

RWANDA

CHF 2,281,000

Programme No. 01.48/2000

National Context

The 1990-1994 war in Rwanda dragged a struggling economy and society backwards, with considerable impact on human resources and the basic functions of civil society. Despite recent political stability, 32% of gross national product comes from overseas aid. Government services, especially in rural areas, are very limited and economic development is constrained by a depleted labour force and limited infrastructure. An estimated 32% of the urban population is affected by HIV/AIDS. Civil society structures, such as the Rwanda Red Cross, have suffered from the past war to such an extent they have to be virtually reconstructed in order to play any positive social role in the future. In normal conditions most states in Africa face the pressure of transitional economies; Rwanda faces the challenge of complete reconstruction from a highly fragile economic base.

Country Assistance Strategy

Rwanda faces enormous challenges to manage health and social needs, regional population movements and economic development. It remains highly dependent upon long term external assistance. As with other parts of the social infrastructure the Rwanda Red Cross (RRC) will require years of institutional development before it is able to undertake traditional roles in community health, disaster response and social programmes.

The Rwanda Red Cross (RRC) and the Federation have worked closely together to reorient the programmes and to restructure the National Society. The highest priority for the RRC at this moment and for the foreseeable future is to complete its reorganization, train new personnel, and become more functional in delivering integrated community-based programmes in First Aid (as per the ARCHI programme), Disaster Prevention and Preparedness, and youth activities.

Direct management and institutional support at the headquarters level will be necessary for the Federation and the PNS to continue to provide financial and advisory help to assist the RRC. The Federation will continue its commitment of support to the Rwanda Red Cross to develop its volunteer base, skills and governance and management capacities. This requires longterm dedicated support from Federation members and other donors to invest in institutional development for the Rwanda Red Cross as an important potential instrument for social development and pluralism. To achieve this development the Federation will invest heavily in institutional development and capacity building on both a technical and project-based level.

The core programmes will be community based first aid for disaster response, preparedness and health programmes. Youth will also serve as a foundation for the humanitarian values projects to counter the past war experiences and contribute to a civil society.

To achieve these objectives the Federation will require a consolidated approach from those RC/RC societies running bilateral programmes, a joint planning and resource management consensus, and a long term funding base for institutional development of the RRC.

Programme Objectives

Disaster Response

The RRC presently has limited capacity to respond to disasters, but will develop this capacity through management training, youth training and working with other agencies and government ministries to define its roles and responsibilities. The country and regional delegation will provide relief support to the RRC in various support functions, in close liaison with UN and NGO agencies, in times of disaster, until such time as RRC can manage such operations independently.

The Federation will assist in developing a full disaster response programme that will include emergency relief, warning and communication systems, warehousing of emergency relief goods at the Prefectoral level, creation and distribution of reserve stocks required for a first reaction, community involvement and evacuation if necessary, close liaison with the local authorities, education of the community in disaster preparedness.

Disaster Preparedness

The Federation will provide technical assistance and training to the RRC in its key DP role for community based disaster preparedness. The Federation will assist the RRC technically and financially in developing a community based disaster preparedness (CBDP) programme that will involve the local population and authorities in its development and implementation. This is a multiyear programme that includes country mapping for risk, a recognized management structure, trained volunteers at the prefectoral and communal levels, and a sensitized population working together to prepare itself and their own vulnerable members for the next disaster. The development and implementation of this programme which will include a disaster response capability as described above will be integrated with other community-oriented activities of the RRC. The DPP programme is also tied to the Governmental National DPP programme which is being developed with the assistance of the Federation and the RRC.

Health

The Community Based First Aid (CBFA) programme which is already well under way forms the entrypoint of the volunteers into the Red Cross since it is the first training that new recruits receive; it is also the basis for all social work, and community activities at the field level including a greater interaction with the vulnerable people of the communities.

The CBFA programme needs to be extended to tie in to the Government Health programme and system at the community level offering basic first aid to the population, health education, first response to epidemics, inoculation programmes, tie in to the government services and support for the vulnerable (women and orphans head of family, handicapped, elderly, etc.).

Eventually, it is envisaged that this involvement with the community will include the gamut of public health programmes and activities with the possibility of contributory funding being done by the Government. The Federation will be expected to provide a delegate in Health and Social Work to shore up the CBFA programme, to create "Animateurs de Santé" in the communities, ensure a good tie-in to the ARCHI programmes, and full coverage of the country.

Humanitarian Values

Given the recent history of the country, this is considered to be a key programme objective in Rwanda. The RRC has recognised and accepted the responsibility and, with the assistance of the ICRC and the Federation, will promote humanitarian values through seminars, public campaigns in urban and rural areas, and dissemination programmes in the prefectures and communes. These dissemination activities will also be integrated within other programmes to ensure full coverage and understanding of Red Cross principles.

Capacity Building

The Federation will assist in revitalizing the new structure and components and training the new personnel to make it a viable and wellfunctioning Society with active components at all levels. During the upcoming years, training programmes and workshops will be conducted for the governance, the Prefectoral and Communal Committees, and the members of the National Headquarters to ensure that they understand fully their responsibilities and the roles that they are expected to play in a welldeveloped and decentralized Society.

In addition, all aspects of the management of the RRC will be studied and strengthened. The results of the self-evaluation will be used to identify the domains of management and work that will need to be improved. Financial, personnel, and resources management will be analysed and training programmes devised to bring about lasting improvement. The Federation Delegation will be involved in providing the technical assistance, by using the regional capacity required to succeed in this multi-year endeavour.