

Liberia: Relief, Resettlement and Rehabilitation

28 April 1999

appeal no. EA 99 (programme no. 01.05/99)

situation report no. 1

period covered: January - March 1999

The return and assistance operation for refugees and displaced in Liberia is proceeding with impressive results, despite the often adverse conditions. The Federation has supported the Liberian Red Cross Society (LRCS) in facilitating the return of the refugees and internally displaced to their home communities, with well targeted programmes focusing on capacity building as well as technical support in the health, water, sanitation, and shelter sectors.

The context

Some 700,000 people fled Liberia when the civil war erupted in 1989, with another one million people displaced within the country. Since the 1997 elections, the security conditions have improved and, in general, peace and stability are slowly returning. Despite reports from the international community of increased ethnic conflicts, security incidents, harassment, and intimidation of the civilian population by Government security officers in Monrovia and in the rural areas, people located in internally displaced and refugee camps are voluntarily returning to their village and towns of origin, and organising self-reliance initiatives.

Since the start of the return operation in late 1997 until the end of February, 114,000 Liberians had been assisted by UNHCR and other NGOs to return home - 80,000 from Guinea, 26,700 from Cote d'Ivoire, 3,200 from Ghana and 1,200 from Nigeria, and 2,900 from Sierra Leone and other countries in the region. An estimated 290,000 former refugees have returned spontaneously. Since December, some 94,200 internally displaced persons (out of a total of 157,000) have been assisted by the Red Cross and the Liberia Refugee Repatriation and Resettlement Commission (LRRRC - the government department responsible for the co-ordination of the repatriation and reintegration programme).

Some 48,012 IDPs (out of a total of 56,448) located in eleven of the remaining fifteen shelters require assistance to relocate, but due to resource constraints the programme has been suspended and the balance of IDPs in Monrovia will not be able to return home before the April rains as planned.

Latest events

In January, UNHCR reported the return of 7,484 Liberians (952 organised by land and 6,532 spontaneously) from Gueckedou. In February, a convoy of 816 returning Liberian refugees was organised. This convoy was escorted part of the way by the UN High Commissioner for Refugees, who paid a two-day visit to Liberia on 26-27 February. The President of Liberia also accompanied the High Commissioner of his

During the reporting period, an additional five road convoys of returning Liberians were received from Cote d'Ivoire and Guinea via N'zerekore (2,036 persons), and on 15 March a sea shuttle between Freetown and Monrovia facilitated the return of an additional 700 Liberian refugees, bringing the total of number of refugees repatriated to Liberia from May, 1997 to March 1999 under the Voluntary Assistance Programme to 114,000.

In January and February, two polio campaigns were undertaken by all the medical centres in the country, and the President announced the day as a National Holiday to allow parents to take their children to the immunisation centres. The campaign was launched by the Ministry of Health and Social Welfare and sponsored by WHO and UNICEF. The Red Cross headquarters' clinic immunised 3,159 children (1,659 under five's, 523 children age 6-11 months, and 977 children age 12 months old) and the Federation provided the Ministry of Health with logistical support in the rural areas of North-western Liberia. Assessments indicated an 80% coverage rate in eight out the 13 counties, with 1,234,489 children vaccinated.

The New Africa Research and Development Agency (NARDA), an umbrella organisation for National NGOs, held a Post-Conflict and Peace-Building Workshop in Monrovia with more than 50 delegates attended from the NGO, INGO, Government, and UN Agency community. Also, Representatives from Ethiopia, Mozambique and Angola attended the workshop. The key issues raised during the conference included the need to improve Liberia's human rights record and to provide training to the various branches of the security apparatus. The Federation/LNRCS management team and two Programme Managers participated in the workshop.

Despite the recent progress in the peace process, Liberia's relationship with neighbours and the international community remain strained. The border between Liberia and Sierra Leone currently remains closed.

