

# **SUDAN**

## **RELIEF HEALTH FOR REFUGEES AND VULNERABLE GROUPS, DISASTER PREPAREDNESS AND RESPONSE**

CHF 3,826,000

1,485,000 beneficiaries

Programme no 01.15/99

### The Context

War-affected populations throughout Sudan struggle to cope with the effects of chronic malnutrition and an alarming increase in the spread of infectious diseases. The ongoing civil wars in the south and the east, coupled with drought and floods in many parts of the country have increased needs and vulnerabilities alike. In addition, the absence of an efficient infrastructure in Africa's largest country places the population at higher risk of malnutrition, disease and famine. In the last half of 1998, 20,000 additional persons displaced by the conflict in the south arrived in Khartoum state camps. Severe floods in four states increased the number of people receiving relief services from the SRCS by 100,000. The Sudanese Red Crescent Society (SRCS) emergency operations focus on provision of essential relief, health and social services to internally displaced people (IDPs), refugees and victims of natural disasters, while new initiatives are undertaken to further build national disaster preparedness and response capacities in strategic branches.

### The Operation

Provision of safe drinking water to 200,000 beneficiaries will continue in the camps of El Salam and Wad el Bashir in Khartoum State. More than 40,000 Eritrean refugees and 10,000 Ethiopian refugees in Wad Sherife and Gedaref, in addition to 53,000 locally vulnerable people will continue to receive health services, including primary health education, through SRCS health clinics. The SRCS malaria control assistance programme will also continue in 1999 to reduce morbidity and mortality in four states. The programme benefits 930,000 people.

A disproportionate number of displaced and refugee populations are women, children and elderly people. SRCS is making a special effort to address their specific vulnerabilities. Therefore, 6,000 women in 12 states will receive assistance aimed at improving the skills and self-reliance of female household heads while promoting their health awareness and education. Additionally, reproductive health services will be provided to 250,000 internally displaced women in three states. Similarly, activities geared towards child health promotion

and disease prevention will be carried out in three states benefiting an estimated 480,000 people. SRCS will also initiate an integrated social development project for elderly people who are displaced, living in camps or surviving in dire poverty in five states.

Finally, given the magnitude of needs and complexity of the disasters and vulnerabilities caused by 15 years of continuous conflict in the south, SRCS will undertake many initiatives aimed at building its national disaster preparedness and response capacities in six strategic locations in central and western regions of the country adjacent to southern Sudan.

#### Objectives

- To supply and distribute safe drinking water on a daily basis to 200,000 internally displaced.
- To provide standard health services to 105,000 refugees and local vulnerable people.
- To promote malaria prevention, treatment, control, health awareness and education benefiting over 930,000 IDPs, refugees and local vulnerable populations.
- To provide 250,000 women with basic reproductive health services, health education and monitoring.
- To reduce the vulnerabilities of children and the elderly through home-based child care and social services.
- To enhance the disaster preparedness and response capacities of the National Society in six strategic locations in the central and western regions of the country.

#### Plan of Action

- Health

##### Khartoum Safe Drinking Water Project

This service provides 483,000 litres of safe drinking water per day to 200,000 beneficiaries in El Salam and Wad el Bashir IDP camps. The number of beneficiaries has increased by 20,000 due to the conflict in the south. The programme is fully implemented by National Society staff and volunteers.

##### Relief Health Services to Refugees and Local Populations

Some 52,000 Eritrean and Ethiopian refugees (Gedaref and Wad Sherif) and 53,000 Sudanese vulnerable persons living in the same communities will receive primary health care through SRCS health clinics. They provide services like home visits, maternity, laboratory testing, ORS section, mother and child health, therapeutic and supplementary feeding, and growth monitoring. This programme is implemented fully by SRCS. In 1999 the supply of drugs and medical equipment will be increased, while the health education/training component will be intensified by increasing its frequency and scope.

##### Malaria Control, Prevention and Treatment

Malaria remains the most common tropical disease in the Sudan, particularly along the Nile River basin, where irrigated agriculture is common. The disease is the main reason for outpatient visits to health facilities and a major cause of death among the population. SRCS will increase the awareness of the population through education campaigns. The programme also calls for the draining of stagnant water, spraying, prophylactic treatment of at-risk groups and treatment of cases at SRCS clinics in the States of Khartoum, White Nile, Northern State and Gezira. About 930,000 persons will directly benefit from this programme. SRCS has gained hands-on experience since 1997 and will be upgrading its methodology after a 1998 evaluation.

