

# 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

## REPUBLIC OF CONGO

15 April 2004

### In Brief

**Appeal No.:** 01.42/2003 ([Click here to access the 2003 Appeal](#))

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

**Appeal coverage:** 65.5% ([Click here to access the Final Financial Report](#))

**Appeal 2004:** Republic of Congo no. 01.44/2004 ([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.*

*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](#) in delivering assistance to the most vulnerable. For support to or for further information concerning Federation programmes or operations in this or other countries, please access the Federation's website at <http://www.ifrc.org>*

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### Overall analysis of the programme

The [Congolese Red Cross](#) is among the few humanitarian organization with a presence in all departments of Congo; the others are WHO, local churches and some local NGOs. Indeed, wherever people live, there is at least one national society's volunteer. The national society is hence a key partner to the Republic of Congo government authorities in matters of emergency relief and is often called upon to respond to disasters. The national society acts quickly, even under severe difficult conditions.

This ability to respond under difficult circumstances was reflected in the national society response to the three outbreaks of Ebola Haemorrhagic Fever in the department of Cuvette Ouest. The second and third Ebola operations involved 125 trained volunteers who engaged in sensitizing and mobilizing activities to stem the outbreak. Medical doctors from the Red Cross of the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) and the Togolese Red Cross<sup>1</sup> supported the Congolese Red Cross to help deal with the outbreaks. The Federation delegation in Brazzaville and Yaoundé offered immense support to the national society, particularly with human resources.

With the support of the Federation, the Congolese Red Cross capacities to support the Ministry of Health in fighting STI/HIV/AIDS and polio were boosted. IEC meetings on STI/HIV/AIDS and sexual violence were carried out in target localities where prospectuses, condoms and T-shirts were distributed. Volunteers carried out

<sup>1</sup> Both national societies are members of the Disaster Response Teams, respectively from Central Africa and West Africa.

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home visits to People living with AIDS and created activity pools to facilitate proximity counselling. The population accessed quality information in caserns, schools, churches and public places like markets through IEC and awareness campaigns. Feedback is positive, mostly from soldiers and policemen who continue requesting more condoms.

The ICRC continued to support the national society in its activities to disseminate international humanitarian law among the armed forces, the former militiamen and young people in general. The circulation of information in all directions was also promoted through a bi-monthly information leaflet, weekly broadcasts and HF radios which covers all the eleven departments in the country.

With the new governance and management teams in place at all the Congolese Red Cross levels with the Federation support; the national society has improved its efforts to strengthen its management capacities and its financial basis. The national society has developed a few operational income-generation projects in Brazzaville (cafeterias), in Mpoumako (health centre, agriculture) and in Pointe-Noire (health centre). The Spanish Red Cross also played a big role in helping the CRC achieve its self-sufficiency objectives.

During this reporting period, the political situation was stable after armed conflicts had plagued the Republic of Congo since 1993 and several thousand militiamen began to abandon the forests in the Pool region. However, access to health care, education and food security remains precarious, creating serious humanitarian concerns.

### Health and Care

Since the start of the year 2003 the health delegate position for the Congos remained open. In order to make up for this vacancy the Federation delegation shared the staff resources from both Congos. In the last two years the region has concentrated on bringing more hands on operational capacity to the programme managers and staff from the national societies of Central Africa. Two regional response team workshops were run by the ERDAC<sup>2</sup> in October 2002 and June 2003, one focused on logistics and the other on epidemics. The health teams are getting more and more exposure to regional health issues and have become a dependable resource in case of emergency, as is the case in Congo with Ebola.

**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 for 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 community-based health activities.**

#### Expected results

**1. Persons living with HIV/AIDS and fighting STDs at Brazzaville, Pointe-Noire, Dolisie and Owando.**

#### Achievements

- Fifteen IEC<sup>3</sup> meetings on STD/HIV/AIDS and sexual violence were organized by the with Congolese Red Cross volunteers in Brazzaville, Dolisie and Pointe-Noire to induce significant behavioural changes in respect to HIV/AIDS, especially among young people at high risk; three meetings on STI/HIV/AIDS and sexual violence were held with operational partners, including UNFPA, the General Population Directorate and the Family Health Directorate. Awareness-raising campaigns were directed towards 40,592 people in churches, caserns, public places including markets: 22,500 in Brazzaville and 18,092 in Pointe-Noire. During these campaigns, 40,592 prospectuses and condoms were distributed with the support of UNFPA. Twenty-five (25) banners, 200 T-shirts and 200 posters were produced with the Federation support.