Red Cross/Red Crescent action

Based on accounts of financial irregularities on the part of the Liberian Red Cross Society (LRCS), all activities and programmes supported by the Federation from January to February, 1999 were suspended while an internal financial review was conducted by an independent Financial Committee. With revised internal controls in place, the LRCS resumed its programme of co-operation with the Federation in mid-February. The revised procedures related to financial accounting and reporting, decentralisation of authority, staffing and personnel management, and cost recovery from the National Society incomes and resources. During the interim period while the National Society restructured its finance department and set-up a transparent financial system with appropriate control systems, the Federations delegation directly managed all the operational funds. The Federation delegation is responsible for the payment of all operational costs on behalf of the National Society, inclusive of its personnel (staff and volunteers), working advances to chapters, and payment to suppliers and contractors. To ensure adherence to the new established financial policy, rules and procedures, the chapter field officers and chairmen were trained and provided a manual on Working Advance Guidelines and Procedures, developed by the LRCS/Federation Institutional Development department.

The interim management team held a one-day symposium on the performance of the LRCS's management, focusing on the performance at all levels (SWOT analysis) and agreeing on the following objectives and recommendations to the LRCS Executive Board:

- { strengthening its organisation and management;
- { strengthening the society's public image; and
- { increasing funding support for its programmes.

The LRCS, both at the management and governance levels, is actively seeking support and advice from the

image of the Red Cross, working relations between the National Society and Federation, between the headquarters' and chapters/branches, and with external operating partners and donors.

Institutional Development (ID) w

The Federation continues to support LRCS in Institutional Development, especially by providing monthly running costs and incentives to the Headquarters' and Chapters. Plans are underway to reduce and streamline the overall support to the LRCS. The National Society is in the process of reorganising and re-structuring its manpower needs at the headquarters' and within the programme sectors. To support the National Society in the effort to improve credibility, accountability, and transparency, the Federation plans to provide training and a series of workshops related to Management, Finance, Leadership, and other related topics during the second quarter of 1999.

The rehabilitation work of the Red Cross branch buildings was resumed in March at two of the 13 chapters. Building materials were purchased and dispatched to the Bong Chapter to complete *Phase 2* of the rehabilitation of the Chapter building; and the Sinoe Chapter commenced the construction work of a 'canoe' (medium size boat) which will be used in its fishing project. The Bassa Red Cross branch received six acres of land from the local authorities which will be used for agricultural development to support local Red Cross activities.

The Bomi chapter, in collaboration with UNOPS, completed a three month renovation project of the local community school. Two buildings with ten (10) classrooms (accommodating 475 students) was renovated by the Red Cross youth volunteers supervised by 2 adult volunteers skilled in carpentry and masonry. In another project funded by the ICRC, the youth are renovating the sleeping quarters and kitchen facilities of a prison compound. The ICRC is also responsible for the supervision and monitoring of the feeding programme at the Central Prison.

After a field mission visit by the Swedish Red Cross Desk and Recruitment Officer, a project proposal on vocational skills training for war-affected youth has been finalised and the Swedish Red Cross has approved the funding for the 18-month training course. The vocational training project will target 120 war affected youth, ages 13 to 25 years in three Red Cross chapters - Nimba, Bong and Grand Kru. The training course will be conducted within the existing LRCS Red Cross school system in the Chapters. A plan of action has been approved to start the implementation of the project activities and the classes are scheduled to commence on 15 May.

Phase one of the pig and poultry project funded by the Empress Shoken Fund (ESF) has been completed and an interim narrative and financial report has been submitted to the ESF Joint Commission. The objective of the project is to provide job opportunities for Red Cross youth volunteers and war affected youth, while at the same time providing basic food commodities at an affordable and reasonable price to low income families and the most vulnerable. The implementation of the project is behind schedule because the plan of action had to be adjusted and the budget revised. The plan of action and operating procedures were revised and forwarded to the donor.

Integrated Health and WatSan w

Although the health programmes were virtually paralysed due to the suspension of all programmes by LRCS, collaboration continued between the LRCS/Federation programme managers and plans were concluded on a number of projects. In March, the LRCS signed a two-year agreement with MSF-France to jointly operate a health centre in Kakata. The Kakata government health facility has been closed since 1997 due to the damages caused by the war. During the first month of operation the clinic registered 2,000 patients for consultation and medical treatment.

