

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

REPUBLIC OF CONGO

01 September 2003

Appeal No. 01.42/2003

Appeal Target: CHF 213,602 (USD 146,563 or EUR 145,227)

Programme Update No. 02

Period covered: April to June 2003

The Federation's mission is to improve the lives of vulnerable people by mobilizing the power of humanity. It is the world's largest humanitarian organization and its millions of volunteers are active in over 180 countries.

For more information: www.ifrc.org

In Brief

Appeal coverage: 64.9% See attached Contributions List for details.

Outstanding needs: CHF 74,953 (USD 53,000 or EUR 48,750)

Related Emergency or Annual Appeals: N/A

Programme Summary: Recent economic efforts point to improvements in the overall economy. Health concerns remain serious; however, Ebola haemorrhagic fever is under control. (See recently completed emergency appeal 07/2003). Teams of IEC facilitators and peer educators have been trained and are implementing activities in various districts of the Republic of Congo. The Congolese Red Cross was also involved in the large-scale measles campaign. The national society has gained wide recognition and appreciation for its efforts in all areas of humanitarian activities.

Operational developments

The Republic of Congo has an estimated population of 3,100,000, 56% of whom are young people and two thirds of whom live in the two major cities, Brazzaville and Pointe-Noire.

The geographical situation, together with its high population density, puts the Republic of Congo at the heart of a major trade network, mainly in the hands of expatriates. In recent months, a big economic effort has been noted with the revival of the agreements with the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund, the interventions of the European funding agencies, the revival of production centres and activities on the railway between Brazzaville and Pointe-Noire as well as the reorganization of the harbour.

Health is an acute problem. Cases of malaria, diarrhea, measles, tuberculosis and meningitis are regularly recorded by the integrated health centres, and take high toll among young children. AIDS has become a national concern with 9.8% of the population HIV positive, peaking at 12 per cent in Brazzaville and 22 per cent in Pointe-Noire; it is the primary cause of mortality.

Furthermore, Ebola haemorrhagic fever is present in Cuvette West. Thanks to major efforts by the Congolese Government, potential partners such as WHO, UNICEF, UNDP, WFP and MSF-Holland, the solid work of the Congolese Red Cross, with the support of the International Federation and its members, the epidemic has been curbed.

With regard to politics, Congo is enjoying new-found peace. The signing of the peace agreement between the Government and the Ninja rebels gives hope for security, the first step towards stable institutions. The democratic process is developing more and more and the country is opening up.

Despite all this, resources do not yet indicate that the population of the Congo can quickly overcome the problems of poverty, unemployment, housing, access to health care and education. Drinking water, electricity distribution, sanitation and environment are also serious problems. In the humanitarian field, the Congolese Red Cross is thus faced with a number of vulnerabilities and all the ensuing problems such as street children and AIDS orphans. It is reassuring to note the cohesion and determination of the Congolese Red Cross National Directorate which strives daily to undertake more concerted and sustainable activities.

1. Health and care

Goal: The Congolese Red Cross, through its network of volunteers, will have contributed to a reduction in the main diseases through its support to the Ministry of Health, strengthened partnerships with the other health actors, and the access given the population to good information on health related issues.

Objective: The Congolese Red Cross will have been involved in the Ministry of Health's and the Regional Directorate for Health's coordination activities and will have meaningfully involved its volunteers in all the community-based health activities.

Results achieved

Persons living with HIV/AIDS and combat against STI¹ in Brazzaville, Pointe-Noire, Dolisie and Owando