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<sup>2</sup> ERDAC stands for Equipe de Réponse aux Désastres en Afrique Centrale

<sup>3</sup> IEC - information, education and communication

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- Training in health care and home visits to AIDS patients of 25 official volunteers and three independent auditors from the community committee of Pointe-Noire. Fifty (50) volunteers have been trained and 20 peer educators refreshed to reinforce their capacities to run anti-AIDS clubs in schools and quarters in Brazzaville. 150 volunteers have been trained in STI/HIV/AIDS and sexual violence in the districts of Moundali, Bacongo, Ouenzé and Talangai in Brazzaville where four IEC sessions were organized.
- The outpatient treatment centre and other health units in Brazzaville, Dolisie and Pointe-Noire were supported in their home care work for AIDS patients and also provided social support for people living with HIV/AIDS.
- Access to quality information on HIV/AIDS/STI for a large part of the target population by way of simple preventive measures produced a great change in behaviour.
- The programme for Brazzaville and Pointe-Noire was defined, and 49 and 25 representatives respectively were appointed.
- Eleven (11) STI/HIV/AIDS activity pools were created: seven in Brazzaville and four in Pointe-Noire. These are to facilitate proximity educational counselling.

### **Other activities**

- Participation and involvement of the Congolese Red Cross volunteers in the smooth running of the National Poliomyelitis Vaccination Days; 480 volunteers, 21 supervisors, one national coordinator, five vehicles and eight portable HF radio sets.
- Participation of the national society in the measles campaign in the 11 chief towns of the departments, with the Federation support; 850 volunteers, 21 supervisors, one national coordinator, two vehicles and eight portable HF radio sets.
- The national society organized a refresher course for 150 volunteers and 15 peer educators and providers of reproductive health services and IEC sessions in Djambala, Owando, Ouessou, Impfondo, Gamboma, Inkouélé.
- Sanitary coverage of the FESPAM (Pan African Music Festival) in Brazzaville from August 2 to 8 2003 by the national society first aiders.
- Exhumation by the Red Cross volunteers of remains of 27 victims of the 5 June 1997 Brazzaville war in the districts of Moundali and Mfilou. This spared the people living in neighbouring compounds from a possible disease.

### **Impact**

- The sensitization campaigns on the use of condoms in caserns to protect oneself against HIV/AIDS have impacted the soldiers' behaviour. In fact, wherever and whenever they meet Red Cross volunteers, they ask for condoms.
- More people in Brazzaville, Pointe-Noire, Dolisie and Owando are free to seek advice concerning HIV/AIDS at the AIDS discussion centres, without necessarily feeling embarrassed.

### **Constraints**

- Lack of funding was the major handicap. Most planned activities were either partly carried out or simply not.
- Some schools, for ethnic and religious reasons did not want the Red Cross to carry out sensitization campaigns on the use of condoms.
- Political unrest and internal conflict hampered the national society from implementing some activities.

## **Disaster Management**

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

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

### **Expected results**

#### **1. Support to services in the regions of Cuvette Centrale and Plateaux**

##### **Achievements**

- Assistance to the victims and populations affected in the Pool area through social mobilization, medical care and distribution of food and non-food items supplied by WFP, following the war on 18 December 1998 war. In addition, the Red Cross volunteers did a census of 500 people who sought refuge local churches and families in Brazzaville prior to their voluntary return to their homes and villages. To succeed in the operation, volunteers were trained in food distribution and census techniques.
- An evaluation team undertook a field mission in the district of Oyo and Owando in the Cuvette Centrale department in relation to the floods, noting the need for medicine and food and non-food items in the affected communities.
- A joint needs evaluation mission in respect of people displaced or otherwise affected in the Pool area was undertaken in Mindouli by the national society with the support of the Federation and the ICRC. The Congolese Red Cross general directorate held four technical meetings with the local committees of Missafou, Mindouli, Boko and Kinkala regarding emergency operations. The local committees' operational capacities were strengthened with the material put at their disposal.
- Three national society's senior officers attended a disaster response training held in Kribi, Cameroon with the support of the Federation. They afterward trained the members of the local committees of Dolisie in Niari department and of Brazzaville. This strengthened the national society's capacity in disaster management. Other meetings were held in Brazzaville with the support of the head of delegation and the Red Cross of DRC in view of having a risk zones mapping.
- With the support of the Spanish Red Cross, the Congolese Red Cross managed a canoe bought to strengthen the financial capacities of the National Society, in transporting people from Brazzaville to villages along the banks of the Congo River and vice-versa, and to rescue people in danger in case of floods.

#### **2. Control of hemorrhagic fever caused by the Ebola virus.**

##### **Achievements**

Since the first outbreak of the Ebola epidemic in the Cuvette Ouest department in the North-East of the Republic of Congo, in 2001, bordering with Gabon, the Federation has actively supported the Congolese Red Cross and its branches to respond, along with the Ministry of Health, WHO and other humanitarian partners, to eradicate the epidemic.

