

# EMERGENCY APPEAL



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

## ***NIGERIA: MUNITIONS DEPOT EXPLOSION IN LAGOS***

**Appeal no: 3/2002**  
**31 January, 2002**

***THIS APPEAL SEEKS CHF 748,133  
IN CASH, KIND AND SERVICES  
TO ASSIST 15,000 BENEFICIARIES FOR THREE WEEKS***

### ***The Situation***

On Sunday 27 January at about 5:00 PM, a fire at the munitions depot in Ikeja Military Cantonment, Lagos' largest military facility, resulted in a series of explosions sending artillery and mortar shells flying over nearby areas. Detonations were heard throughout the night and into the next day. Most deaths and injuries occurred not because of the actual explosions but because of the ensuing confusion. Lagos residents fled in panic and in one area near the site of the disaster, hundreds of people drowned in a canal as they tried to wade to safety. In the general mayhem many were trampled in human stampedes while still others were hit by moving vehicles trying to cross the heavily traveled Ikeja dual highway. Accurate information continues to be gathered, but according to government officials over 600 individuals are confirmed dead and many more injured. More injuries / casualties may occur as a result of scattered unexploded ordinance which has yet to be cleared. An estimated 12,000 people have been displaced while 535 individuals remain on the Red Cross missing persons list.

On 29 January, at an inter-ministry meeting the Nigerian government decided that there would be an evacuation of people remaining in the vicinity of the Ikeja Munitions Depot so that the area could be cleared of unexploded ordinance by explosive disposal experts. During this period of between two to three weeks, homeless and evacuated families will be accommodated on the Police College Ikeja and the Abalti Barracks Yaba grounds. A construction company, Berger Nigeria PLC, has been contracted by the Nigerian government to prepare the sites and to erect steel-framed tarpaulin-covered shelters.

### ***The Needs***

#### **Immediate Needs w**

- Food is urgently needed for an estimated 12,000 homeless, displaced, or evacuated people to be accommodated in the two camps for a period of two to three weeks.
- An on-site family tracing and reunification service is needed to continue handling any cases of missing children (currently 325) and missing adults (currently 180), and to continue to provide psychological support.

- Basic domestic items (cooking pots, plates / mugs / knives / spoons, sleeping mats, and soap) are needed for 2,500 homeless families.

## **Red Cross Action w**

CHF 150,000 has been released from the Disaster relief Emergency Fund (DREF) to provide immediate support to start the operation. With the support of the NRCS national headquarters management and staff, over 200 Lagos State branch volunteers (40-45 per shift) were dispatched to the scene by 9:00 PM Sunday, 29 January. 160 injured were provided with first aid while 150 were evacuated to the Ikeja General Hospital. Red Cross volunteers informed those affected that the Nigerian Red Cross would be charged with family tracing and reunification. It soon became apparent that there were many unaccompanied children. In response, a Red Cross shelter was set-up within the cantonment where a total of 1,323 children have been registered and provided with food and lodging. To date, 1,320 children have been reunited with their families leaving only three currently in the care of the Red Cross. 120 children and 25 adults remain missing and new cases are still being registered. Pleas for assistance to the Red Cross in locating missing people are being broadcast by local FM radio. Red Cross volunteers are also registering those who have been displaced.

To date, a total of 2,400 families (estimated at approximately 12,000 individuals) have been registered as displaced or homeless. Public donations of food, clean drinking water and clothes have been distributed by Red Cross volunteers. The NRCS has erected 20 tents in the cantonment car park for mothers and very young children. 500 sleeping mats from emergency stocks and 20 bails of used clothing and plastic shoes (donated by the Swedish Red Cross) have also been distributed.

## ***The Proposed Operation***

### **Objectives and Activities planned w**

The NRCS will be involved in the following three main activities aimed at helping approximately 15,000 persons affected by the disaster (12,000 displaced and 3,000 potential tracing cases): registration of those displaced / evacuated, food and family pack distribution, and family tracing and reunification.

### **Relief distributions w**

#### Objective 1: Food Distribution

To provide and distribute 2,500 wet food rations per day to the registered displaced or evacuated people temporarily sheltered in the two constructed camps at Ikeja and Yaba. The ration will consist of 3.5 kg of rice, 600 grams of beans, and .04 litres of cooking oil, and 1 small tin of fish per family per day.

#### Objective 2: Family Pack Distribution

To provide rehabilitation assistance packs to 2,500 families. Packs are to consist of two cooking pots, six plates / mugs / knives / spoons, two sleeping mats, two bars soap, and one plastic holdall.

### **Tracing w**

#### Objective 1: Beneficiary Registration

To register all those who have been displaced / evacuated. Red Cross volunteers will register all those displaced / evacuated by the explosion. Registration will continue when the affected population is moved to their temporary shelters at the Police College Ikeja and Abalti Barraks Yaba grounds.

#### Objective 2: Tracing and Reunification

To trace and reunite individuals separated from their families. Red Cross volunteers will provide tracing services with the aim of reuniting families with the remaining 3250 missing children and 180 missing adults as well as any new reported cases.

## **National Society Capacity Building w**

The fact that most people lost their lives from the panic that ensued three to four hours after the start of the explosions has highlighted the need for the NRCS to introduce a system of emergency information dissemination to people affected by disasters. The NRCS needs to further develop a system whereby reliable information can be disseminated to the wider public in the shortest possible time giving clear instructions on where they can seek safety. One example of this would be an initiative to increase the NRCS access to the public broadcast system.

The NRCS recently introduced a decentralized system of disaster preparedness and relief response support with the appointment of six zonal officers. Two of these newly appointed officers will be engaged in the current operation and will gain valuable experience in the process.

