

Health and Care in the Community

CHF 3,045,000

Programme No. 01.73/2000

Programme Context

Globalisation, the shift of power from the state to other elements of society, and spreading urbanisation are among the forces in today's world that present both threats and opportunities in relation to people's health and well-being.

In developing countries, infectious diseases, and their interaction with poverty and malnutrition, will continue to take a heavy toll on life. New and re-emerging epidemics are a growing threat, not only to people's health, but to achievements in human development. In many parts of the world, a rapidly ageing population will increasingly put pressure on health care and pension systems, where they exist.

Ultimately, it is the role of governments to ensure that health and social welfare systems, however structured, are capable of meeting the needs of their populations, and particularly the most vulnerable. However, the Federation is uniquely placed to complement their efforts. Among its resources are a network of National Societies with a strong volunteer base, its ability to operate simultaneously at the international, national and local levels, and its traditional expertise in health, community services and first aid.

Strategy 2010, outlining how the Federation can maximise its impact on community health and well-being, advocates a focus on:

- first aid services and training, using them as entry-point opportunities to reduce individual and community vulnerability to disease, accident, trauma and violence;
- effective management of health programmes, particularly at the community level;
- the provision of practical and emotional support to vulnerable people, contributing to help bridge the gap between formal service delivery systems and the family or individuals.
- a more proactive and comprehensive approach to health care in situations when the formal health system is unable to reach certain areas or groups of people, or when it suddenly collapses due to a disaster.

Programme Strategy

Reflecting these priorities, this global programme has two aims:

- to improve health and care in the community by exploring, compiling and promoting best practice in the areas of first aid, community involvement in health, and care to particularly vulnerable groups.

- to improve the Federation's capacity to respond to public health crises by developing surveillance, preparedness and rapid response mechanisms for dealing with epidemic outbreaks and water and sanitation problems, and to increase the Federation's capacity to provide stress management and psychological support to people affected by disasters.

Programme Objectives

The programme will assert RC/RC international leadership in first aid, use it as an entry point for other programmes, and ensure that these efforts result in opportunities and resource mobilisation for National Societies. It will promote the Global Road Safety Partnership and ensure that Societies can globally share first aid knowledge and expertise. It aims at documenting, systematising and promoting best practice in these areas, developing tools and methodology and 'connecting' the international and the local health communities, channelling concerns and information from one to the other.

The programme will promote best practice (from within and outside the RC/RC) regarding effective management of health programmes with community involvement in order to contribute to the greater impact of RC/RC community health programmes. Particular emphasis will be placed on primary health care, reproductive health, prevention and control of communicable diseases (particularly HIV/AIDS and tuberculosis), the promotion of voluntary, non-remunerated blood donation and the implementation of quality programmes for delivery of blood services where appropriate.

The programme will promote best practice (from within and outside the RC/RC) regarding community services that provide support, through volunteers and informal care providers, to vulnerable groups, with particular focus on older persons, children affected by armed conflict and street children.

To improve the Federation's capacity to respond to public health crises the programme will: develop knowledge and training tools for stress management and psychological support and create mechanisms to encourage the greater involvement of NS providing psychological support to people affected by disasters. It will also develop surveillance, international preparedness and rapid response mechanisms for dealing with epidemic outbreaks and environment, water and sanitation problems. These will focus on making the maximum use of National Society potential.