During the 2001 operation, the Congolese Red Cross was involved with 62 trained volunteers and in the second operation in December 2002 and the beginning of January 2003, 64 more volunteers were trained and involved. With a total of 126 refreshed and trained volunteers, and the support of two medical doctors one from the DRC and the other from Republic of Togo, dispatched as the Federation coordinators of the second and third operations, the impact of the Congolese Red Cross involvement was quite obvious. The health delegate and the Red Cross head of health and social action department have closely monitored the epidemic development. A technical support mission by the Federation (with media coverage) was carried out by the Federation Media consultant.

Awareness-raising meetings were organized for the heads of the affected localities and districts (Mbomo, Kellé, Etoumbi, Mbanza) on the importance of complying with prevention measures against Ebola. The 126 trained volunteers continued sensitization and social mobilization activities using megaphones and bicycles and other materials the Federation provided. More than 10,679 persons were sensitized. They also distributed food from WFP and non-food items (mattresses, jerry cans, and cooking sets) to affected families, carried out hygienic and

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sanitation activities and also buried dead bodies. The Red Cross branches of Mbomo, Kellé and Etoumbi were supplied with T-shirts, office supplies, a motorbike, lamps and stretchers.

With the support of the Federation, four needs evaluation missions on the Ebola epidemic were carried out in Kellé, Mbomo and Etoumbi. It was recommended that awareness campaigns on the epidemic be carried out and anti Ebola clubs set up.

### **Impact**

- The local committees of the Red Cross in Mbomo and Kellé (Cuvette Ouest department) have very good relations with local and political authorities; their prior disaster response and activities are well appreciated by all. With the epidemic outbreaks, the national society volunteers are well trained on contamination mode, protection methods and sick and contact persons' isolation. They involved themselves in the committees of the fight against the epidemic outbreak which was set up for the last operation.
- The different Ebola operations have reinforced the operational capacities of the national society with the materials (bicycles, megaphones, spraying machines, boots and aprons) put supplied by the Federation. It is able to respond to emergency situations before requesting partners' support.
- The populations of Mbomo, Kellé, Etoumbi and the surrounding districts are aware of the Ebola epidemic. They are now reluctant to eating primates' meat.
- Red Cross visibility and credibility is increased.

### **Constraints**

- In the Cuvette Ouest department, the Red Cross was rejected by the population because they confused the Red Cross with Pink Cross (a religious sect). The situation got better and is now excellent with the sensitization and advocacy campaigns carried out by the national society headquarters with the support of the Federation coordinator of the operation.
- Due to lack of funds, training of community members of Cuvette Centrale and Plateaux departments to better respond to floods did not take place.
- War and insecurity rendered access to most parts of the country impossible by Red Cross volunteers.

## **Humanitarian Values**

Promotion of humanitarian values was not priority for the Congolese Red Cross during the reporting period. That is the reason why this programme was not part of the Appeal 2003-2004. However, since many activities were implemented in this domain, we found it necessary to include it in this Annual Report.

### **Objective**

International Humanitarian Law is familiar to 80% of the Congolese population and humanitarian values are respected by 50% of the young people, especially those who are engaged in military and police work (soldiers, police, gendarmes, militia and ex-militia), or studying (students, grammar school pupils and apprentices).

### **Achievements**

- Radio broadcasts every Monday evening from 22:15 to 22:45 on the Congolese Red Cross humanitarian activities, International Humanitarian Law and the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement in general. These broadcasters are journalist members of 'Amis de la Croix-Rouge' (Friends of Red Cross)..
- Production of a bi-monthly information leaflet called "Etendard de la Paix" by the Congolese Red Cross to share information with partners and the Congolese population in general.
- Collection, registration and distribution of Red Cross messages to parents and submission of reports to ICRC.
- The national society in collaboration with the ICRC prepared training sessions on International Humanitarian Law in Brazzaville for 20 Red Cross volunteers. The volunteers trained later carried out some activities in the interior of the country through IEC campaigns to sensitize the population on the respect of IHL, humanitarian values and Red Cross fundamental principles for a just society.
- With the technical support of the Federation delegation, all the eleven departments of the country are easy to reach on radio. Daily news on the national society's activities is transmitted to the headquarters by local committees through calls.

### **Impact**

- The Congolese population listened to the national society news on the National Radio and are aware of the humanitarian activities it implements.
- All the 11 departments countrywide easily communicate with one another through HF radios. The national society's humanitarian actions are then successfully coordinated from the headquarters.

### **Constraints**

- Lack of funding because the humanitarian values section was not part of the Appeal 2003-2004.