Nigeria has been affected by sporadic clashes between ethnic groups, and with a population which reflects the country's ethnic breakdown Lagos is potentially prone to further ethnic unrest. The current operation will help the NRCS sharpen its response should this ever occur in Lagos.

The NRCS's positive response to the current disaster has received wide public coverage and approval. Its role as lead agency on the ground has served to heighten the profile of the NRCS resulting in many new alliances both in the public and private sector. For example, a gas company has donated the equivalent of over CHF 85,000 to the NRCS for their relief effort. The current tracing operation is also the largest of its kind since the Nigerian civil war (1967-70).

## **Co-ordination w**

On 29 January, a co-ordination meeting between UNICEF, the WHO and the NRCS was held under the leadership of the Lagos State Commissioner for Health where the division of responsibilities was agreed upon between the participants. A further meeting was held on the 30 January with the National Emergencies Management Agency (NEMA) and the Army Brigade Commander. UNICEF has taken responsibility for providing hospitals with medicines and displacement camps with safe drinking water. The WHO has offered the services of medical doctors and nurses for the displaced and those to be evacuated. The Lagos Health Ministry has begun providing transport for those seeking to find loved ones at the three mortuaries at Isolo, Lagos Island and Ikeja where 600 corpses remain unidentified. An Information Centre is to be established by the military in Ikeja Cantonment providing the new base for general information as well as for the NRCS child tracing operation. The ICRC in Nigeria is ready and able to provide technical support and advice to the NRCS as required and in particular should the current family reunification extend into a full tracing activity. CARITAS and the Salvation Army have also been providing cooked food and clothing to some of the displaced as they congregate in the area. Many others, corporate bodies and the general public, are providing food on an *ad hoc* basis.

On 30 January, another co-ordination meeting was held between the National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA) together with Ministry of Health, State and local government and the NRCS. NEMA brought a consignment of food (amount unknown) which they left with military authorities to distribute. NEMA was unable to indicate level of relief response they will offer.

## **Monitoring and Evaluation w**

The operation will be implemented by volunteers of the Lagos State Branch under the direct supervision of eight NRCS headquarters staff. Working in eight hour shifts, two of the four teams of 45 volunteers will be deployed daily. 15 volunteers have been assigned to tracing and 30 volunteers to evacuation, distribution and other duties. The acting secretary general (ASG) will be in overall control of the operation. Together with the ASG, the Federation's head of delegation will monitor the ongoing operation on a daily basis and actively seek to achieve optimum co-operation and co-ordination with authorities and all involved. The president of the NRCS is also monitoring and helping to deal with media relations on a daily basis. Financial control of the operation is maintained through the working advance system whereby the Federation's delegation provides cash advances to the NRCS on the basis of a Plan of Action and on the satisfactory justification of advances.

## **Capacity of the National Society w**

The NRCS has wide experience in relief operations and with the Lagos operation can call on the largest and most active of its 37 branches: the Lagos State branch with its over 600 active volunteers. The zonal disaster preparedness and relief officer is also based in Lagos to give technical and supervisory support. Six officers from the NRCS headquarters have been assigned full-time to the operation, all of whom have years of relief operation experience. Again, because the operation is in Lagos city there is ready access to transport as well as administrative and logistical support.

## ***Budget summary***

See Annex 1 for details.

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*All International Federation Assistance 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.*

*In line with the Minimum Reporting Standards, the first operations update on this appeal will be issued within 30-days of the launch and the second will be issued over the course of the operation; a final narrative and financial report will be issued no later than 90 days after the end of the operation.*

*This operation seeks to administer to the immediate requirements of the victims of this disaster. Subsequent operations to promote sustainable development or longer-term capacity building will require additional support and these programmes are outlined on the Federation website.*

*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>*

Jean Ayoub  
Director  
Disaster Management and Co-ordination

Didier J. Cherpitel  
Secretary General

		ANNEX 1
<b><u>BUDGET SUMMARY</u></b>	APPEAL No. 03/2002	
	<b>0</b>	
TYPE	VALUE	
<b>RELIEF NEEDS</b>	<b>IN CHF</b>	
Shelter & constructions	0	
Clothing & textiles	28'028	
Food & seeds	375'943	
Water and sanitation	0	
Medical & first aid	0	
Teaching materials	0	
Utensils & tools	74'059	
Other relief supplies	74'515	
<b>TOTAL RELIEF NEEDS</b>		<b>552'545</b>
<b><u>CAPITAL EQUIPMENT</u></b>		
Vehicles		
Computers		
Telecom. equipment		
Office furniture & equipment		
Household furniture & equipment		
Generators & lighting		
Medical equipment		
Other equipment		
<b><u>PROGRAMME SUPPORT</u></b>		
Programme management	50'000	
Technical support	15'000	
Professional services	17'000	
<b><u>TRANSPORT STORAGE &amp; VEHICLE COSTS</u></b>	<b>13'441</b>	
<b><u>PERSONNEL</u></b>	<b>7'597</b>	
<b><u>ADMINISTRATIVE &amp; GENERAL SERVICES</u></b>		
Travel & related expenses		
Information expenses		
Administrative & general expenses	92'550	
External workshops & seminars		
<b>TOTAL OPERATIONAL NEEDS</b>		<b>195'588</b>
<b>TOTAL APPEAL CASH, KIND, SERVICES</b>		<b>748'133</b>
<b>LESS AVAILABLE RESOURCES (-)</b>		
<b>NET REQUEST</b>		<b>748'133</b>