- Creation of pools of facilitators for the Programme in the districts, organization of grassroots education sessions: 8 working sessions were held, 5 in Brazzaville and 3 in Pointe-Noire, and 7 pools of facilitators were set up, 3 in Brazzaville and 4 in Pointe-Noire.
- Training of volunteers in the Pointe-Noire Communal Council: organization of follow-up and home care for AIDS patients. Terms of reference vouching for the training curriculum were prepared, and the partners and facilitators sensitized. Twenty-five hand-picked volunteers and three auditors took part in the training.
- Organization of information, education and communication (IEC) sessions: increasing the awareness of the populations in Brazzaville and Pointe-Noire of the combat against HIV/AIDS. Information was given to 40,592 persons in places of worship, military barracks and markets, 22,500 in Brazzaville and 18,092 at Pointe-Noire. The population of the two big cities thus learned about the disease and benefited from the advice given by Congolese Red Cross volunteers at the sessions organized.
- Manufacture of aids with the Federation's support: 40,592 prospectuses, 25 flags, 200 T-shirts and 200 posters made and 40,592 condoms sold. These aids helped increase the population's awareness.
- Organization of a workshop on exchanging experiences between the AIDS programme coordination at the Red Cross of the Democratic Republic of Congo and the Congolese Red Cross. The operational capacity of both national societies to combat HIV/AIDS was enhanced. A report was prepared and sent to the Federation.
- Training and refresher training of peer educators in Brazzaville to help run anti-AIDS clubs in schools and in the districts. Fifty volunteers were trained and 20 peer educators given refresher training in social mobilization.
- To improve techniques to combat HIV/AIDS, STI's and sexual violence, the national coordinator participated in two learning workshops at UNDP; 15 peer educators attended the seminar on facilitation techniques organized by the General Directorate for the Population.
- Strengthened cooperation with the operational partners for AIDS prevention: four programmes have been forwarded - one to World Bank, one to UNAIDS, one to the town hall in Pointe-Noire and one to the town hall in Brazzaville. With this strategy, the Congolese Red Cross benefited from the interest of its partners and fully involved them.

¹ STI: Sexually-transmitted infection

- Participation in World Red Cross day (8 May): the general population was informed on AIDS prevention. Educational talks were organized in 11 departments of the Republic, using aids (50,000 condoms, 11,000 leaflets, etc.) and with the support of UNFPA. Awareness was increased and the Congolese Red Cross carried out its self-evaluation of the work done in the community by organizing IEC.
- Training of 150 volunteers in STI/HIV/AIDS and sexual violence in the districts of Moundali, Bacongo, Ouenzé and Talangai in Brazzaville where four IEC sessions were held.

Combating Ebola Haemorrhagic Fever

- Involvement of the Congolese Red Cross in the combat to eradicate Ebola haemorrhagic fever in Cuvette West:
 - training of 150 volunteers in grassroots community awareness in the 38 localities in Kellé, Mbomo and Etoumbi districts;
 - distribution of food and non-food items to vulnerable people, with the support of WFP and the Congolese Government;
 - organization of hygiene and environmental sanitation operations;
 - burial of the dead;
 - surveillance of contacts with the cooperation of WHO, MSF-Holland and the Ministry of Health.
- Four field missions were organized by the Congolese Red Cross officers with the support of the Federation and two joint Congolese Red Cross-Federation missions were also organized:
 - ongoing campaigns on IEC in the communities increasing the awareness of 10,679 persons;
 - food and non food distributions at Kellé, Mbomo and Etoumbi;
 - 15 bicycles, 5 per district, one all-road motorcycle, 54 printed T-shirts, office supplies, mattresses, jerry cans, generator, stretchers, gas lamps, etc.;
 - organization of roving awareness teams.

The Federation provided both material and psycho-social support. The families of the epidemic victims were helped as a good part of their belongings had been burned to avoid contamination. This was done due to funding from German Red Cross and German Government, Finnish Red Cross, Swedish Red Cross, Monaco Red Cross, Red Cross of the DRC, DIFD (British Government) and other national societies and donors.

The Congolese Red Cross distributed food (rice, vegetable oil, tins of food and salt) and non-food (mattresses, blankets, pots, jerry cans) items to the population. A family who had lost one member received one mattress, three blankets, five bars of washing soap and a 10-litre bucket, as well as 25 kilos of rice, 12.5 litres of vegetable oil, salt and 10 tins of food. These quantities were multiplied by the number of persons who had died and who had survived per family. The persons and families who benefited were fitted out and can now properly prepare meals, eat, sleep and protect themselves even better than before the epidemic.