With the arrival of the Health delegate in March, the LRCS/Federation Health managers carried out a needs assessment and a familiarisation visit to the medical institutions and the Red Cross clinics, chapters, and branches in the five areas of operation. Recommendations will be made on the Federation/LRCS health assistance programme through the LRCS clinics after the mission is completed. In the meantime, a three

provision of safe drinking water and proper sanitation services. To achieve this, special emphasis will be placed on community involvement in problem-solving and the evaluation of services.

The rehabilitation of the headquarters' clinic was completed and the clinic/laboratory was reopened on 31 March. The occasion was marked by an official ceremony attended by the Representative of the Red Cross Movement, as well as the Government authorities and local media. The LRCS National President and Federation Head of Delegation dedicated the facility. The funds generated from the clinic/laboratory will be used for cost recovery for the refurbishment of the facility and to cover the over head cost of personnel, administration, and logistical expenses for the clinic and laboratory. The facilities (clinic and laboratory) are equipped and staffed according to the Ministry of Health guidelines, and adhering to the accepted Red Cross standard list of drugs and medical equipment

The integrated health/watsan programme team visited the programmes in Nimba and Grand Gedeh counties from the 10 March to the 22 March, mobilising and training community members in the setting up and maintenance of shallow wells and community/family latrines. The LRCS/Federation is operating two integrated health and watsan programmes in the Southeast. UNICEF is supporting the watsan programme in Nimba county (in nine towns), targeting 28,127 beneficiaries with a provision of safe drinking water, proper sanitation facilities and health/hygiene education campaigns. A joint evaluation of the programme was undertaken by UNICEF/LRCS/Federation from 26-31 January 1999, followed by several bilateral meetings between Red Cross and UNICEF to discuss an extension of the programme for two months (April-June) to complete the 1998 planned activities and objectives. The project envisaged the construction of 27 hand dug wells equipped with hand pumps, eleven latrines for various institutions, the rehabilitation of four existing unlined hand dug wells with hand pumps, the construction of ninety family latrines, and education campaigns on proper garbage disposal and dissemination of hygiene/health education.

The table below reflects a summary of the proposed activities against achievements in the twelve operational areas from July 1998 to December 1998 (projects/achieved to date):

TOWN	Inst. Latrines	Fam. Latrines	Well Const.	Well Rehab.	Domed Slab	Well Rim	HHE	Camp Clean-up
MEHNLA	1/0	10/8	3/0	0/0	10/8	66/52	7/5	7/4
BLAMEIN	1/0	5/3	2/0	0/0	5/4	44/39	7/4	7/4
GARNWEE	1/0	7/2	3/0	0/0	7/2	66/48	7/5	7/5
KAHYI	1/1	10/8	4/0	0/0	7/6	88/68	7/7	7/2
GLAIYEE	1/0	7/2	3/0	0/0	7/2	66/57	7/5	7/5
TEINBEIN	0/0	10/0	2/0	0/0	10/0	44/44	7/5	7/2
ZEKEPA	1/1	0/0	1/0	0/0	0/0	22/20	0/0	0/0
KPALAH	1/1	8/0	3/0	0/0	8/0	66/66	7/5	7/2
LOYEE	1/0	0/0	1/0	0/0	0/0	22/20	0/0	0/0
SACLEPEA	1/1	25/29	4/4	2/2	25/29	132/132	7/7	7/5
ZONTUO	1/1	8/3	0/0	2/2	8/5	44/44	7/5	7/4
ZANZAYEE	1/0	0/0	1/0	0/0	0/0	22/18	0/0	0/0
Projects Proposed	11	90	27	4	90	682	63	63
Projects Achieved	5	55	4	4	56	608	48	33

The Netherlands Red Cross is supporting the integrated health and watsan programme in Grand Gedeh, Grand Kru, and Maryland counties, targeting 31,175 returnees with a provision of safe drinking water, preventive and curative health services, and proper sanitation facilities in the 22 towns, and the rehabilitation of three (3) health posts in each county.

