

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

CENTRAL AFRICA SUB-REGIONAL PROGRAMMES

7 October 2003

Appeal no. 01.44/2003; Appeal target: CHF 1,766,437 (USD 1,212,046 or EUR 1,200,997)

Programme Update No. 3

Period covered: July to September 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: 59.7%; please refer to the Contributions List for this appeal on the Federation's website.

Outstanding needs: CHF 711,054 (USD 537,860 / EUR 462,020)

Related Emergency or Annual Appeals: N/A

Programme Summary: HIV/AIDS is a priority issue for national societies in the Central Africa region; they are encouraging peer educators in schools, companies and youth groups, and also focusing their efforts on high-risk groups. Health (AIDS) action plans have been finalized for Cameroon, Chad and Equatorial Guinea. A pilot project, providing psycho-social support to sex workers, has been finalized; it will serve as the blueprint for similar projects throughout Cameroon and in the region.

Coordinated efforts in organizational development and disaster management have also shown good progress towards achieving the objectives; members of the regional disaster response team (RDRT) have been trained and their skills strengthened in water sanitation and epidemic management.

Due to limited financial coverage for this appeal, the sub-regional office has adapted its programme implementation; impact on beneficiaries and the community is therefore limited.

Operational developments

Central Africa is made up of eight countries: the Republic of Congo, the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), the Central Africa Republic (CAR), the Republic of Chad, the Republic of Gabon, the Republic of Equatorial Guinea, the Republic of Sao-Tome and Principe, and the Republic of Cameroon. Socio-economic indicators seem to reveal some riches in most of these countries. Unfortunately, the most vulnerable in Central Africa are yet to benefit from this wealth because of the inequitable distribution of available resources.

Admittedly, while a minority live in affluence, the majority live below the poverty line with little access to basic health care and education. Their general situation, including food security, is progressively becoming precarious. This is worsened by Central Africa's high epidemics rate, the rapid progression of HIV/AIDS, floods, drought, and conflicts. The poor are the most vulnerable victims of these disasters.

During this reporting period, some changes have been observed in the DRC, CAR and Chad. In the DRC for instance, the Itouri region notorious for its various ethnic conflicts has become more secured with the establishment of a transitional government and the deployment of an international contingent within the framework of the Artemis operation¹.

The new authorities in Bangui (Central African Republic) are trying to justify their take over of power by paying salaries to civil servants and calling for a national dialogue. Nevertheless, the Central Africa Red Cross Society is experiencing a serious institutional crisis following the suspension of its Executive Committee by government authorities.

Chad has been enjoying some relief following its admission into the league of oil producing nations. It is hoped that this will not destabilise the social order in the country.

Although countries in Central Africa have been making significant efforts aimed at preventing and controlling epidemics, the conditions of the most vulnerable remains worrisome. They are still affected by cholera, meningitis and Ebola fever.

Social tension and epidemics not only contribute to making the populations more vulnerable, but also to environmental and health degradation. A lot remains to be done and this requires stronger support from humanitarian agencies. The epidemiological situation remains a cause for concern in spite of the awareness campaigns carried out by volunteers of the Red Cross Societies in the sub-region.

Given that this Appeal is not completely covered (financially), the Federation sub-regional office has been implementing its programmes with prudence and caution.

Health & Care

Goal: Reduced vulnerability of local communities in Cameroon, Chad and the Central African Republic to disease including AIDS and the various opportunistic infections related to the HIV virus. Absence of stigmatization encountered by PLWHA² and their families.

Objective: the key health problems of the communities that are supported by the Red Cross Societies of Cameroon, Chad, Central African Republic and Equatorial Guinea will be identified in a participatory way and priority activities will be planned and implemented to help the community in tackling these problems.

Expected result 1: The eight national societies of the region are involved in the fight against HIV/AIDS on a relevant scale.

HIV/AIDS is a priority issue to national societies of Central Africa as they encourage peer education in schools, youth groups, companies, and high-risk groups (sex workers, lorry-drivers, armed forces, etc.).

Despite all the efforts made by both the volunteers of the Red Cross Societies and other NGOs, the epidemiological situation remains a cause for concern in the region.