The operation in response to the epidemic of Ebola haemorrhagic fever strengthened the operational capacities of the branches in the three districts of the department of Cuvette West. It furthermore greatly increased the visibility and credibility of the Red Cross among the population following the unfortunate confusion with the Rose-croix.

In conclusion, the work of the Congolese Red Cross branch at Mbomo, Kellé and Etoumbi in the department of Cuvette falls within the fundamental mission of the Federation, namely to alleviate the suffering of the vulnerable. Through the project to combat the Ebola epidemic, the Congolese Red Cross, via the involvement of its volunteers, provided the persons and families affected by the epidemic sizeable assistance, in line with the fundamental principles of the Movement. Thirty of the 126 volunteer first-aiders involved are women.

Other activities

Organization of refresher training for persons providing reproductive health services and running IEC sessions at Djambala, Owando, Ouesso, Impfondo, Gamboma and Inkouélé benefiting 150 volunteers and 15 peer educators. Relations between the public authorities and the Congolese Red Cross were thus strengthened.

- Participation of the Congolese Red Cross volunteers in the polio campaign. A report has been produced and sent to the Federation. The Congolese Red Cross visibility and credibility were strengthened in the area of social and community mobilization.

- The Congolese Red Cross participation in the large-scale measles campaign: training and mobilization of 850 volunteers, supervision of the campaign in all the departments of the country. The involvement of the Congolese Red Cross volunteers enhanced the quality of the campaign.
- Participation in the malaria control programme: the Congolese Red Cross took part in a technical meeting organized at the national malaria control directorate with the programme managers. The Congolese Red Cross helped prepare the orientation document.

2. Disaster Management

Goal: Communities living in the Cuvette better able to cope with effects of flooding and diseases.

Objective: The Ministry of Health receives support in responding to cyclical flooding in Cuvette Ouest from the existing but upgraded health teams, better management mechanisms and better intervention arrangements at the Congolese Red Cross regional committee.

Results achieved

- Missions to assess the floods in Central Cuvette, the epidemic in Cuvette West, the situation of displaced persons in Pool and to identify needs for an effective response. Four missions were made to Mbomo, Kellé and Etoumbi in Cuvette West, two to Mindouli, Kinkala, Boko and Missafou in Central Cuvette, and reports were submitted. The Congolese Red Cross, with the support of the Federation, provided assistance to the victims of these disasters in the form of food and non food items.
- Preparation of humanitarian response operations in Pool: the Congolese Red Cross has set up an assistance programme which it has shared with the components of the Movement and the coordination for humanitarian action. A joint Congolese Red Cross, ICRC and Federation mission was made to Mindouli; four technical meetings were held with the leaders of local councils in Missafou, Mindouli and Kinkala.
- To acquire the necessary disaster response tools, a delegation of three Congolese Red Cross officers attended a workshop of the Central African Regional Disaster Response Team (RDRT) at Kribi in Cameroon, with the support of the Federation. These three Congolese Red Cross delegates facilitated a four-day workshop-seminar, from 23 to 26 April 2003, to share the skills they had learned at the workshop in Kribi with the members of the local committees in Dolisie in the department of Niari and of Brazzaville.

3. Organizational Development

Objective: The Congolese Red Cross is financially and technically self sufficient and able to cope with the main challenges it faces using its network of volunteers and its infrastructure.

Results achieved

- Better access to basic health care in the department of Pool: the suffering of the populations affected by the war has been alleviated, as the Congolese Red Cross provided them appropriate primary health care. The Congolese Red Cross's visibility and credibility were also strengthened through the rural development project in Mpoumako, a village situated a few kilometres from the city of Brazzaville. The young people in this locality were used in agricultural and pastoral activities. The Ambassador of Spain to the Republic of Congo laid the cornerstone of this project, in the presence of the head of district, members of the components of the movement (Federation and ICRC), the local deputy and several national and local Congolese Red Cross authorities. Funding from the Spanish Red Cross made this project possible.
- Better quality of food for the stricken populations in some of localities of Pool: food assistance for more than 80,000 vulnerable persons in the districts of Mindouli, Missafou and the localities in the neighbourhood of Kingouala and Kingoyi. A project was drawn up to overcome food deficiency and reduce the number of cases of severe malnutrition detected.
- Support to the local branches to energize the structures of the Congolese Red Cross general directorate. The presidents, the departmental directors, the presidents of the finance commissions, the leaders on the management board and the general management were trained. Electric typewriters have been given to the

departmental councils. Six machines were purchased to crush cassava, one of which has already been given to the Ewo local committee in Cuvette West.

