

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

CENTRAL AFRICA SUB-REGIONAL PROGRAMMES

23 February 2004

In Brief

Appeal No.: 01.44/2003 ([Click here to access the 2003 Appeal](#))

Appeal target: CHF 1,766,437 (USD ,1212,046 or EUR 1,200,977)

Appeal coverage: 79.5% ([Click here to access the Final Financial Report](#))

Appeal 2004: Central Africa sub-regional programmes no. 01.48/2004 ([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 Central Africa sub-region is comprised of Cameroon, Central Africa Republic, Chad, Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), Republic of Congo, Equatorial Guinea, Gabon, and Sao Tome and Principe. Click on the name of the national society below to access the individual Federation web page:

[<Cameroon Red Cross Society>](#)

[<Central African Red Cross Society>](#)

[<Red Cross of Chad>](#)

[<Red Cross of DRC>](#)

[<Congolese Red Cross>](#)

[<Red Cross of Equatorial Guinea>](#)

[<Gabonese Red Cross Society>](#)

[<Sao Tome and Principe Red Cross>](#)

Most of the programmes for the 2003 Central Africa sub-regional Appeal have been completed despite the fact that the Appeal coverage was 80%.

Central Africa sub-regional programmes; Annual Appeal no. 01.44/2003: Annual Report

The fight against HIV/AIDS continued; however, the absence of a Health Delegate prevented Central Africa sub-regional office¹ from providing the best services in health.

National societies in the region have now recognized the importance of the Regional Disaster Response Team in Central Africa (ERDAC²); as a result, disaster management has improved.

There have been great achievements in organizational development especially in Gabonese Red Cross. Central Africa sub-regional office promises to work and ensure that national societies in the region become “well functioning national societies”.

To promote humanitarian values, extra effort has been made in collaboration with the “ladies free” project to stop stigma and discrimination vented against HIV/AIDS victims.

Regional coordination has been strengthened despite the absence of partner national societies (PNS).

The institutional crisis in Central Africa Republic hindered the smooth functioning of the Central African Red Cross Society and prevented it from achieving set objectives, including action in favour of vulnerable people.

International representation has been on course. There is collaboration between Central Africa sub-regional office, UN agencies and the diplomatic corps accredited to Cameroon. The “Ladies Free” project has been an avenue for collaboration.

There is recurrence of cholera, meningitis and Ebola in spite of deliberate efforts to prevent and control the epidemics. In fact, the reappearance of some epidemics such as cholera in Kassaï (DRC), and the Ebola fever in the Republic of Congo are now denounced.

Social tension and epidemics increase the vulnerability of populations through poor health and environmental degradation. There is need to put extra effort to combat the epidemics and this calls for stronger support from humanitarian agencies.

Health and Care

Goal: Reduce the vulnerability of local communities to diseases, including AIDS and various opportunistic infections related to HIV/AIDS in Cameroon, Chad, and CAR. Eradicate stigma against people living with HIV (PLWHA) and their families.

Objective 1: Support all eight national societies of Central Africa in the fight against HIV/AIDS.

Achievements

- In the fight against HIV/AIDS, the pilot phase of the project known as “Ladies Free” is underway in Cameroon; pedagogic booklets have been updated; the training of peer educators is on course; and the activities of the theatre group of the Red Cross has been launched in Douala.
- The construction of a health centre to welcome “Ladies Free” is 90% complete.
- Six micro-projects presented by “Ladies Free” well trained in the management of such businesses have been supported by the Federation’s Central Africa sub-regional office, so as to encourage girls to stop prostitution.
- For the smooth conduct of this particular point of the project, several partnerships have been made between Central Africa sub-regional office and some organizations and embassies including the “Agence de Coopération et d’Assistance à l’Entreprise Privée (ACEP), the International Labour Organisation

¹ The Central Africa sub-regional office is also known by its French acronym of BRAC (Bureau Régional de l’Afrique Centrale)

² Equipe de Réponse aux Désastres en Afrique Centrale

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(ILO), the British embassy, the National AIDS Control Committee (NACC), and the Centre Pasteur du Cameroun (CPC).

