

# INFORMATION BULLETIN



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: ASSISTANCE TO LIBERIAN ASYLUM SEEKERS**

07 August 2003

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**Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF) Allocated: CHF 10,000**

*The Federation's mission is to improve the lives of vulnerable people by mobilizing the power of humanity. It is the world's largest humanitarian organization and its millions of volunteers are active in over 180 countries.*

For more information: [www.ifrc.org](http://www.ifrc.org)

### ***In Brief***

**This document is being issued based on the needs described below. A DREF allocation of CHF 10,000 has been released. The Federation does not anticipate further needs. Unearmarked funds to repay DREF are needed. This operation will be reported on through the DREF update.**

### **The Situation**

On 17 June 2003, the UNHCR office in Lagos, Nigeria received a total number of 1,986 asylum seekers, comprised mostly of women and children from Liberia, in Oru Refugee Camp. As of 20 July 2003, the number of asylum seekers had increased to 2,357. Since the arrival of the refugees, the Nigerian Red Cross Society (NRCS) provided tents, plastic sheeting and clothing, from its limited preparedness stock, to help reduce the plight of the asylum seekers. The NRCS also deployed over six volunteers to the camp to assist with food distribution and HIV/ AIDS campaign.

A second assessment conducted by the NRCS in July 2003 indicated that poor diet and sanitation have continued to be major problems of the refugees in the camp. The asylum seekers were having limited health services as the only existing clinic lacks essential drugs.

### **Red Cross and Red Crescent action**

The NRCS has been the major operational partner of the UNHCR and National Commission for Refugees at the Oru Camp. The NRCS applied Federation DREF funding towards the procurement and distribution of non-food items and to provide assistance to the refugees. A total number of 25 NRCS volunteers assisted with food distribution and HIV/AIDS campaign.

### NON FOOD ITEMS DISTRIBUTED

ITEM	QUANTITY	BENEFICIARIES
Blankets	200 pcs	100 families
Nylon Mats	270	135 families
Cooking Pots	800	400 families
Plastic Buckets	800	400 families
Cooking stoves	400	400 families
Plastic Plates, Cups and Spoons	167 dozens	2,357 persons

A total of 2,357 refugees benefited from the DREF fund and received non food items. Since the non food items were limited, only the most vulnerable such as women, children and the aged were at least provided for. Even though this was not enough, it nonetheless made a measurable impact on the beneficiaries.

#### Health

NRCS volunteers also provided health campaign and sanitation education in the camp. They also carried out HIV/AIDS sensitisation programme. These activities were ongoing. The Red Cross clinic at Lagos and Oru camps had been attending to the Liberian refugees since their arrival in the country.

#### Water and Sanitation

Efforts were made to provide water and sanitation facilities at the camp as these would pose bigger problems as a result of influx of more asylum seekers.

#### Shelter

Since the arrival of the asylum seekers, the NRCS has provided 18 big tents and 22 rolls of plastic sheeting for accommodation. As these are not enough, the partners had planned to seek for more funds.

#### Communication – Advocacy and Public Information

Since the arrival of the asylum seekers, the NRCS Information Department issued a media statement informing the public about their plight. The NRCS, through its Information Department, also made several appeals to partners and to the general public.

#### Government and UN Action

The Nigerian Government's National Emergency Management Authority (NEMA) supplemented the food provision with the following:

- 300 bags of Garri (cassava flour);
- 100 bags of salt;
- 2,000 pieces of yam;
- 200 bags of beans;
- 600 bags of rice; and
- 100 cartons of canned beef..

In addition, UNICEF and UNHCR donated some food items, medical supplies, and water and sanitation assistance to the asylum seekers.

#### Constraints

The supply of relief items was not enough for the asylum seekers. The situation at the camp was very worrisome as a result of accommodation problems.

### **Conclusion**

With the continued fighting in Liberia, a further influx of asylum seekers is expected. Tensions in the refugee camp could increase due to a lack of adequate shelter and a lack of a regular supply of food assistance in the camp. The NRCS is appealing for more help and is urging UNHCR to make all efforts to assist the refugees.

For a full description of the National Society profile, see [www.ifrc.org](http://www.ifrc.org)

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*All International Federation 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.*

*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>*

For longer-term programmes, please refer to the Federation's Annual Appeal number 01.32/2003.