The high level of poverty and precarious living conditions often expose girls in urban areas to unprotected sex. To tackle this problem, the sub-regional office has completed an action plan for a pilot project aimed at bringing psycho-social support to 1,000 sex workers and providing free medical care to 250 of such workers

¹ Artemis operation refers to the EU-led interim peace-enforcement mission that was deployed in DRC from June to September 2003. The UN peacekeeping mission (UNMOC) has since assumed this role.

² PLWHA – Persons living with HIV-AIDS

in Yaounde (2003). The project, approved by the Cameroon Ministry of Public Health and the National AIDS Control Committee (CNLS), will be replicated in Douala (2004), and in Ngaoundere and Maroua (late 2004-early 2005). Based on the lessons learned and the success achieved during the pilot phase in Yaounde, the project will be extended to other countries of Central Africa until 2007.

The action plan has been submitted to the British, Canadian and American Embassies, as well as the Advisory Committee of the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) Fund. The British Embassy and the HIPC Fund have promised to provide financial support for the pilot project.

The Federation sub-regional office is finalizing an agreement with the Pasteur Centre of Cameroon (*Centre Pasteur du Cameroon*) that will enable the centre to conduct bioassays on 250 sex workers. A similar agreement with MSF (*Médécins Sans Frontières*) will facilitate the administration of a 5-year free antiretroviral drug programme to 250 HIV-positive sex workers.

Objective 2: Finalise the Cameroon, Chad, and Equatorial Guinea health action plans in the framework of community-based priority health issues.

Achievements

During his one-month stay in Yaounde, 1 to 30 September 2003, an executive from the Congolese Red Cross brought technical support to the national societies of Cameroon, Chad, and Equatorial Guinea. A health (AIDS) action plan has been finalized in each of these three countries; these plans aim to resolve all community-based priority health issues in Cameroon, Chad, and Equatorial Guinea. Contracts have been awarded for the implementation of these action plans.

Objective 3: Support National Societies in the fight against diarrhoea and epidemics.

Achievements

Chad

Volunteers of the Red Cross of Chad in the Gore and Marou refugee camps have, since March, been pursuing their awareness campaigns on diarrhea prevention and destruction of vector-breeding sites. The construction of 178 latrines by 25 volunteers has reduced the impact of diarrhea.

As well, 50 volunteers carried out awareness campaigns on HIV/AIDS in the same refugee camps. That activity will be reinforced and extended to Guera and Bitkine with the support of two theatre troupes set up by peer educators.

Cameroon

The pilot project aimed at providing psycho-social support to 1,000 sex workers has been finalized with the development of the 2003-2007 action plan for Yaounde and Douala, and the 2004-2007 action plan for Ngaoundere and Maroua.

The pilot phase started in August 2003 with sensitization campaigns held in "red light" districts. Peer educators of the "*Club des Amies de la Prudence*" (CLAP) organized 40 discussion sessions on HIV/AIDS prevention through the practice of safe sex and stopping high risk behaviour.

Six micro-projects have been executed, and funds are available for about 20 new ones.

Several contacts have been made with embassies, cooperation agencies, CNLS, and HIPC Fund to raise the money needed for the execution of the project during the period 2003-2004 in Yaounde and Douala.

Equatorial Guinea

Trained peer educators are pursuing awareness campaigns on HIV/AIDS in schools, tourist centres, squares, and offices. At least 80 schools have been visited, as well as 36 companies, 31 villages, and several associations nationwide.

Impact

- Since the beginning of the year 2003, volunteer activities of sanitation and construction of public latrines in Equatorial Guinea have so far helped prevent a cholera outbreak.
- The extensive awareness campaign carried out by volunteers of the Red Cross of Chad also contributed to the prevention of cholera and other water-borne diseases in the refugee camps of Gore and Marou.

Major activities for the next quarter: October-December 2003

Cameroon

- Reduction of water-borne diseases.
- Sensitization of barbers on the need to prevent sexually transmitted infections (STI/HIV/AIDS).
- Setting up a theatre troupe in Douala.
- Personnel training in epidemic management and setting up a national epidemic management team.

The sex workers pilot project was aimed at:

- Continuing the sensitization campaigns of 40 peer educators from CLAP.
- Launching of a treatment centre for STI after the opening of the Cameroon Red Cross social and welfare health centre.
- Training of 40 new sex workers in Yaounde in income-generating micro-project management.
- Reaching a final agreement with some cooperation agencies and partners involved in the Social Marketing Programme of the “*Centre Pasteur du Cameroon*” and MSF.

