

TANZANIA
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National Context

While Tanzania can be considered the most politically stable country in the East African and Great Lakes region, it suffers from a chronic debt relief burden that has impacted heavily on its social services budgets. Similar to many other states in the region Tanzania is a country in economic transition with the transitional impact felt most heavily by the most vulnerable in the community: increased unemployment, higher food costs, lower wages, urban migration and reduced governmental services. While there have been negligible outflows of populations in Tanzania due to its general political stability, it has become a recipient of large refugee movements from the region.

Refugee immigration is one of a number of social concerns, with HIV/AIDS, which affects 9.4% of the adult population (1997), further exacerbating the problems of economic recovery due to a reduced labour force, associated with increased demands on an overtaxed health infrastructure. Recurrent floods and droughts have increased pressures on the most vulnerable and increased demands on stretched government services; of particular concern are health problems with the limited governmental health infrastructure under pressure to deal with increased epidemics.

Country Assistance Strategy

The Federation and the Tanzania Red Cross Society (TRCS) have a significant role to play over the coming years to respond to the present situation. As a result, in collaboration with government ministries, the LTN and local and international NGOs, the Federation and the TRCS will focus on service delivery to the most vulnerable using the country-wide volunteer network. The primary focus of the Federation and TRCS strategy will be to provide emergency response services, especially including the large refugee support operation in Kigoma, and community health services. As auxiliary to the government the TRCS is challenged with increased demands in these areas where traditional governmental support is under financial pressure.

To achieve these objectives the TRCS, supported by the Federation, will formulate country level agreements defining responsibilities between UN agencies, the government ministries and NGOs to ensure competent resource management and joint planning.

To achieve the intended objectives, the TRCS will rely on Federation technical assistance in restructuring its governance, management and volunteer base to provide increased competence and capacity in these core functions of relief and health service delivery. A proliferation of bilateral Red Cross programmes need to be brought under the overall Federation/TRCS objectives to provide focus and continuity to achieve these basic goals in relief and service delivery.

Programme Objectives

Disaster Response

The refugee camps in the Kigoma and Kasulu districts will remain the main focus of the disaster response efforts of the TRCS and the delegation for the foreseeable future. It is most likely given the political situation in Burundi and the Democratic Republic of Congo that the Federation will continue to support the basic needs of upwards of 130,000 refugees. The main objective of the Refugee Operation for 1999 is to continue and improve service delivery in the fields of health, water/sanitation, camp management and logistics supply. The second major objective will be to continue the development of TRCS expertise in these technical fields and in the management of operations. The third objective is to use the refugee operation as a vehicle for the dissemination of Red Cross Principles. Fourth will be to extend services to the local population.

The TRCS also has a key role to play in sudden, large scale and medium impact emergencies. The TRCS, with Federation support, will respond to natural and man-made emergencies through the provision of immediate basic needs in response to occasional emergencies. Also the TRCS will seek to capitalize on expertise acquired in the refugee operation to offer support for threatened communities, particularly in the field of public health. It will seek to cooperate with the Government of Tanzania and LTN agencies, offering those agencies service delivery through its volunteer and branch network. The TRCS will specialize its expertise in public health interventions, especially public health information campaigns to mitigate the impact of epidemics in disaster response situations.

Disaster Preparedness

The TRCS, in its auxiliary role to governmental services and with Federation support, will continue its preparedness programmes to respond to emergencies. This will include co-operation arrangements with ministries, UN agencies and local and international NGOs.

Community preparedness for disasters - such as developing community, family and individual coping mechanisms - will remain a key role of the TRCS. This function will be closely co-ordinated with the Disaster Response planning. Disaster procurement planning and logistics preparation will be included in HQ and regional TRCS services. The objectives for DPP: to procure and preposition basic emergency relief supplies, to train additional personnel, and to develop logistics capability at a national level. Through realization of these objectives the National Society will be able to react quickly and appropriately to any urgent situation.

Health

The key function of the TRCS in the health sector is the delivery of health and related services with the aim of restructuring the programmes on AIDS/HIV, Primary Health Care (PHC), First Aid, and Solid Waste Management (essentially an environmental health programme) to ensure a more stream-lined and integrated approach. In addition, the TRCS will provide public health education and epidemic mitigation for those affected by natural and manmade disasters as well as providing local community interventions. Until the governmental services are better financed, these areas can be expected to remain a core TRCS programme for many years.

Capacity Building Plan

The TRCS has been undergoing a change process, and support in this area will focus on reinvigorating this effort, including Governance support, restructuring of the National Society at the management level, branch development, organizational and financial strengthening, and improving income generation. The development and growth of a branch network on the grassroots level is key to the sustainability of Red Cross programmes and services. In co-operation with the Refugee Relief Operation, expertise, support and advice will be provided to local communities seeking to establish and maintain the branches. Special emphasis will be on working with youth, disaster preparedness and response.