- To support advocacy activities, Central Africa sub-regional office has established relations with the “Club des Amies de la Prudence” (CLAP), and the “Association des Femmes Actives du Cameroun” (AFASO). CLAP works to improve the situation of “Ladies Free” and brings them together in order to better understand their problems and encourage them to join the project. AFASO brings together female PLWHA³, in this case women. They are trained as peer educators to carry out sensitization campaigns through educative discussions in public places and in the working places of the “Ladies Free”, where prostitution is practiced.
- To strengthen the collaboration, Central Africa sub-regional office has granted CLAP and AFASO offices in its headquarters. The personnel of Central Africa sub-regional office are in daily contact with members of the two associations. This is an effort to fight stigma suffered by “Ladies Free” and PLWHA.
- Central Africa sub-regional office is in the process of establishing partnerships with organizations to financially support the “Ladies Free” project. These organizations include the National AIDS Control Committee (NACC), the follow up committee of the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) funds, the Canadian embassy and British embassies, the “Agence de Coopération et de Crédit aux Entreprises” (ACEP), the International Labour Organisation (ILO), the “Centre Pasteur du Cameroun” (CPC), and “Médécins Sans Frontières” (MSF).

Objective 2: Finalize the Cameroon, Chad, and Equatorial Guinea health action plans.

Achievements

- National societies of Cameroon, Chad, and CAR received several missions during which executives from both Headquarters and Local Committees were brought together.
- In fact, Central Africa sub-regional office sent an ERDAC Executive from the Congo Red Cross in NS of Cameroon, Chad, and Equatorial Guinea to support them. Health-AIDS action plans and programme contracts have been developed in those three NS.

Constraints

The finalization of action plans related to the problems identified by communities took place later than expected. The follow up of this issue failed owing to the lack of a Health Delegate. The funds were transferred to the national society very late (45 days for Chad) due to the poor banking system in Central Africa.

The construction of the health centre is not completed.

Impact

- The problems of “Ladies Free” are progressively well understood by the girls themselves, the government, and international organizations.
- The project on “Ladies Free” offers a good number of local funding opportunities through the establishment of very enriching partnership ties.

³ PLWHA – Persons living with HIV/AIDS

Disaster Management

Goal: Reduce the vulnerability of populations in Central Africa after disasters.

Objective: The technical know-how of the Regional Disaster Response Team (ERDAC) is reinforced in the domains of WatSan (water and sanitation) and epidemic management. Everything is set to facilitate the early deployment of ERDAC in case of disaster (Development of ERDAC deployment procedures).

Achievements

Capacity building of executives in national societies:

- In March 2003, a workshop brought together 25 executives from Central Africa sub-regional office. The workshop trained participants
 - Needs assessment
 - Risk analysis
 - Risk mapping in disaster management.
- Another workshop brought together 20 executives from national societies in Central Africa during the second quarter. That workshop contributed to the capacity building of ERDAC as the participants were trained in epidemic management and in the SPHERE project.
- An ERDAC data bank is now available.
- An insurance company has been identified to cover ERDAC members during interventions.
- A memorandum of understanding has been signed with the national society for the deployment of ERDAC teams.
- The training in WatSan failed owing to the lack of equipment.

In follow up on disasters:

- Central Africa sub-regional office supported the Cameroon Red Cross in disaster response planning and finalization of the Appeal when floods and landslides occurred in Magha and the surroundings in the South West and North West provinces.
- Central Africa sub-regional office facilitated the establishment of a partnership between the Cameroon Red Cross and the Cameroon Civilian Protection Department using concrete and pragmatic initiatives to prevent disasters and respond in case of emergency.

ERDAC teams have been deployed on several occasions to:

- Congo during the Ebola fever outbreak
- DRC during the cholera outbreak
- Chad to assist the country team manage the first aid operations in favour of Central African Republic refugees and Chad returnees with support from the UN.

Constraints

- Limited financial and human resources hindered the follow up of various projects and programmes.
- The lack of equipment for the training in WatSan prevented us from achieving the first objective of the programme.

Impact

- The concept of solidarity among NS is spreading in the region as human resources are exchanged.
- NS in Central Africa are able to fill the gap when the need of recruiting competent human resources arises, or in case of an emergency.
- NS in the region renewed their adhesion to the concept of ERDAC as they unanimously signed the letter of understanding for the deployment of ERDAC teams.

Organizational Development

Goal: Capacity building of executives at all levels.

Objective: Ensure the smooth functioning of national societies.