Chad

- Reduce the number of victims of cholera and other water-borne diseases in N’Djamena.
- Raise public awareness on the dangers of excision especially among the Abeche and Bodo communities.
- Reinforce the HIV/AIDS awareness campaign on through the empowerment of theatre troupes.
- Establishing a national epidemic management team.

Equatorial Guinea

- Raise the awareness of populations on STI/HIV/AIDS.
- Improve access to drinking water.
- Set up a national epidemic management team.

Disaster Management

Goal: Reduced vulnerability of the populations in Central Africa following disasters.

Objective: The technical skills of the regional disaster response team (ERDAC³) are strengthened in the areas of water and sanitation and epidemic management (“ERDAC training project”) and food security (“VCA⁴ and Food Security project”); all procedures and practical arrangements are in place to facilitate a rapid deployment of the ERDAC during disasters (“Development of ERDAC deployment procedures”).

In line with the Federation’s 2002-2003 Appeal for Central Africa (01.05/2002), the sub-regional office has been providing substantial support to the establishment of a regional disaster response team (ERDAC) since October 2002.

³ ERDAC – Equipe de réponse aux désastres en Afrique centrale (in French); RDRT - Regional disaster response team (in English)

⁴ VCA – Vulnerability and capacity assessment

Facilitated by support from DMC⁵, a workshop was held in the sub-region in October 2002. That workshop brought together 35 executives from the eight national societies, with different profiles, and was aimed at setting up a multi-faceted team capable of planning and implementing disaster management programmes both at national and regional levels.

- Two ERDAC members were deployed to the Republic of Congo at the outset of the Ebola epidemic.
- Two ERDAC members planned and conducted an anti-cholera campaign in Mjimayi (DRC); a telecom regional resource person installed the radio system.
- Two ERDAC members from the Red Cross of Chad supervised activities aimed at bringing support to returned Chadians and CAR refugees thanks to funds provided by UNHCR.
- Two ERDAC members supervised activities carried out by volunteers of the Central African Red Cross during recent political events in CAR. Those activities included WatSan (treatment of wells), exhumation and burial of corpses, distribution of goods, and IEC⁶ on health.
- Representatives of all eight national societies have explained the concept of ERDAC both at their headquarters and local branches levels, thereby revamping the existing disaster response teams and stimulating the establishment of new ones where necessary.

In conformity with the objectives of the 2003 Appeal, the following activities aimed at revamping disaster response teams were carried out from March 2003 to June 2003:

- A workshop in March 2003 aimed at teaching participants on how to assess needs, analyse risks and draw a risk map within the framework of disaster management brought together 25 executives from the eight national societies of Central Africa. A good number of executives had already taken part in the October 2002 workshop.
- Another workshop brought together 20 executives from the eight national societies in Central Africa in June 2003. That workshop contributed to the capacity building of ERDAC as the participants were trained in epidemic management and in the SPHERE Project.

Impact

Executives from the national societies in the sub-region now have good mastery of:

- The process of an epidemic disaster;
- The risks of epidemics in Central Africa;
- What to do before, during, and after an epidemic;
- What it takes to mobilise communities;
- How to collaborate with partners in order to achieve a coherent coordination of epidemic response;
- Solidarity is common between national societies as they now exchange human resources;
- The national societies of Central Africa reaffirmed their adhesion to the concept of ERDAC as they unanimously signed an agreement on the deployment of ERDAC teams.

Major activities for the next quarter: October-December 2003

In spite of the objectives stated in this Appeal, the water and sanitation (WatSan) team has yet to be established. This can be achieved only if the following two essential activities are carried out:

- Clearly define the objectives and WatSan responsibility an ERDAC team can take in case of necessity, in collaboration with the international team of ERU-WatSan.
- Put in place the minimum equipment required for the kind of WatSan responsibility the region intends to take.

The Federation Delegate in charge of disaster management for Central Africa took part in an international course on WatSan Emergency Response Teams (ERU-WatSan) in Austria from 11 to 20 July 2003. Therefore, the present proposal includes the capacity building of all eight national societies of Central Africa in WatSan.

⁵ DMC – Federation Disaster Management and Coordination Division

⁶ IEC – Information, Education, Communication

Humanitarian Values

Goal: Absence of discrimination and stigmatization in the community.