A ten man team from the Federation and LRCS health department travelled to Grand Gedeh County to

- preparations were made for the establishment of the programme activities and the following goals and objectives, in line with the project plan of action, were achieved during the mission:
- { a Memorandum of Understanding between the LRCS Headquarters', the Grand Gedeh Chapter, and the Gbarzon District Branch was signed;
 - { meetings were held with the chapter Field Officer and chapter officials, and discussions were held with the local government officials and elders in the Gbarzon District. A series of workshops were conducted with volunteers and beneficiaries, and the process of recruiting volunteers to support the project began (and continues);
 - { a two-day (16-17 March) watsan Training-of-Trainers workshop was organised by the Federation/LRCS watsan team in the Red Cross Gbarzon district branch office. The workshop was attended by 14 participants -- Red Cross watsan volunteers, first aid trainers, and community members from the towns and villages in the Gbarzon district. The purpose of the workshop was to discuss training methods and share knowledge, as well as to update the participants skills in the installation, maintenance and repair of wells, safety procedures in the construction of shallow wells and pit latrines, and a refresher course on the history and principles of the Red Cross, and volunteer responsibilities;
 - { watsan construction materials and tools were dispatched and pre-positioned in the project areas;
 - { the watsan work plan was revised for the implementation of the project activities by both the chapter and watsan team;
 - { the site for the construction of the clinic was identified and cleared by the community and Red Cross branch volunteers. In addition, a local contractor was selected and a design of the facility was submitted for review and approval of the Management Committee. The community commenced the moulding of the bricks for the construction of the clinic building;
 - { a written commitment was made by the community elders to support the operation of the clinic with the Grand Gedeh Chapter;
 - { the health team held a two day CBFA workshop for 22 community hygiene and health animators;
 - { two watsan monitors and a driver/vehicle were re-assigned from the headquarters to the project to support the chapter and branches in the implementation, training, and monitoring of the programme.

Relief, Repatriation and Resettlement w

The procurement of relief items (6,000 shelter kits consisting of cutlasses, hammers, axes, nails and plastic sheeting) was purchased locally by the Delegation in accordance with standard Federation procedures. Phase III of the programme recommenced on 25 March with the distribution of 430 shelter kits to 430 families. Since the commencement of Phase III on 2 November 1998, 5,812 families (26,714 persons) from nine IDP shelters have returned home, assisted with shelter and farming materials provided by the Red Cross. Shelter materials and transport assistance has also been provided for 100 vulnerable families. In the areas of return where Red Cross assistance has been provided (primarily Bomi, Cape Mount and Lower Lofa counties), farming activities have increased this year by 75% compared to last year. There is also an increase in the number of shelters and schools being constructed by the returnees. Additional funding is needed to assist the balance of IDPs (48,012 persons) who want to return to their village of origin.

During the reporting period, a cooperation agreement between the Federation/LRCS and UNDP/UNOPS to support the resettlement of the IDPs was renewed. Funding was provided for 2,000 persons under Phase IV of the resettlement and reintegration programme, entailing plans to provide sea transport for 2,000 IDPs currently residing in Monrovia back to their towns and villages of origin in southeastern Liberia. The LRCS/Federation is responsible for the registration of beneficiaries, providing first aid and medical supplies, as well as water and sanitation services, co-ordination of the transit centre services, and co-ordination of the transport of the returnees to their village of origin. The registration and transport will commence in April and Phase IV should be completed by August.

In the areas of return the Red Cross Chapters and Branches are providing relief assistance to returnees that have returned spontaneously without the assistance of UNHCR. The Grand Kru chapter distributed relief assistance to 400 families in the form of cooking sets, plastic buckets and pans, and plastic sheeting. However, blankets, construction materials and tools are also needed to assist in their reintegration and resettlement in the community.

The Relief Department in the Bomi chapter is undertaking the distribution of food in the Emergency School Feeding programme, with support from WFP. Nineteen (19) Red Cross youth are responsible for monitoring and supervising the distribution of food to 132 schools in Bomi and Lower Lofa counties (serving 35,000 children) in six districts. On a monthly basis 300 mt of food (i.e. bulger flour, wheat, beans, oil and sugar) is distributed to 132 schools. Next month, the chapter plans to extend its coverage to two additional districts servicing an additional sixteen schools. In January, two members of the LRCS Relief staff participated in a WFP sponsored two-day workshop for Warehouse Managers/Supervisors.