Achievements

- The quality of financial and narrative reports has improved
- Reporting Officers from all national societies in Central Africa attended a regional workshop on financial and narrative reporting in Kribi (Cameroon) from 24 to 28 November 2003. The workshop trained on the importance of reporting and the Federation reporting formats.

Cameroon

Central Africa sub-regional office supported the Cameroon Red Cross in the process of recruiting a Programme coordinator.

Gabon

Central Africa sub-regional office assisted the Gabonese Red Cross to improve its articles of association. In addition, the Federation regional office provided the national society with financial and technical support to hold its ordinary general assembly (OGA). During the OGA:

- The national society's articles of association were adopted
- A manual on financial procedures, the organizational chart, and the position description was adopted
- A draft bill to protect and use the logo of the Red Cross; the personnel articles of association; and the proposed labour contract were rejected. The OGA decided that these documents will be keenly studied by the appropriate specialists, under the supervision of the incoming Board of Directors and the Secretary General;
- A new team of a Board of Directors was elected, taking into consideration the gender equity, and making provisions for the representatives of all the ministries which are partners of the Red Cross.
- After the OGA, the newly elected members of the Board of Directors and the representatives of ministries which are partners of the Red Cross were trained in good governance and management. Another group was trained in December 2003. The two training sessions enabled the Board of Directors to draw a three-year action plan.
- A few management tools and equipment have been put in place.
- After adoption by the OGA, the prescriptions in the manual on financial procedures are already being implemented at the national society's headquarters.
- Central Africa sub-regional office gave two second-handed computers to the Gabonese Red Cross. This equipment has been allocated to the office of the in-coming Secretary General and the accounting department.
- The accounting software has been installed in the computer allocated to the accounting department. The accounting officer will be trained on the accounting software in January 2004.

Constraints

- Commitment of the personnel and volunteers in Cameroon Red Cross Society has declined due to tension at the helm of the national society. This prevented the smooth functioning of the strategic planning process, the identification and implementation of income generating projects developed by divisional committees for the benefit of the most vulnerable.
- The dissolution of the Board of Directors of the CAR Red Cross and the dismissal of its chairperson by the Government put a stop to the activities that were already being carried out. It also prevented Central Africa sub-regional office from supporting the CAR red Cross as intended.

Impact

- The improvement on the articles of association of the Gabon Red Cross has improved the image of the national society in the eyes of political authorities and the general public in Gabon. Consequently, the operating budget of the Gabon Red Cross for the financial year 2004 has been integrated into that of the Ministry of Social Affairs and defended before the Ministries of Finance and Planning. The latter approved it and promised to table it before the Financial Commission of the Gabon National Assembly. The media that covered the OGA spared no effort in commending the changes in the Gabon Red Cross in various ways. As a result of that had-sell advertising, the Chair person of the Gabon Red Cross was invited by the First Lady of the Country to accompany her in touring Gabon to raise the awareness of populations, especially that of the North, on HIV/AIDS. On their part, the wives of ambassadors accredited and living in Gabon promised to get activities aimed at mobilising resources and bringing support to the most vulnerable started again in 2004. In addition, some qualified executives from both the public and the private sectors are progressively getting interested in the activities of the Gabon Red Cross.
- The workshop training in reporting generated a sense of regional solidarity among Reporting Officers.
- The support of Central Africa sub-regional office to the Cooperation Agreement Strategy (CAS) process of the DRC Red Cross strengthened working ties between the DRC – Republic of Congo Delegation and the Regional Office.

Humanitarian Values

Goal: Eradicate Discrimination and Stigma in the Community

Objective: The general public really understands the Federation’s position vis-à-vis humanitarian issues, especially stigma against PLWHA and “Ladies Free”.

Achievements

- The media coverage of the 2003 World Disaster Report was done in four steps:
 1. For the attention of the Diplomatic Corps accredited in Yaoundé;
 2. At the Catholic University of Central Africa (Yaoundé) through a discussion forum on the theme “Ethics and equity in Humanitarian Action”;
 3. For the attention of members of the Rotary Club in Yaoundé;
 4. For the attention of the group of Cameroonian employers (GICAM).
- Members of the Red Cross press network publicised the landslides which occurred in the North West Province of Cameroon and on the 2003 world disaster report.
- The monthly news bulletin entitled “Brief News from Central Africa” was published on a regular basis in January to September 2003. The peculiarity of this news bulletin is to echo the monthly activities of volunteers in Central Africa.
- The quarterly newspaper entitled “Central Africa” for the period January – June was published in August 2003.
- Central Africa sub-regional office supported the development of 52 paintings known as “ART EXPO”. The paintings were made by young Cameroonian artists to show another vision of Africa as seen by Africans themselves.

