

Appeal 2004



International Federation
of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

Middle East/North Africa Gender Network

Appeal no. 01.91/2004

The International Federation's mission is to improve the lives of vulnerable people by mobilizing the power of humanity. The Federation is the world's largest humanitarian organization, and its millions of volunteers are active in over 180 countries. All international assistance to support vulnerable communities seeks to adhere to the Code of Conduct and the Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Disaster Response, according to the SPHERE Project.

This document reflects a range of programmes and activities to be implemented in 2004, and the related funding requirements. These are based upon the broader, multi-year framework of the Federation's Project Planning Process (PPP). The PPP products are either available through hyperlinks in the text¹, or can be requested through the respective regional department. For further information concerning programmes or operations in this or other countries or regions, please also access the Federation website at <http://www.ifrc.org>

Click on programme title or figures to go to the text or budget

	2004
Programme title	in CHF
Coordination, Cooperation, and Strategic Partnerships	
Coordination and Implementation	318,930
Total	318,930²

¹ Identified by blue in the text.

² USD 239,526 or EUR 205,297

Regional Context

Some of the prevailing socio-cultural norms in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region do not encourage gender equality in a way that puts women on the same footing with men in terms of status and access to resources and power. The *Arab Human Development Report* of 2002 and 2003 establishes the lack of empowerment of women as one of the glaring discrepancies present in the region.

Adult illiteracy rates based on 1999 statistical data show that cumulatively as many as 51 percent of females are illiterate in the Arab countries compared to 29.9 of males.³ According to the findings of a large scale international study (World Values Survey), Arabs stood for gender equality in education but not in employment. In human development terms, Arabs expressed support for building the human capabilities of women but not their utilization⁴. The reports further point to the fact that in most of the Arab countries, women's representation in Parliament is as low as 3.5 percent.

In the context of national societies of the region, the participation of women is very low especially at the level of leadership and management. The need to improve the existing situation in a manner that increases the role of women both within the national societies and in the wider socio-economic and political environment represents an important priority for all concerned.

Coordination, Cooperation, and Strategic Partnerships

[Representation, Management, and Implementation](#) [<Click here to return to the title page>](#)

Gender Network

Background and achievements/lessons learned to date

Gender mainstreaming refers to the systematic integration of the respective needs, interests and capacities of both men and women at all levels of an organization. It implies that the leadership and staff of the organization are accountable for assessing the implications of their policies, procedures and development activities on men and women.

During the 3rd MENA Conference (*Tehran, 2001*) all societies collectively agreed to establish a MENA Gender Network to coordinate their efforts with respect to gender. As a first step the Conference established a working group consisting of a designated representative from one national society in each of the three sub-regions (Iran Red Crescent Society from the Middle East, Bahrain Red Crescent Society from the Gulf, and Algerian Red Crescent Society from North Africa). This core group was tasked to develop strategies and plans of action to be further implemented and followed up by each national society. The purpose was to develop a level of awareness and practice in which there is no sex-based discrimination in the way the national societies carry out their work and provide their services. This requires a process of empowerment through a variety of support mechanisms including the development of skills and competencies of staff and volunteers.

The Conference also requested each national society to nominate a focal point with a view to strengthening the network and facilitate communication.

The decisions of the Conference took into account the challenges in the region and the gender policy of the Federation which states that:

"The goal of the Federation is to ensure that all Red Cross/Red Crescent programmes benefit men and women equally, according to their different needs and with the input and equal participation of men and women at all levels within the National Societies and the Federation's Secretariat".

The main strategy and plans of action developed by the Network core group in conjunction with the national societies concerned focused on gender mainstreaming at all levels including national society leadership and management as well as programming.

In order to follow up on the implementation of the decisions of the 2001 Conference, the Iranian Red Crescent Society prepared a concept paper which was discussed at the first meeting of the MENA Gender focal points in Tehran in 2002.

Subsequently, the operational framework for MENA Gender Network, which highlights the main outcomes of the meeting, was prepared and adopted by the eleven National Societies who attended the meeting.

³ UNDP *Arab Human Development Report 2002*, page 151

⁴ UNDP *Arab Human Development Report 2003*, page 19

The main strategy focuses to the improvement of the role of women by acknowledging them both as participants and beneficiaries in the activities of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies. Upgrading knowledge and skills of women (including training and networking) within MENA national societies, proper consideration of the specific needs, capacities and vulnerabilities of women and men in Red Cross/Red Crescent programmes, and increasing the involvement of women at all levels are some of the key practical steps leading to the effective implementation of the vision towards the empowerment of women.