#### Reproductive Health for Displaced Women

The programme offers reproductive health services, health education and monitoring as well as antenatal services for 200,000 displaced women. Essential drugs will be provided, including iron, folic acid, antibiotics, antimycotics, antiseptics, local anaesthetics, family planning means, cotton, gauze and related surgical supplies through SRCS health clinics. Midwives will receive home delivery kits and training to upgrade their skills and knowledge, especially with regard to blood-transmitted infections like hepatitis and HIV.

#### Health Education and Self-Reliance Initiatives for Displaced Women

Women generally, and displaced ones specifically, are amongst the least educated, while carrying an impressive economic responsibility, particularly in female-headed households. SRCS staff, as well as trained volunteers, will work on increasing health/hygiene awareness among women. Simultaneously, beneficiaries will be trained in skills to improve their economic and social well-being. SRCS has identified 6,000 women who will directly benefit from these initiatives in 12 states.

#### Relief and Basic Health for Children

A total of 480,000 beneficiaries are targeted in Kassala, Northern State and Gezira State, with the objective to reduce mortality and unnecessary suffering among infants and children under the age of five. Local volunteers will be trained in home visits and training local communities in home-based child care. Communication materials - and training programmes how to use them - will be developed with the communities' participation. Health clinics will be supplied with additional medicine. SRCS has extensive knowledge in community-based health care and is in a position to implement this programme technically.

#### Social and Health Services for the Elderly

This is a three-year programme. In 1999 the programme is to develop activities with elderly people in Darfur, Kordofan, Blue Nile and in the IDP camps around Khartoum. With the active participation of the elderly, their social problems will be identified to design community-based activities to address their needs. Special training on social welfare for the elderly will be given to 25 SRCS staff and volunteers. In addition, the traditional role of the elderly in conflict resolution is a key factor to the Red Crescent's commitment to improve local capacities for peace.

- Disaster Response Capacity

#### Building Disaster Response Capacities

SRCS has identified 6 strategic locations/branches in the central and western regions where physical, material and training capacities must be built to meet the humanitarian needs of the victims of the civil war in the south. The following branches are adjacent to the southern region and serve as the first humanitarian buffer zone for the IDPs: West Kordofan (El Fula), South Kordofan (Kadugli), West Darfur (El Genena), South Darfur (Nyala), White Nile (Kosti), and Blue Nile (El Damazin). Disaster management training will be provided, logistics and transport capacities enhanced, basic emergency relief stocks will be positioned and communications systems established.

### Resource Planning

The 1999 relief and rehabilitation programmes of SRCS will be implemented by the National Society's professional staff and volunteers. SRCS is contributing personnel and the infrastructure available to it, while it will also carry out the day-to-day technical and management monitoring. In 1999, continued external support is instrumental to the delivery of services to the vulnerable.

### Capacity

- The Operating National Society

SRCS is present throughout the nation with 220,000 volunteers, 10,000 of whom are fully trained and active. There are 40 staff at its National Headquarters and 200 employees at state levels. The National Society has proven technical expertise in practical disaster preparedness and response, community-based health care and services tailored to the needs of internally displaced and refugee populations. All Federation-supported programmes are implemented by SRCS paid staff and volunteers.

However, a recent independent management study of the SRCS pointed out that the National Society should seriously consider reviewing its management and organisational systems. This will be one of the National Society's major undertakings in 1999, with technical support from the Federation.

- The Federation

The Federation provides support services in the areas of strategic planning, financial and narrative reporting and information with a one Head of Delegation, one Finance and Administration Delegate and a pool

of regional technical delegates based at the Regional Delegation in Nairobi. The Regional Delegation supports SRCS in the fields of reproductive health, relief planning, information, water and sanitation, telecommunications and logistics.

- Other Red Cross/Red Crescent Resources

Participating National Societies continue to provide technical support, funding, material support and delegates. The ICRC is active in the conflict-affected regions in the south and the east (Kassala). The ICRC provides financial and material support to SRCS branches who implement relief and health services.

#### Co-operation

Full co-operation is in place with UN bodies such as UNICEF, WFP and UNHCR. SRCS serves as the main implementing agency for the water programmes in Khartoum. Support for them is channelled through the Federation, but also through CARE, Sudan Aid and ICRC.