

# 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

## ***BURKINA FASO, MALI, NIGER: POPULATION MOVEMENT***

07 March, 2003

### ***Field Assessment Coordination Team (FACT) - Special focus on Mali***

*Information Bulletin N° 1/2003*

*Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF) allocated: CHF 40,000*

*This bulletin is being issued based on the needs described below reflecting the information available at this time. Based on further updates and details from assessment reports, or should the situation deteriorate further, the Federation will consider responding to the situation by revising the current Emergency Appeal (no. 34/02) which was launched on 4 December 2002 seeking CHF 1,314,000 (USD 886,317 or EUR 890,938) to assist 82,000 beneficiaries.*

### ***The Situation***

Following the September 19 coup attempt in Côte d'Ivoire, the peace process and the resulting French-brokered Marcoussis Accord remains bogged down. The political turmoil has unleashed anti-immigrant and ethnic sentiment affecting millions of people in the population who originate from neighbouring countries. While open hostilities have ceased, sporadic fighting continues to erupt, particularly along the Liberian border areas where there are ongoing reports and accusations of rebel army incursions into the Cote d'Ivoire. There are concerns that the conflict will increasingly have a pan-regional impact. The Federation assessment of the situation, in consultation with the ICRC and UN colleagues in Geneva and the field, dictates a well coordinated regional humanitarian response. Given the most recent developments in the peace process, the deadlock over posts in a reconciliation government, and still unstable conditions in Cote d'Ivoire and the surrounding countries, the Federation has reviewed its management and planning for the West Africa Humanitarian Crisis affecting Burkina Faso, Mali, and Niger, to include Ghana, Liberia and Cote d'Ivoire. Following the decision of the Federation's Disaster Management and Co-ordination (DMC) division to assume the Secretariat management lead, a PNS teleconference was organized to present the next phase of this operation and proposals to reinforce the Federation's preparedness and response strategy. A specialised FACT team was organized and deployed to West Africa. Reports from the team, UN, and other information sources on the situation, including security and other reports as well as the FACT terms of reference, have been posted on DMIS.

### ***Red Cross/Red Crescent Action***

On 27 February, DMC deployed a five-person FACT team to the region to carry out additional assessments including operational initiatives where needed or appropriate. After consultations with the Federation Representative in Dakar, Senegal and the Regional Delegation in Abidjan, where contacts and discussions were also held with UN and ECHO offices, the team moved to Bamako, Mali where they met with the MRC, the

Spanish Red Cross, and the ICRC. The team arranged to visit the stadium in Bamako where repatriated persons are received in a usually exhausted and traumatised condition. The MRC provides First Aid, a cooked meal, washing facilities and a place to sleep. Most beneficiaries remain between 24 to 48 hours before being transported to their regions of origin by the Government. The MRC has been supported very ably by the Spanish Red Cross and their delegate in this activity. To date 47,000 persons have arrived in organised convoys, and the civil protection service estimates a similar number have arrived by foot passing through the many frontier posts or anywhere along the porous border with the Cote d'Ivoire. While there are no accurate figures available for the total arrival of repatriates and refugees, a feasible number is perhaps 100,000 so far. The FACT team visited refugee camps in Loulouni and Farangoran on 28 February to 2 March to observe the arrival of 750 repatriates in 10 buses arriving in Sikasso on their way to Bamako. The situation of the refugees and asylum seekers in the two camps in Mali is complex, and further information will be issued on this situation shortly. A meeting was also held with MSF Belgium in Sikasso. On 3 and 4 March, the FACT team met Government officials, WFP, GTZ, UNAIDS, UNHCR, UNICEF and SCF. Before the team leader and information delegate left for Burkina Faso the team debriefed with the MRC to discuss the teams findings and to agree on further action. The following was presented:

### ***Immediate Needs***

The Spanish Red Cross have very limited funds remaining to continue food distributions at the Stadium and Sikasso. There are currently stocks for 4,000 meals which will last approximately 2 weeks. In order to avoid any break in this very important activity, remaining funds from the December Emergency appeal could be transferred to the Spanish Red Cross to continue this critical activity. In addition additional food needs in the refugee camps in Farangoran and Loulouni would also be addressed. In the Bamako Stadium there is an urgent need for additional latrines and shelter. A Federation delegate would also assist the Spanish delegate with the additional activities.

### ***Longer-term needs***

- **Disaster Preparedness:** Transport. FACT logistics will carry out an evaluation of repair costs to the MRC vehicle fleet.
- **Communications:** Work will be undertaken to identify and correct the Internet connection at the MRC headquarters, and evaluate and advise on the HF/VHF radio network.
- **Family resettlement:** The strain on host families providing shelter or accommodation for repatriates into the community is a source of concern to Government, UN, the Red Cross, and NGOs, as is the additional burden placed on education and health infrastructures. Repatriate families receive 12kgs of maize from WFP (not part of their usual diet) as a gesture of support to host families. A possible Red Cross activity under consideration is to supply a resettlement kit to include such items as cooking sets, mattresses, hygiene items, blankets, water containers, school exercise books etc.
- **Health:** At this time there are no signs of malnutrition or epidemics. The HIV/AIDS levels in Mali, however, is considerably lower than in Cote d'Ivoire and there is a fear that new arrivals with higher infection rates could have a serious impact. The FACT health delegate will report on her conclusions following meetings with UNAIDS and UNICEF. A regional approach may be useful after the situation in Burkina Faso is evaluated.

The MRC have expressed appreciation with the result of the assessment, and indicated that they will favour the development of a budget for additional food distributions, as well as a budget for shelter, latrines, and communication requirements.

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

*For a special UN report on Mali see: OCHA Humanitarian Situation Report, Mali No. 02*

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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.*

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