

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

THE GAMBIA

7 July 2004

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 181 countries. For more information: www.ifrc.org

In Brief

Appeal No. 01.34/2004; Programme Update no. 01; Period covered: January to May 2004; Appeal coverage: 18.8%; Outstanding needs: CHF 426,010 (USD 336,899 or EUR 302,164). ([click here to go directly to the attached Contributions List \(also available on the website\).](#))

Appeal target: CHF 568,740 (USD 427,142 or EUR 366,102);

Related Emergency or Annual Appeals: n.a

Programme summary: The hiring by the [Gambia Red Cross Society](#) of a Finance Manager, Administrative Officer, and Programme Coordinator accelerated the national society's restructuring process. This has enhanced the organizational and financial development objectives, notably on strategic planning, accounts auditing and the establishment of a procedures manual. Work will now begin on the food security programme, for which funds have been allocated. The national society will focus on completing its strategic multi-year planning, consolidating its procedures, and implementing its food security project during the rest of 2004. It will however still maintain its HIV/AIDS projects, running its annual youth camp and ambulance service, and preparing for its local and General Assemblies slated for September.

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This Programme Update reflects activities to be implemented over a one-year period. This forms part of, and is based on, longer-term, multi-year planning (refer below to access the detailed logframe documents).

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, or for a full description of the national society profile, please access the Federation's website at <http://www.ifrc.org>

Operational developments

A member of the Gambia Red Cross Society who participated in the Key Correspondent training during the Dakar Home-based AIDS Care Conference in December 2003 has also been selected to be part of the team which will attend the HIV/AIDS conference in Bangkok in July 2004. He is one of only six people selected from the National Red Cross / Red Crescent Societies worldwide.

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The Gambia Red Cross is once more actively involved in organizing its annual ten-day International Youth Camp, "Bantaba" in Basse, Upper River Division from 27 August to 5 September 2004. Invitations in French and English have been sent out to neighbouring national societies. The Youth Camp is expected to attract 300 young people from different national societies and organizations globally. Activities such as HIV/AIDS sensitization, tree planting, and cross cultural experiences will be carried out to promote mutual understanding, respect and lasting friendship.

The storm which hit the Upper River Division (URD) on 24 May resulted in the destruction of 883 houses, affecting 6,025 people within Basse and its suburbs. The affected areas include, Allunhari, Kanubeh, Nyakoi Kerewan, Nyakoi Taibatu and other villages on the North Bank of URD. This kind of storm with a wind speed of 33 knots usually occurs at the end of the rainy season; this year it happened earlier. The Basse Hydro-Meteorological Institute has forecasted more of such storms which was thrown from the ocean and landed in the Basse areas and surroundings.

The headquarters dispatched personnel to assist in needs assessment, which, in spite of delays due to transportation, it managed to complete and disseminate. Unfortunately, a request for DREF funding was not granted to the national society; no contributions were received.

Exchanges on the national society transition process have occurred through the Federation Sahel sub-regional office partner conference calls organized in January and June. The first call resulted in the mobilization of the Gambia Technical Advisor for a fifth and final mission from 12 February to 12 March; the mission was designed to assist the national society through a crucial period and prepare for a handover to the Regional Development Officer. A "Friends of Gambia" meeting was held in Accra on 4 March linked to the West and Central Africa Partnership Meeting. The national society's Secretary General and President used the opportunity to portray the status of the national society change process based on elements of the "characteristics of a well-functioning national society."

From 13 January to 6 February 2004, the British Red Cross Programme Assistant undertook a mission aimed at supporting the development of effective administrative systems with the Gambia Red Cross. In working with the national society, many of the mission's objectives were jointly accomplished and those not carried out were either inappropriate or not feasible because of the absence of permanent staff.

In the light of encouraging results from a recent seismic survey, the Gambian government announced the possible drilling of an oil exploration well later this year in its offshore waters. Since independence in 1965, the long narrow land-locked country has earned revenue mainly from tourism and groundnuts export. More than half of all Gambians live on less than one USD a day; the country ranks 151 out of 175 in the UN Human Development Index. The President pointed out that, so far, only one tenth of Gambia's 5,000 square km of offshore waters had been surveyed in detail, noting that potential existed for much oil to be found. (Source: UN OCHA IRIN)

Health and care

Goal: The rate of HIV/AIDS in the Gambia is reduced.

Objective: Central River Division: A social mobilization HIV/AIDS campaign has been carried out among selected target groups.

Upper River Division: An intensive awareness campaign on the truth about AIDS has been carried out among adolescents and youth (13-35 years).

Progress/Achievements

- Knowledge is increased and attitudes behavioral positively changed among adolescents and youth aged 13-35 years in target villages of both CRD and URD
- The Gambia Red Cross branches have sufficiently trained and equipped teams of campaign workers. Over 40 volunteers initially trained ('training of trainers'-TOT), equipped and receiving refresher courses annually.
- The branch offices are adequately equipped to supervise the project activities.
- Liaison with partners and stakeholders efficiently carried out by the national society headquarters.

Impact/Constraints

These projects have not received funding under the 2004 Appeal. However, the national society continues to implement HIV/AIDS programmes bilaterally with Spanish Red Cross support and with Concern Universal, i.e. the 'Stepping Stones' project.

Disaster Management

Goal: Gambian households have physical and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food.

Objective: Five thousand school children (grade 4-6) understand, practice and benefit from adequate food to meet their dietary needs.

