

# **BURUNDI**

## **SOCIAL, HEALTH AND ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE**

CHF 4,065,000  
550,000 beneficiaries

Programme no 01.10/99

### The Context

Following the repatriation of the Rwandan refugees in 1996, the Burundi Red Cross (BRC), supported by the Federation, re-oriented its activities towards the vulnerable population in Burundi. There are currently an estimated 550,000# displaced Burundians (9% of the population) living in 320 camps. Additionally, there are still some 300,000 Burundian refugees in UNHCR camps#, 264,000 of them in Tanzania, who may return at any time. Furthermore, the current volatile situation in the Kivu area of the Democratic Republic of Congo has forced the Federation, the UN and their partners to draw up an emergency response plan in the event of an influx of refugees.

The embargo imposed by neighbouring countries after the coup in 1996 further aggravated the socio-economic situation in Burundi. Agricultural output plummeted in the first quarter of 1998, 20% down from the same period in 1996. All these factors have had a direct impact on the standard of living of a large part of the population; according to WFP, 300,000 people are suffering from the effects of famine, and UNICEF announced recently that the rate of malnutrition had risen from 8% to over 20% in the regions worst hit by the crisis, with two-thirds of the victims being children under five.

### The Operation

Against this very volatile background, the BRC, assisted by the Federation, is implementing a relief-oriented programme. However, efforts are made to actively contribute to the economic recovery of those worst hit by the conflict - through activities in the field of disaster preparedness and response, community health, agriculture, rehabilitation and income generation. The programmes cover the majority of the country's provinces; an additional aim is strengthening the capacities of BRC staff in the areas of programme management.

### Objectives

The overall objective of Federation support is twofold: to help BRC to strengthen its capacity to provide emergency relief for the vulnerable throughout the country; and to address the

effects of the internal conflict and the ensuing economic crisis by promoting activities that will have a long-lasting effect on the well-being of vulnerable groups. They result in the following specific objectives.

- To rehabilitate and aid the most vulnerable populations through support in non-food, housing, education, and farming needs.
- To improve disaster response capacity through emergency response planning, relief stocking, and training of volunteer emergency response units.
- To improve health through deployment of community health workers, strengthening BRC capacity to respond to epidemics, establishing nutritional units in BRC health centres, and promoting community participation in health centre management.
- To improve socio-economic well-being by supporting street children, impoverished women, farmers, and displaced persons through community and income-generation projects.

#### Plan of Action

- Rehabilitation and Aid Programmes

To distribute approximately 170 MT of household items (blankets, jerry cans, kitchen sets, tarpaulins, soap) for 9,000 families.

To provide materials (metal sheeting, door frames, nails) for the construction or rehabilitation of 203 houses for displaced families and 47 school rooms. To organise the training of 53 construction project leaders, six at the provincial level and 47 at the community level in six provinces.

To procure and distribute 15,000 hoes and 2,500 kg of market-garden seeds as part of an FAO-sponsored national agricultural rehabilitation project.

To train 60 volunteers in relief activities in six provinces.

- Disaster Preparedness and Emergency Relief Programme

To start and follow up the process of establishing a national emergency response plan with the government.

To procure, store and maintain a disaster preparedness stock for 50,000 beneficiaries.

To organise an eight-day disaster relief training for emergency response units in 10 provinces.

To equip 10 emergency response units (one per province) with emergency relief materials, tents and household items.

- Community Health Programme

To train community health workers - at least 25% of them women - in five provinces in basic first aid, health, and hygiene, and to equip them with first aid kits and bicycles.

To train 11 leaders in 11 local committees in the prevention and control of epidemics.

To supply BRC with essential drugs to deal with endemic and epidemic disease, mainly in displaced persons camps.

To provide food for BRC supplementary feeding centres serving 2,000 children aged six months to five years, as well as 400 pregnant and breast-feeding women.

To rehabilitate health centres entrusted to the BRC by the Ministry of Health.

- Social and Income-Generating Projects

To support and educate 150 street children in two BRC centres (Bujumbura and Ngozi).

To organise vocational training for 200 impoverished women through three centres.

To support 4,000 farmers to relaunch agricultural production through distribution of seed potatoes and bean seeds.

To support 6,250 displaced and 1,000 extremely poor people in six provinces with revenue generated by income-generating projects such as poultry farming, brick yards and tile tunnel ovens.

To train beneficiaries and project leaders in the management and sustainability of small projects.

#### Resource Planning

Supplies of non-food items under the rehabilitation and aid programme for the most vulnerable populations will come from stocks already available in Nairobi. Funding for the transportation of these supplies to five provinces, as well as the purchase of agricultural inputs and other items will be sought from donors such as ECHO and USAID. Donors will be approached to fund the disaster preparedness and emergency relief programme as well as the community health programme, while funding will be sought with UNOPS for the house reconstruction project. It is expected that WFP will provide most of the food requirements.

#### Capacity

- The Operating National Society

Having gained extensive experience in running a long-term relief operation, BRC has 46,300 full members and 263 volunteers. Headquarters employ eight managerial staff members.

- The Federation

Five delegates are currently assigned to Burundi, four of them in the capital Bujumbura and one in Ngozi.

- Other Red Cross/Red Crescent Resources

The regional delegation in Nairobi will send delegates to Burundi to carry out missions in connection with information, institutional development, health, and water and sanitation. The ICRC will participate in activities aimed at institutional development of the National Society (self-assessment, statutes commission, training activities and preparation and holding of general assembly).

#### Co-operation

The delegation will continue to maintain close relations with the various United Nations agencies working with refugees (UNHCR, WFP) and with displaced people (OCHA, FAO, WFP), as well as with the ECHO delegation in Burundi. The National Society will undertake specific agreements with several government ministries to secure their assistance in various projects, particularly community health projects and the street children centres.