- Organization of the session of the National Governing Board to set up a coherent work framework. The clear separation between the Management Board and the General Management was highlighted.
- Strengthening the network of volunteers so as to increase the number. During this quarter 205 new volunteers joined the Congolese Red Cross, strengthening the national society's operational capacities.
- Renovation of the whaling boat and launching of its commercial activities on the River Congo. Seven trips have been effected on the north Congo part. Transport has been facilitated for the population and receipts have been recorded, enabling the Congolese Red Cross to assume responsibility for some of its projects.
- Reviving the Congolese Red Cross cafeteria at national headquarters so as to strengthen the national society's finance. The cafeteria should serve food to workers in the surroundings and the public in appropriate conditions.
- Carrying out the single mother, head of household, support project, to help them through knitting and farming projects. Eighty-four single mothers, heads of household, have been identified in Sibiti, Djambala and Brazzaville; training in knitting for 10 trainers (6 national and 4 local); provision of ploughing supplies, knitting machines and farming input to the groups in Djambala; provision of knitting machine and ploughing supplies to the groups in Sibiti, and knitting machines for those in Brazzaville; acquisition of farm land in three localities. The single mothers identified have been able to care for themselves with the income-generating activities set up in this project. Associations demonstrated their solidarity.

4. Humanitarian Values

Objective: Eighty per cent of the Congolese population is familiar with International Humanitarian Law and 50 per cent of young people, particularly those who are armed (soldiers, police, militia and former militia) and those in school (students, pupils, apprentices) respect humanitarian values.

Results achieved

- The Congolese Red Cross bulletin, *Etendard de la Paix*, which aims to increase the awareness of the population, Congolese Red Cross officers and volunteers and their activities, was produced.
- Production of radio broadcasts to increase the awareness of officers, volunteers, the components of the movement and the general public of the activities of the Congolese Red Cross and the Movement. A total of fifteen radio broadcasts were made this quarter.
- Preparation of the national seminar on International Humanitarian Law at Brazzaville to train 20 volunteers selected from 11 departmental Congolese Red Cross councils. The teaching materials and aids are available from the ICRC. The request for funding in compliance with the bilateral cooperation agreement was sent to the ICRC for August 2003. The Congolese people will thus be informed about International Humanitarian Law.
- Participation in the production of the Federation's Central Africa Regional Office information bulletin: the Congolese Red Cross sent four information leaflets to the Regional Office to be included in six information bulletins this quarter.
- Collection, registration and distribution of Red Cross messages to relatives and transmission of reports to the ICRC. Children separated from their parents because of the war were put in contact with their parents.

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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DONOR	CATEGORY	QUANTITY	UNIT	VALUE CHF	DATE	COMMENT
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CASH

						TOTAL COVERAGE
REQUESTED IN APPEAL CHF ----->				213,602		64.9%
CASH CARRIED FORWARD				69,564		
IRISH - GOVT				32,625	28.04.03	
SWEDISH - RC		50,000	SEK	8,025	24.03.03	ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT
SWEDISH - GOVT		150,000	SEK	24,000	09.05.03	ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT
SUB/TOTAL RECEIVED IN CASH				134,214	CHF	62.8%

KIND AND SERVICES (INCLUDING PERSONNEL)

DONOR	CATEGORY	QUANTITY	UNIT	VALUE CHF	DATE	COMMENT
SWEDEN	DELEGATE(S)			4,435		
SUB/TOTAL RECEIVED IN KIND/SERVICES				4,435	CHF	2.1%

ADDITIONAL TO APPEAL BUDGET

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