Progress/Achievements

- Students demonstrate their full understanding of the relation between nutritious food and personal health.
- Students maintain their own mini gardens at home.
- Students adding nutritious food to their daily diet gain weight.
- Target audience, having established nursery gardens for muringa trees, are actively promoting the use of muringa leaves in the community.
- Volunteers demonstrate good capacity to implement food security projects in the Red Cross branches.

Impact/Constraints

Despite availability of funds the national society was unable to launch its food security project during the period, due to human resource and organizational constraints. These include low staffing levels, strategic planning process and the Basse storms emergency. Work to revise project plans to match available funding (about 40% of the total budget) is now underway and the project will be launched.

Organizational Development

Goal: The Gambia Red Cross is a well-functioning national society capable of alleviating human suffering and delivering effective and efficient development services.

Objective: The national society has strengthened its governing, managerial and financial capacities at the headquarters, branch and link levels.

Progress/Achievements

The Gambia Red Cross has restructured and improved its organizational and capacities at headquarters and branch level.

- **Human resource policy and management are enhanced and administration procedures introduced at the national society headquarters.**
 - Recruitment was held to replace the former management team bringing in a new Secretary General in October 2003, a Programme Coordinator in May 2004 and a Financial Manager in March 2004. A position for dissemination and emergency preparedness has been opened while a Health Officer has been engaged on a contractual basis. This new team will be responsible for the planning process already started.

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- **The national society has adopted policies and strategies in all core areas of intervention.**
 - The national society has since 2003 received support from a Federation Technical Adviser for development and being in partnership with Concern Universal, a Gambia-based NGO with which a strategic planning process was started early 2004. The handing over of the technical adviser to the new Regional Development Officer provided an opportunity for the exchange of ideas on the strategic planning process between the national society and Concern Universal. It also created an avenue for the Federation Sahel sub-regional office to reiterate its interest in supporting this process. The Sahel sub-regional office's strategic planning framework of reference was presented and proposed. It however became clear that it could not entirely be followed since the new national society management team did not have the required information for this exercise and the planning phase was already started with the Concern Universal.
- **The Gambia Red Cross is decentralized, having strong branches with the capacity to accomplish its Mission.**
- **A nation-wide membership drive is promoted.**

Financial management systems and procedures are improved and revenues from resource development activities are increased and diversified.

- **Installation of a new accounting and budgeting software and development of a procedural manual.**

Some preliminary work has been completed for the review of available software and on the development of the procedures manual.
- **Competent, motivated and well-trained staff runs the national society.**

The Finance Manager conducted a mission to the Federation Sahel sub-regional office in Dakar in April to work on the activities carried out within the scope of the finance development cooperation agreement – notably on the computerized accounting package with the purchase of new equipment, implementation of the finance administration manual/staff training needs and ways to improve financial report documentation.
- **Adequate financial resources allow the national society to cover its core costs at headquarters and branch levels.**
- **Resource Development committee meetings produce an operational resource development plan.**

The resource development plan is contingent upon the development of the national society strategic plan. Resource mobilization activities are currently focussed on the reinforcement of the existing structures: the national society is taking a firm and very active grip on Red Cross house rentals with new contracts more favourable than previous ones. Almost all offices are now occupied on new terms. The Swedish Red Cross has also accepted the transfer of their loan repayment instalments to a new revolving fund for income-generating projects in branches.

Impact

- Three main priorities were underlined at the conclusion of the Gambia partnership meeting in Accra:
 - The finalization of the restructuring process: the Finance Manager position has been filled with experienced audits personnel This represents an asset for the national society which needs to raise its financial, accounting and budget management skills.
 - The development of a five-year strategic plan which will enhance the national society and its partners' resource mobilization skills.
 - Programme implementation: The appointment of a Program Coordinator to strengthen and impact resource mobilization activities.
- The Regional Development Officer's mission in March provided a complementary evaluation of the situation which led to a tripartite discussion amongst the national society, the ICRC and the Federation. Consequently, some ICRC programme funding was converted into institutional support.
- The recruitment of a Dissemination and Emergency Preparedness Officer with ICRC support will improve the national society's capacity to run programs in that field and strengthen headquarters with a solid management team capable of delivering efficient services.

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Constraints

- Difficult technical conditions such as frequent power cuts and lack of basic office equipment severely hamper the national society's capacity to develop and function efficiently.
- There is inadequate time to complete the national society management team and finalize the planning process for inclusion in the Federation's 2005 Appeal process.
- Additional human resources may be needed at the Sahel sub-regional office level to run strategic planning processes in five or six countries.
- The difficulty in finding a suitable Finance Manager delayed the much needed improvement of the current accounting procedures and the computerization of an updated accounting system.

[Contributions List below; Click here to return to the title page and contact information](#)

DONOR	CATEGORY	QUANTITY	UNIT	VALUE CHF	DATE	COMMENT
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CASH

				TOTAL COVERAGE	
REQUESTED IN APPEAL CHF ----->				568,741	18.8%
CASH CARRIED FORWARD				38,731	
BRITISH - GOVT/DFID GRANT 2004				50,000	29.01.04 FOOD SECURITY
BRITISH - GOVT/DFID GRANT 2004				18,000	29.01.04 TECHNICAL ADVISOR
SUB/TOTAL RECEIVED IN CASH				106,731	CHF 18.8%

KIND AND SERVICES (INCLUDING PERSONNEL)

DONOR	CATEGORY	QUANTITY	UNIT	VALUE CHF	DATE	COMMENT
Note: due to systems upgrades in process, contributions in kind and services may be incomplete.						
SUB/TOTAL RECEIVED IN KIND/SERVICES				0	CHF	0.0%

ADDITIONAL TO APPEAL BUDGET

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