Outstanding needs

With the current rate of return of both refugees and displaced to their places of origin, the assistance needs are significant. Water and sanitation facilities must be rehabilitated; crop production must be started from scratch; health and education systems must be rebuilt. Therefore, the needs include shelter and construction materials, seeds and agricultural tools, fishing boats and nets, clothing, blankets, cooking utensils and other relief supplies. Funding is needed to cover these needs and the operational cost of the five clinics, ambulance service, purchase of computers, telecon equipment, capital goods and transport and storage services as indicated in the Federation 1999 Emergency Appeal.

External relations - Government/UN/NGOs/Media

The Federation/LRCS relief team continues to play an active role in the IDP resettlement meetings chaired by LRRRC on a fortnightly basis. The co-ordination between the agency, government authorities, Working Group (UNDP) and Task Force Team (UNHCR/WFP/EU/UNDP/CRS/CAD) continues to be excellent. The health and watsan programme team attend biweekly meetings with their respective government line Ministry's (MOE and MoPW). In addition, the Head of Delegation attends the UN/Donor and interagency meetings monthly and the MSG meeting biweekly. There is a close co-operation between the Federation/LRCS, and the INGO, Embassy, and UN community. At the county level, there is effective co-ordination and co-operation between the Chapters and INGOs, NGOs and district government authorities.

The International Foundation for Education and Self-Help (IFESH) invited one LRCS chapter chairman to participate in a six-week Training-of-Trainers sessions in Reconciliation and Peace Building on the campus of Cuttington University College from 12 April to 28 May. The goal of the training programme is to promote peace building and reconciliation at the local community level to facilitate the country's reconstruction and rehabilitation efforts. The chairman will be able to conduct workshops for educators, social workers, and civil society leaders in reconciliation and peace-building skills and techniques and IFESH will organise regional workshops over the next 12 months at the local community level and also facilitate Red Cross workshops to the war-affected youth in the vocational training project. IFESH has also donated school supplies and materials to 13 Red Cross schools.

Contributions

See Annex 1 for details.

The relief, health, watsan, and institutional development programmes continue to address and fulfil the needs of the refugee and displaced population who have returned to their home communities. Provided the situation in Liberia remains stable or continues to improve, the Federation anticipates further progress in meeting the programmes objectives.

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COTE D'IVOIRE, GUINEA, LIBERIA AND SIERRA LEONE

ANNEX 1

APPEAL No. 01.05/99**PLEDGES RECEIVED****28.04.99**

DONOR	CATEGORY	QUANTITY	UNIT	VALUE CHF	DATE	COMMENT
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CASH

REQUESTED IN APPEAL----->		12,959,383		01/01/99		17.24%
BRITISH - RC		50,000	GBP	115,785	12/03/99	REFUGEES IN FORECARIAH
BRITISH - RC		30,000	GBP	71,523	01/04/99	RELIEF ADMINISTRATOR COSTS
ICELANDIC - RC		200,000	ISK	4,066	27/03/99	GUINEA
NETHERLANDS - RC/GOVT		958,000	NLG	694,998	08/03/99	LIBERIA
NORWEGIAN -RC		200,000	NOK	37,534	31/03/99	LIBERIA AND SIERRA LEONE
SWEDISH - RC		145,000	SEK	24,114	15/01/99	IVORY COAST
SWEDISH -RC		37,000	SEK	6,153	18/01/99	GUINEA
SWEDISH - RC/GOVT		4,818,000	SEK	867,240	21/04/99	
UNDP		37,396	USD	53,233	25/02/99	LIBERIA
SUB/TOTAL RECEIVED IN CASH				1,874,646	CHF	14.47%

KIND AND SERVICES (INCL. PERSONNEL)

DONOR	CATEG ORY	QUAN TITY	UNIT	VALUE CHF	DATE	COMMENT
SWEDISH -RC/GOVT		2,000,000	SEK	360,000	21/04/99	
SUB/TOTAL RECEIVED IN KIND/SERVICES				360,000	CHF	2.78%