

INFORMATION BULLETIN



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

TOGO: CIVIL TRANSITION

14 February 2005

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.

In Brief

This Information Bulletin (no. 2/2005) is being issued based on the needs described below reflecting the information available at this time. CHF 75,000 has been allocated from the Federation's Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF). The Federation does not anticipate further needs. Un-earmarked funds to repay DREF are needed. This operation will be reported on through the DREF update.

For further information specifically related to this operation please contact:

- In Togo: Norbert Gagno Paniah, President, Togolese Red Cross, Lomé; Email crtsiege@laposte.tg; Phone 228.221.60.30 or 228.221.21.10; Fax 228.221.52.28
- In Nigeria: George Bennett, Federation Head of Nigeria Sub-Regional Office, Lagos; Email ifrcng02@ifrc.org; Phone 234.1.269.52.28; Fax 234.1.269.52.29
- In Senegal: Alasan Senghore, Federation Head of West and Central Africa Regional Delegation, Dakar; Email ifrcsn21@ifrc.org; and Hanna Schmuck, Regional Phone 221.869.3641; Fax 221.860.2002
- In Geneva: Christophe GrosPierre, Federation Acting Regional Officer for West and Central Africa, Africa Dept.; Email christophe.grosPierre@ifrc.org; Phone 41.22.730.43.13; Fax 41.22.733.03.95

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>

The Situation

The President of Togo, Gnassingbé Eyadéma, died on Saturday 5 February at the age of 69. He was in power for 38 years, Africa's longest-serving head of state. After legalising political parties in 1991, he won three contentious elections. Internal political crises and civil unrest have resulted in population movements by Togolese to the neighbouring countries of Ghana, Benin and Nigeria: in 1993, approximately 350,000 fled to Ghana, Benin and Nigeria. In 1998, tension again increased related to elections in Togo, with some unrest in the capital Lomé.

The late president's son, Faure Gnassingbe, a minister in the government, was formally sworn in as president on Monday 7 February. Public rallies have been banned and a two-month period of national mourning was declared. The opposition had called for protests and West African leaders have warned they may impose sanctions. At least three people were killed and several injured at the week-end in Togo during demonstrations related to these recent political developments in the country. There is a growing concern that order should be maintained and the situation be solved peacefully.

Red Cross and Red Crescent action

The day after the president's death, the Regional Delegation organized an emergency meeting in Dakar together with representatives of the Togolese Red Cross,¹ Ghana Red Cross Society,² and the Federation Nigeria (Lagos) and Mano River (Abidjan) sub-regional offices. During this meeting, the various scenarios and preliminary plans of actions were discussed. The regional delegation was assigned the lead role in monitoring the situation and coordinating possible response. Information Bulletin no. 1 was issued and communication maintained with the Togolese Red Cross to monitor events. Refer to http://www.ifrc.org/cgi/pdf_appeals.pl?rpts05/tg050208.pdf

During the unrest in Lomé on Saturday 12 February, Togolese Red Cross staff and volunteers³ assisted 46 injured people. Further unrest occurred on Monday 14 February in some parts of the city; the Togolese Red Cross treated seven injured. ICRC is supporting the national society with emergency items and radio equipment.

The Ghana Red Cross has visited the border area to alert the local branches and volunteers of a possible influx of refugees from Togo. The Red Cross of Benin⁴ has started developing a contingency plan in coordination with UN and other agencies.

The Togolese Red Cross sent a draft contingency plan to the regional delegation in Dakar. The Ghana Red Cross and Red Cross of Benin have requested technical and financial support from the regional delegation for their contingency planning.

The regional delegation, in coordination with the two sub-regional offices, developed a Plan of Action. DREF funding of CHF 75,000 has been allocated for its implementation, covering the following:

- Support Mission Teams, comprised of the regional DM Coordinator and the Mano River DM delegate, to visit Togo, Ghana and Benin from 15-23 February. This team will assist those national societies to develop and finalize their contingency plans. RDRT members from other national societies might also take part, depending on their availability;
- Financial support to implement the three national societies' contingency plans: Togo, Benin and Ghana)
- Administrative costs related to Federation regional delegation and sub-regional offices' support
- Coordination with ICRC and other Movement partners
- Coordination with the Government, UN and other agencies
- Follow-up and monitoring missions (Regional DMC, DM Delegate, RDRT members)

Coordination

The Regional Delegation for West & Central Africa in Dakar and the Sub-Regional Office in Lagos are coordinating closely with the concerned national societies, ICRC, other Movement partners, and UN organizations. The Regional Delegation has taken the lead in monitoring the situation, to ensure coordination of Movement partners that are best positioned to assist.

All International Federation Operations seek to adhere to the Code of Conduct and are 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 operations in this or other countries, please access the Federation website at <http://www.ifrc.org/>. See also the map of Togo on page 3 of this Bulletin.

For longer-term programmes, please refer to the Federation's 2005 Annual Appeal for Nigeria sub-regional programmes no. 05AA025 (which includes Benin, Ghana, Togo and Nigeria) – http://www.ifrc.org/cgi/pdf_appeals.pl?annual05/05AA025.pdf.

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¹ Togolese Red Cross – <http://www.ifrc.org/where/country/check.asp?countryid=170>

² Ghana Red Cross Society - <http://www.ifrc.org/where/country/check.asp?countryid=73>

³ 25 First Aid volunteers, 2 nurses, 1 medical assistant, 1 doctor and members of senior management were involved.

⁴ Red Cross of Benin - <http://www.ifrc.org/where/country/check.asp?countryid=209>