Objective: The public has a sound understanding of and respect for the work of the eight Red Cross Societies of the sub-region and of the Federation's position and policies related to humanitarian issues, including discrimination with a particular emphasis on stigmatization of PLWHA and sexual violence to women.

The network of volunteer journalists set up by the sub-regional office continues to hold its monthly meeting, and its members are publishing articles on humanitarian issues; several articles were published in various newspapers during this reporting period. Those articles were based mainly on landslides that occurred recently in the North West Province of Cameroon and on the 2003 World Disaster Report.

The integrated project on AIDS control in favour of stigmatised sex workers is still going on. BRAC has contacted various embassies and organisations to obtain their financial and technical support for the smooth functioning of the project.

As a result of that initiative, the British Embassy in Yaounde has promised to support the project financially. On its part, the "Centre Pasteur du Cameroon" promised to conduct bioassays on 250 sex workers. MSF promised to provide free medical care to 250 HIV-positive sex workers. Other partners are expected to offer their own support in the days ahead.

Impact

- Journalists are getting more and more interested in activities carried out by the Red Cross.
- There is increased public awareness of our activities.

Major activities for the next quarter: October-December 2003

- Based on the World Disaster Report, a briefing will be organised to plead with the various embassies accredited in Cameroon in favour of the vulnerable in Central Africa who unfortunately do not receive the same treatment as their peers in other regions of the world.
- A conference which is expected to dwell on ethics and equity in the distribution of aid during disasters will take place by late October 2003 at the Catholic University of Central Africa in Yaounde.
- An exposition of 52 pictures on African culture and peace is equally scheduled.

Organizational Development

Goal: A strong management and governance of National Societies and their volunteers.

Objective: National societies are credible to their stakeholders, have improved their management and regularly provide transparent reports. They obtain thus better access to locally available resources. A sustainable system of multiplications, making use of well managed volunteer networks, guarantees a cost-effective use of these resources.

1. Improving the juridical framework of National Societies

With support from the sub-regional office, the Federation Representative assisted the Gabonese Red Cross to revise its statutes and develop rules and regulations. The revised documents have been forwarded to the Joint Commission in Geneva for comments.

2. Regional Coordination/Cooperation

In collaboration with the Chair person of the "Association des sociétés de la Croix-Rouge et du Croissant-Rouge Francophones d'Afrique" (ACROFA), the President of the Coordination Committee is involved in the resolution of the internal crisis facing the CAR Red Cross. He has been briefed on the progress of the situation and the reconciliatory measures to tackle the crisis. The eight national societies of Central Africa

reinforced their coordination mechanism when they organised their traditional partnership meeting in Kribi, Cameroon (15-17 September 2003). They used that opportunity to:

- Determine the progress made by each national society in implementing their programmes from January to June 2003, and their priorities for the year 2004;
- Obtain a promise made by the Swedish Red Cross regarding its contribution for the year 2004;
- Exchange their views regarding the achievements, constraints, and additional measures to be taken in respect of the Ouagadougou Declaration;
- Sign an agreement between the national societies of Central Africa and the Federation Central Africa sub-regional office on the full and efficient use of resources belonging to the Regional Disaster Response Team (ERDAC);
- Decide that the terms of reference of the Coordination Committee will be examined during the next meeting;
- Prepare for the XXVIII International Conference of Red Cross and Red Crescent to be held in Geneva from 2-6 December 2003;
- Prepare for the VI Pan African Conference taking place in Algiers in September 2004.

The Cooperation Agreement Strategy (CAS) process is underway in three national societies (Cameroon, CAR and Chad).

- The Cameroon Red Cross is conducting an analysis aimed at proposing actions to be taken in respect of its strategic development plan,
- The Central African Red Cross has completed its SWOT⁷ analysis with the support of the Regional Delegate for Organisational Development.
- The Red Cross of Chad solicited and received some comments in order to improve on its strategic plan document.

