

# **LIBERIA**

**CHF 3,194,000**

**Programme No. 01.05/2000**

## ***National Context***

The social and economic decline of Liberia which persisted during the 1980s has been accelerated by the conflict in the 1990s, leaving a crippled economy unable to meet the needs of the Liberian people. All sectors of the country were affected, and those which have been reactivated are operating far below their prewar level of output. Public and private capital has been depleted, with widespread destruction of physical infrastructure, and massive displacement of the population.

Since the 1997 elections, the security conditions have been fragile but stable. The general economic situation remains poor and continues to deteriorate, with a large external debt and one of the world's lowest GNP per capita. According to recent UN estimates, slightly more than 80 per cent of the population earn less than one dollar a day the threshold of absolute poverty. The country's social indicators show a life expectancy of 53 years, infant mortality of 105.6 per 1,000, birth rate is 42.3 per 1,000, and death rate is 11.53 per 1,000 population, and adult literacy is 38%. The country continues to suffer from a poor water supply, only 11% of the population has access to safe water, 16.9% has access to adequate sanitation facilities and over 90% of the population does not have access to basic health care.

Liberia is prone to recurring disasters such as floods, epidemics and as well as political instability and ethnic clashes. Civil war, internal conflicts and armed attacks also characterise the country and the region, creating large population movements inside and outside the country. The destruction of income generating sources at the community and family unit levels has created continuing vulnerability, and the reintegration effort is hampered by resource constraints. The situation is exacerbated by large numbers of youth, former combatants and IDPs remaining idle while other groups are moving to the urban areas in search of opportunities. The failure to successfully assimilate former combatants has led to increased banditry in the country, attacks on communities, abductions, rape and murder. The reintegration of former combatants is an essential element in reducing the risk and the vulnerability of communities during the post conflict situation.

## ***Country Assistance Strategy***

The Federation strategy has been formulated to assist the Liberian National Red Cross Society (LNRCS) in strengthening its structural, resource development, and operational capacities at the national headquarters, zonal and chapters levels in order to improve the effective delivery of humanitarian assistance to the vulnerable groups and communities. Despite resource constraints, the LNRCS continues to provide quality and professional services in the areas of health, relief, education and the promotion of youth activities and development activities for women. The Federation intends to continue to provide support in these key activities. The Federation co-ordinates its activities closely with the ICRC which is the lead agency in Liberia, as well as with United Nations agencies.

## ***Programme Objectives***

The Federation's overall programme aims are to develop the capacity of the thirteen chapters and sixty-nine branches so that they can more effectively deliver assistance and meet the emergency needs of vulnerable groups and the targeted beneficiaries, strengthen the relationship between the National Society and Government, and expand working relationships with NGOs and donor agencies at the national level. More specifically, the programme and capacity building priorities are as follows:

### ***Disaster Response***

The Federation and LNRCS objectives are to strengthen the disaster response capacity and management of operations in order to mitigate and respond to humanitarian needs caused by internal conflict and displacement. This will be accomplished by: improving the performance of the disaster action teams at the chapter and branch levels by distributing basic shelter, household materials, and agriculture tools for IDPs and returnees; providing operational support to the LNRCS in setting up systems for an effective relief operation; providing first aid training and materials; conducting training of LNRCS staff and volunteers by conducting workshops and seminars on a quarterly basis.

### ***Disaster Preparedness***

The Federation will assist the National Society to build or reinforce the capacity to render prompt assistance by constructing warehouses and stockpiling relief supplies at strategic locations in the districts. The disaster preparedness of the National Society will also be strengthened through the formulation of disaster preparedness policy and plans. Finally, a focus will be placed on developing a resource data bank on National Society human and funding resources.

### ***Health***

To continue to improve the health status and the living conditions of the most vulnerable populations by addressing the three major health risks: malaria, cholera and HIV/AIDS; to re-establish the blood programme; to establish community based health care programmes; to establish a stronger networking with health agencies at the national level with WHO and other international NGOs. (Rural Clinics and Water/Sanitation) Continue the provision of health care services in rural and remote areas where there are no government or private health care facilities available. Provide First Aid training throughout the country targeting students, industrial groups, sports events, motorists, NGOs and government offices. Integrate the CBFA activities in the rural clinics and water/sanitation programmes. Upgrade the medical diagnostics laboratory at headquarters and establish a blood bank. Restructure activities of the ambulance programme and decentralise its operation to fit in the zonal structure. Reduce the risk of disease and increase the selfsufficiency of the vulnerable populations or IDPs /returnees, provide first aid kits and identify and train 20 volunteers and 50 IDPs/returnees to take care of this activity.

### ***Humanitarian Values***

The Federation and LNRCS will work to enhance respect for human dignity and humanitarian values and strengthen and promote the application of the Fundamental Principles, international humanitarian law and human rights.

The Women and Development and Youth Development Programmes will be linked and integrated into the four core programme areas.

## ***Capacity Building***

The Federation will continue to assist the LNRCS in the rehabilitation and strengthening of its Headquarters and chapter structures, and to develop a Resource Development Plan linked to income generating and fund raising activities with the long term objective of improving the delivery of assistance and services to the most vulnerable. An emphasis will be placed on developing staff and volunteers through basic training, and implementing a new management organisational structure with improved staff administration, financial accounting, and audit systems which will improve transparency as well as improve records at all levels.