities between national societies' financial staff.

### **Budgets have been consolidated and chart of accounts revised and completed.**

The installation of Compta 100 pack software should allow the integration of different accounts and expand a new chart of accounts.

### **Finance management staff have been involved in preparation and budget control, as well as finance reporting.**

The overall tools introduced in the finance department should allow the fiscal year 2004 to have better technical mastery of these basic steps of financial and accounting management.

### **Rules and procedures have been introduced with finance procedural manual fully respected by the national society**

The steering committee made up of the treasurer and the head of programmes will be assisted by the accountant to develop procedures related to accounting and financial management. Final touches on the program are going on for the document to be submitted.

### **Professional skills of finance staff have been improved through training.**

Training sessions at the time of the installation of the software are being completed with monthly assistance visit for the closure of the accounts plus at the end of the year in order to prepare the annual financial statements.

### **By end 2003 one national resource development committee has been organized in each national society (composition and Terms of Reference approved).**

Activities related to resource development are a bit delayed due to the statutory meetings in Geneva and the absence of personnel. A Cooperation Agreement Strategy is being finalised and the national resource development committee of the Red Cross of Niger anticipate strengthening the coordination of activities at the central and local levels for the development of fund raising abilities. Working sessions have been planned for January 2004 immediately after the national society's Administrative Council meetings to take advantage of the presence of the Federation's regional representatives.

### **By end 2003 one resource development plan has been developed (operational plan with measurable objectives and defined responsibilities) within overall goals development plan of each national society.**

Following the discussions held with the regional sections, the Red Cross of Niger' national committee will put in place an annual resource development plan according to the project planning process (PPP) framework. Each fundraising project should come up with the following logical planning criteria: analysis of the fund raising; situation, needs assessment, quantitative objectives, expected results, activities linked to the project, performance indicators, critical assumptions and risks. The attendance of the national society's program coordinator in the project planning process (PPP) workshop last May in Kribi, Cameroon, should facilitate the transfer of knowledge.

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### **Impact**

- The development process of the management systems will get a new boost through a planned comprehensive audit management of the national society's accounts (funded by the regional finance and resource development program). However, the impact of setting up the new financial and accounting management tools should be measurable beginning January 2004.

### **Constraints**

- Lack of personnel capacity. Until August 2003, the regional finance and resource development program benefited from the full support of the French Red Cross regional delegate based in Niger. Unfortunately, no replacement has arrived.

### ***For further information please contact:***

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

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*[<Contributions List below - Click here to return to title page>](#)*

APPEAL No. 01.39/2003

## PLEDGES RECEIVED

28/01/2004

DONOR	CATEGORY	QUANTITY	UNIT	VALUE CHF	DATE	COMMENT
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## CASH

						TOTAL COVERAGE
REQUESTED IN APPEAL CHF ----->				318,177		63.7%
CASH CARRIED FORWARD				67,195		
BRITISH - GOVT/DFID (04)				40,000	24.02.03	FINANCE DEVELOPMENT
FINNISH - RC		25,000	EUR	36,388	07/01/2003	HEALTH AND CARE
IRISH - GOVT				47,716	28.04.03	ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT/FINANCE
SUB/TOTAL RECEIVED IN CASH				191,299	CHF	60.1%

## KIND AND SERVICES (INCLUDING PERSONNEL)

DONOR	CATEGORY	QUANTITY	UNIT	VALUE CHF	DATE	COMMENT
DENMARK	DELEGATE(S)			3,778		
FRANCE	DELEGATE(S)			7,556		
SUB/TOTAL RECEIVED IN KIND/SERVICES				11,334	CHF	3.6%

## ADDITIONAL TO APPEAL BUDGET

DONOR	CATEGORY	QUANTITY	UNIT	VALUE CHF	DATE	COMMENT
SUB/TOTAL RECEIVED				0	CHF	