The Iranian Red Crescent Society has taken an important step by initiating a web site (www.MENA-GCN.NET <<http://www.MENA-GCN.NET>>) to facilitate communication both within and outside the Network.

Some key challenges include the following:

- Six National Societies have not yet designated focal points to coordinate issues and programmes related to gender, the remaining eleven have done so;
- The level of gender awareness within many national societies is an area that leaves a lot to be desired adversely affecting their participation in the implementation of the agreed gender framework;
- Human resources with the appropriate set of skills are not sufficiently available to increase participation of the national societies in the implementation of the gender framework;
- Support from the Federation Secretariat and offices in the field need to be increased in order to encourage the national societies both in terms of technical and financial resources and facilitate the exchange of views including goals achieved in relation to gender.

Through its organisational development expertise the Federation's Regional office in Amman facilitates the work of the Network in terms of providing financial support and technical assistance. The planning and implementation of the tasks of the Network will be coordinated as part of the Federation's regional organizational support to the national societies. This support will continue as it is essential to the strengthening of the Network and will be maintained until the Network achieves a degree of self reliance – i.e. a structured gender policy implemented throughout the national societies in the region.

With limited financial support allocated through the Secretariat Capacity Building Fund, progress is being made to improve the Regional Gender Communication Network. Although the process has had a good start due to the collaborative efforts in the past few years, a lot more remains to be done to ensure that the gender agenda in the MENA context receives the attention it deserves in terms of both policy and operational considerations.

Having been established the sustainability of the MENA Gender Network is based on the coordination and cooperation model. This can serve as a good example to other national societies in areas of common interest such as the willingness to work together and to overcome everyday challenges.

The 2004 Appeal is designed to complement the ongoing efforts with a degree of sustainability and impact.

[<Click here to access full project documentation for MENA Gender Network>](#)

Goal

The role of women both as participants and beneficiaries (important stakeholders) at all levels of Red Cross/Red Crescent organization and management, programmes and services is substantially improved.

Objective

The MENA national societies are able to respond effectively to the needs of women/men through effective services and stronger capacities including human resources, communication/information and a sustainable resource base.

Expected programme result(s); and related projects for this objective:

- The MENA Gender Network initiative has been progressing according to the plan;
- The role of the MENA Gender Network has been more specifically defined with clear terms of reference - to be reviewed and approved by the National Societies at the next MENA Conference (Bahrain, April, 2004);
- Knowledge sharing among the MENA national societies has been facilitated through the MENA Gender Network. This is supported by motivated and well trained human resources: volunteers and staff from the national societies including a gender focal point appointed in each National Society;
- Reliable communication capacities and information systems including a regional database to facilitate information sharing on gender issues has been set-up and is periodically updated;
- The Network has been playing an active role in creating employment (income generating) opportunities for women in dire need of assistance.

For further information please contact:

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BUDGET 2004

PROGRAMME BUDGETS SUMMARY

Appeal no.: 01.91/2004

Name: MENA - Gender Network

PROGRAMME:

	Health & Care	Disaster Management	Humanitarian Values	Organisational Development	Coordination & Implementation	Emergency	Total
	CHF	CHF	CHF	CHF	CHF	CHF	CHF
Shelter & construction	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Clothing & textiles	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Food	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Seeds & plants	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Water & Sanitation	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Medical & first aid	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Teaching materials	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Utensils & tools	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Other relief supplies	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
SUPPLIES	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Land & Buildings	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Vehicles	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Computers & telecom	0	0	0	0	13,500	0	13,500
Medical equipment	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Other capital exp.	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
CAPITAL EXPENSES	0	0	0	0	13,500	0	13,500
Warehouse & Distribution	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Transport & Vehicules	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
TRANSPORT & STORAGE	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Programme Support	0	0	0	0	20,730	0	20,730
PROGRAMME SUPPORT	0	0	0	0	20,730	0	20,730
Personnel-delegates	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Personnel-national staff	0	0	0	0	6,700	0	6,700
Consultants	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
PERSONNEL	0	0	0	0	6,700	0	6,700
W/shops & Training	0	0	0	0	43,100	0	43,100
WORKSHOPS & TRAINING	0	0	0	0	43,100	0	43,100
Travel & related expenses	0	0	0	0	45,000	0	45,000
Information	0	0	0	0	63,400	0	63,400
Other General costs	0	0	0	0	126,500	0	126,500
GENERAL EXPENSES	0	0	0	0	234,900	0	234,900
TOTAL BUDGET:	0	0	0	0	318,930	0	318,930