## **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.**

### **Achievements**

- Support to the local branches to make the Congolese Red Cross management structures more dynamic: 33 senior staff members (presidents, directors, departmental and community treasurers, and middle management and board of directors) were trained in fund-raising techniques.
- Acquisition of office materials for the 11 departmental and community committees of the national society; 11 electric and manual typewriters were handed over to the local communities.
- Acquisition of an experimental income-generating unit; six manioc pod grinders (mills) were given to the departments of Cuvette Ouest, Sangha and Likouala in the extreme north-east of the Republic of Congo.
- Organization and holding of the governance session; 52 governance members, of whom six were government officials, participated in this session from 13 to 15 January 2003.
- To strengthen the volunteer network of the Congolese Red Cross, a campaign to recruit new volunteers was carried out. As a result, 234 volunteers of different strata of society (students, school pupils, tradesmen, officials and military personnel among others) joined the national society.
- To strengthen the national society's human resource operational capacities, a recruitment announcement was made for seven national society's directorship posts through which, seven new directors were recruited to lead the Congolese Red Cross departments.
- In the framework of strengthening the financial capacities of the Congolese Red Cross, commercial trips were undertaken by the national society's lifeboat on the north side of the Congo River. This income-generating project was made possible through bilateral cooperation between the national society and the Spanish Red Cross.
- Launching of activities at Mpoumako (a village situated in the district of Ngabé, department of the Pool on national highway N° 2) approximately 100 kilometres from Brazzaville; installation and construction of a health centre, an apprenticeship workshop for small trades for women, and agriculture). These activities were supported not only by the Spanish Red Cross but also by the local community, which put a plot of land at the disposal of the national society for construction of the complex, designed to house all the structures of the project.
- To revive the activities of the cafeteria at the Congolese Red Cross headquarters, national society's volunteers made financial contribution. This project is now stable and has identified their priority needs (setting up and equipping the premises).
- A coordinator has been appointed and 28 young women have been identified (in Sibiti and Djambala) during the implementation of the project for "support for single mothers". Furthermore, four national trainers and six departmental trainers were trained and the project was also supplied with materials such as, agricultural equipment, herbal medicines, six knitting machines and 600 balls of wool procured. The national society also procured three plots of land perceived best for the project.
- A new form of collaboration between the Federation and the Congolese Red Cross was pursued. This resulted in both partners sharing office premises.
- Meetings between members of the movement (the Congolese Red Cross, the ICRC, the Federation and Spanish Red Cross made it possible to plan how to support the new team and find ways to combine efforts to support the Congolese Red Cross with implementing its programmes.

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- The seminar-workshop held in Kinshasa from 18 to 19 March 2003 to implement the Change Strategy advocated by the Federation, with the participation of delegates and local delegation staff from Republic of Congo and DR Congo, was facilitated by two staff members from the Federation Secretariat. The head of humanitarian values' training from Geneva facilitated the humanitarian values discussion. The seminar was followed by training and information sessions for the delegates and coordinators about the two national societies' programmes. Emphasis was placed on setting up the new management strategy for the programmes by the project (programme) coordinators.
- The delegation also intensified its relations with partner national societies (PNS) to attract them to the region in general and the Congo in particular. Contacts with the British Red Cross were strengthened; a senior member of the British Red Cross visited the Republic of Congo and the DR Congo from 1 to 14 March 2003 to take note of the national societies' programmes in response to the problems faced by the two countries. The British government, through the British Red Cross, the Danish Red Cross, the Finnish Red Cross and the Monaco Red Cross national societies immensely supported the Congolese Red Cross following the emergency appeal in the fight against the Ebola epidemic. The Swedish Red Cross one of the region's main supporters has contributed not only to the Ebola operation, but also given to the organizational programme alongside the Irish government.
- A special fundraising operation was organized in the village of Imboulou, district of Ngabé in the department of the, among and by the Red Cross volunteers; not only to reinforce the national society's financial and operational capacities but also to relieve the village' vulnerable people's suffering.

### **Impact**

- The population of Mpoumako, a village situated a few kilometres away from Brazzaville, are self-dependant in working on agricultural projects after the national society launched some pilot projects. They are now duplicating the project in the village after succeeding with the first ones.
- 'Support to single mothers' in Sibiti and Brazzaville has shown good impact; for instance in Mpoumako, they are now dealing with self-sustenance activities (income generating projects).
- After election sessions, there exists now harmony between the management and governance of the national society, at all levels.
- There is better quality of project design after training. The national society is involved in self-sufficiency projects that are generating income.

### **Constraints**

- Conflict in the country in general and particularly in the Pool region, hampered the implementation of most national society's activities.
- Lack of funding.
- The organization development delegate's end of mission while his support was most needed.
- Volunteers' lack of motivation. Because they are not often paid for their services.

[\*Click here to return to the title page\*](#)