Impact

- The Executive Committee of the Gabonese Red Cross now believes in the distinction between good governance and management. Consequently, it has promised to use the statutes as well as the rules and regulations of GRC as tools that guarantee these principles.
- The Coordination Committee is aware of the strengths and weaknesses of the national societies of Central Africa. These societies have agreed to cooperate, especially in the framework of disaster relief through available resource exchange in the sub-region. This commitment was materialized with the signing of an agreement between the national societies and the sub-regional office.
- The national societies of Central Africa promised to reinforce the measures aimed at improving their implementation of the Ouagadougou Declaration.
- Authorities of the Cameroon Red Cross are contemplating a reorganisation of their general secretariat as a means of addressing weaknesses noticed during their strategic planning process.
- The sub-regional office has decided to be more realistic (in terms of time) when it comes to launching the strategic planning process.

Constraints

- The lack of qualified and permanent staff at the headquarters of the national societies.
- The shortage of working tools and equipment at the headquarters of the national societies.
- The Cameroon Red Cross strategic planning process ended earlier than expected; their personnel were not adequately motivated.
- The Cooperation Agreement Strategy (CAS) process is presently frozen in CAR following the dissolution of the Central African Red Cross Executive Committee by the government's Minister of Social Affairs and National Solidarity.

⁷ SWOT – Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats

Lessons Learned

- In order to ensure the smooth functioning of a strategic planning process, some conditions need to be fulfilled in the first place. These include:
 - Taking good governance into consideration all along the planning process;
 - Making staff members fully available for the planning process;
 - Providing an incentive for the personnel so as to make them enjoy working in the process;
 - Assuring the staff that no job will be cancelled or that no executive will be changed during the process;
 - Assuring the staff that the national society headquarters will not be closed; and
 - Ensuring that personnel have experience in teamwork.
- When a delegate or a resource person is appointed to a national society, s/he is better able to understand the context and to provide a closer and more efficient support.
- The activities carried out this reporting period have helped to understand the need for training executives of national societies in:
 - Good management
 - Good planning of activities
 - Project elaboration.

Major activities for the next quarter: October-December 2003

- Continue the CAS process with the Cameroon Red Cross. To this effect, financial support from the Federation Capacity Building Fund would allow the national society to renew, orientate, and train its staff.
- Help the Red Cross of Chad to complete its strategic plan.
- Support the Gabonese Red Cross in the organisation of its ordinary General Assembly.
- Organise a regional workshop on narrative and financial reporting.

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.

For support to or for further information concerning Federation programmes or operations in this or other countries, please access the Federation website at <http://www.ifrc.org>

Central Africa sub-regional

ANNEX 1

APPEAL No. 01.44/2003

PLEDGES RECEIVED

08/10/03

DONOR	CATEGORY	QUANTITY	UNIT	VALUE CHF	DATE	COMMENT
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CASH

REQUESTED IN APPEAL CHF ----->					1,766,438		TOTAL COVERAGE 59.7%
CASH CARRIED FORWARD				40,803			
AMERICAN - GOVT/PRM		40,000	USD	54,380	29.04.03		
BRITISH - GOVT/DFID (04)				55,000	24.02.03	CO-ORDINATION, INT. REPR. P&V	
BRITISH - GOVT/DFID (04)				50,000	24.02.03	ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT	
BRITISH - GOVT/DFID (04)				64,000	24.02.03	DISASTER MANAGEMENT	
IRISH - GOVT				90,000	28.04.03	ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT, HEALTH	
SWEDISH - RC		325,003	SEK	52,000	10.04.03	HIV/AIDS YOUTH PROG.	
SWEDISH - GOVT		3,200,000	SEK	512,000	09.05.03	DISASTER MGT, HELATH, ORGANISATIONAL DEV. COOPERATION, CAMEROON	
CAPACITY BUILDING FUND				65,700	29/08/03	CAMEROON	
CAPACITY BUILDING FUND				71,500	29/08/03	GABON	
SUB/TOTAL RECEIVED IN CASH				1,055,383	CHF		59.7%

KIND AND SERVICES (INCLUDING PERSONNEL)

DONOR	CATEGORY	QUANTITY	UNIT	VALUE CHF	DATE	COMMENT
SUB/TOTAL RECEIVED IN KIND/SERVICES				0	CHF	0.0%

ADDITIONAL TO APPEAL BUDGET

DONOR	CATEGORY	QUANTITY	UNIT	VALUE CHF	DATE	COMMENT
DANISH - RC		21,470	EUR	32,688	26.06.03	IN KIND 13'625 KG SECOND HAND CLOTHES DIRECT TO CAR RC
SUB/TOTAL RECEIVED				32,688	CHF	