Constraints

The forwarding of the information intended to fill the pages of the various news bulletins to Central Africa sub-regional office by national society should be improved upon.

Impact

- All the above mentioned activities increased the visibility of the national society and Central Africa sub-regional office.

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- The Rotary Club International funded the presentation of the 2003 world disaster report to the diplomatic corps accredited to Cameroon. This is as a result of the partnership policy developed by Central Africa sub-regional office.
- The diplomatic corps, academicians, and students are aware of the activities of the Federation. They are also sensitized on the need to channel more resources to Central Africa.
- The Red Cross registered a good number of candidates to volunteering among university students. Within the framework of its academic programme, the university Appeals on the Red Cross to monitor a module on International Disaster Response Law (IDRL) and on International Humanitarian Law (IHL).
- Some ambassadors promised to finance our programmes or to connect us to potential donors. Central Africa sub-regional office will spare no effort to make sure these opportunities are well exploited.
- There are some signs indicating that people are willing to work hand in hand to finance Red Cross activities such as the development of a manual on the training of peer educators within enterprises.

Regional Coordination

Goal: Build the capacities of national society in order to effectively implement the Federation's strategy to change.

Objective: National societies in Central Africa have a stronger sub-regional coordination mechanism, with clearly defined terms of reference, and enough resources to enable their members to take part in important manifestations organised in the sub-region and in the partnership meeting in Geneva on the one hand, and to assist sisters NS in solving their management and governance problems on the other hand.

Achievements

- National societies in Central Africa reinforced their cooperation mechanism when they held their traditional partnership meeting in Kribi (Cameroon) on 15 - 17 September 2003.
- Central Africa sub-regional office provided a close technical support to the DRC Red Cross and the Delegation for the two Congos within the framework of the revision and finalization of the DRC Red Cross strategic plan paper for the period 2004 – 2008.

Constraints

- The support by partner national societies in the region is too limited.

Impact

The support Central Africa sub-regional office provided the DRC Red Cross within its Cooperation Agreement Strategy (CAS) development process contributed to strengthening cooperation between the Delegation covering both DRC and Republic of Congo and the Sub-Regional Office.

International Representation

Goal: Develop a more productive contact approach and establish partnership ties with the United Nations (UN) Agencies and Embassies accredited in Cameroon.

Objective: Convince Governments, Embassies, and UN Agencies to support the Sub-Regional Office's programmes and projects.

Achievements

Central Africa sub-regional office represented the Federation at the preparatory meeting to the Tokyo International Conference for Africa's Development (TICAD III). TICAD III is the framework within which Japan organises the support it intends to bring to the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD). The Federation seized the opportunity of being present at that meeting to plead with the other participants (High Ranking Country Representatives, UN Agencies, and Diplomatic Representatives) for the following problems to be taken into consideration:

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- The fight against AIDS and stigma against PLWHA by putting emphasis on the sensitization of the community, facilitating access to treatment, encouraging voluntary AIDS screening test, and by developing programmes on extended sensitization on prevention;
- Malaria control
- Programmes on food security that can only be achieved through the development of rural areas.

These suggestions were highly welcome as they were highlighted in the recommendations of the meeting.

Central Africa sub-regional office presented the project on “Ladies Free” to ambassadors accredited in Cameroon. Central Africa sub-regional office also paid several visits to Equatorial Guinea (UN agencies) and Chad (Ministry of Health, UNICEF and WHO representatives).

After his first meeting with the UNDP Resident Representative in Cameroon, the Federation’s Head of Sub-Regional Office became a member of the Heads of UN Agencies meeting. Within the framework of the project on “Ladies Free”, Central Africa sub-regional office strengthened its cooperation ties with the ILO and the World Bank. ILO funded the training aspect of the project while the World Bank facilitated access to HIPC funds.

Constraints

Contacts did not yield expected fruits that were expected owing especially to the lack of a Health Delegate.

Impact

The project on “Ladies Free” is recognised as a pertinent one.

Several Embassies and Organisations are stakeholders in that project.

The images of Central Africa sub-regional office and the Cameroon Red Cross are increasingly showing at both national and international levels.

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