

# PROGRAMME UPDATE



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

## MYANMAR

26 July 2001

*Appeal No. 01.45/2001*

*Appeal Target : 943,078*

*Programme Update No. : 1 Period covered: 1 January 2001 - 30 June 2001*

### *“At a Glance”*

*Appeal coverage: 39.4%*

*Outstanding needs: CHF 571,874*

*Update: The limited progress made in the complex process of reorganizing the national society has caused delays in implementing many objectives of the Appeal 2001, although activities have been undertaken in almost all programme areas. The need for total commitment to change, better relationships with supporters and a wider funding base have become apparent. The outstanding needs reflected above are based on the original appeal budget 2001 which will be reduced with the next Programme Update.*

### **Operational Developments:**

#### ***Political events:***

In early January, the Myanmar government announced that talks between the Myanmar government and the National League for Democracy (NLD) had been underway since last October, although details were not officially announced by either party. The United Nations and the international community welcomed the news of a direct dialogue between the two parties.

An EU mission visited Yangon on 29-30 January following the news of direct dialogue and the release of political prisoners and held discussions with both the government and the NLD. However, there was no immediate indication whether sanctions would be lifted; at the end of April, the EU undertook the formal process of the renewal of its so-called ‘common position’.

#### ***Economic events:***

Though the domestic political situation raised expectations, the economic situation deteriorated. Commodity prices significantly increased and the currency (Kyat) devalued almost 70 per cent against the US dollar.

### **Disaster Response:**

**Flooding:**

Heavy rainfall in central Myanmar during June caused serious flooding in low lying areas, affecting to varying degrees an estimated 250,000 people in two townships. The MRCS is targeting assistance to the worst affected families, with the support of the International Federation. Although no appeal has been launched, the MRCS provided relief assistance to 103 families in nine villages (in Meiktila Township) and 539 families in eight villages (in Wundwin Township).

**Repatriation/Reintegration:**

The MRCS/UNHCR Integrated Assistance Programme for the most vulnerable people of the returnee communities in Northern Rakhine State continued, though with a reduced level of support from the Federation, into mid-2001.

Since 1995, MRCS has provided assistance to extremely vulnerable individuals (EVIs) through activities such as income generation (including provision of livestock and tools for fishing, rice husking and vegetable gardening), vocational/skill training (including tailoring, cane bamboo basketry, fishnet weaving), repatriation and emergency assistance. In 2001, however, the emphasis of the national society's activities is on vocational/skill training as an integral part of the UNHCR Magsaysay Project (which coordinates adult literacy and vocational/skill development), and on the society's health education and community based disaster preparedness (CBDP) projects. The aim is to extend the coverage of the MRCS health and DP programmes, in cooperation with local Red Cross branches and volunteers.

The Federation's community development delegate (supported by the Japanese Red Cross), who provided technical assistance to the programme for three years, completed her mission in April.

***Disaster Preparedness:***

Following considerable progress in the organizational review, the disaster preparedness and response (DP/DR) division was formally established at MRCS in May. An organigram, staff job descriptions and working rules and procedures were drafted jointly by the head of division and the Federation's delegation before being approved by the Executive Committee (EC). Following this, a series of job interviews were conducted and four new posts were filled by existing MRCS staff with salary support from the DP/DR programme. Under the guidance of the MRCS policy on human resources issues, every attempt was made to fill new posts in the organization with suitable staff available as a result of the management reorganization. MRCS now has in place the structure and processes to support the development of a DP/DR programme through the latter half of 2001.

***Constraints***

The necessary but lengthy reorganization process within MRCS caused delays in the implementation of all the activities planned to achieve the objectives listed below.

***Objective 1:*** To develop a new MRCS disaster preparedness policy, clarifying the society's roles and responsibilities in the national disaster preparedness plan and its relationships with other organizations and governmental departments.

***Activities & Achievements***

The newly established DP/DR division, supported by the Federation's delegation, held preliminary discussions with relevant governmental departments and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) to clarify roles and responsibilities under the national disaster preparedness plan.

***Objective 2:*** To increase the capacity of people to cope with the effects of disaster through the development of a community based disaster preparedness (CBDP) strategy and the establishment of a well trained Red Cross volunteer network.

***Activities & Achievements***

A joint Federation/MRCS review of the society's annual action plan has recently been initiated in relation to activities in the following areas: CBDP pilot areas, appointment of CBDP field officers, the use of Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA) for needs assessment and CBFA and DP training.

**Objective 3:** To establish emergency disaster response teams (EDRTs) at headquarters and in the selected CBDP pilot areas.

#### ***Activities & Achievements***

No specific activities have taken place to date against this objective. However, the floods in June (see Information Bulletin no. 1 issued 13 June 2001) have prompted discussions between the Federation's regional disaster management team, the country delegation and MRCS on the need to establish EDRTs.

**Objective 4:** To improve communication and coordination mechanisms between headquarters and the grassroots organizational units.

#### ***Activities & Achievements***

Discussions are currently underway to utilize the ongoing flood relief operation as a case study for MRCS reporting mechanisms.

**Objective 5:** To improve the functioning of the national society's 18 warehouses and ensure their replenishment with relief materials.

#### ***Activities & Achievements***

No formal assessment of current stocks or plans for improvement have been undertaken to date. However, the central warehouse facility in Yangon has been replenished with relief goods donated by a US-based, charitable organization.

### ***Humanitarian Values***

MRCS entered 2001 with no management structure for information and dissemination. The overall aim for this reporting period was, therefore, to establish a structure and appoint capable staff in order to launch activities in the latter half of 2001.

**Objective 1:** To increase the communications capacity of the headquarters of the MRCS by restructuring its information and dissemination division.

#### ***Activities & Achievements***

The information and dissemination division was established at MRCS under the revised staffing plan (April 2001). An organigram, staff job descriptions for three new posts and working rules and procedures were drafted and approved. However, to date no suitable candidates for the posts have been identified, either from within the organization or from external sources. A qualified Red Cross volunteer has been identified as a provisional candidate for the information officer post and there are possible internal candidates for other divisional support staff. It is the intention of MRCS to develop this programme area as soon as possible.

While the new division was under development, two members of the MRCS attended the Southeast Asia and East Asia Communications Planning workshop held in February in Bangkok. Its purpose was to provide national society communicators with hands-on training in communications, strategic planning and external relations, and to develop a regional communication strategy (*available on request from the regional delegation in Bangkok*) and a plan of action leading to the formation of a regional information network.

#### ***Constraints***

The reorganization process within MRCS caused delays in the implementation of the planned activities. In particular, it has proved difficult to determine the availability and appropriateness of internal candidates.

**Objective 2:** To publish and issue a Myanmar Red Cross pamphlet, a newsletter and a magazine.

***Activities & Achievements***

A bimonthly MRCS newsletter was released in May, focusing on the Red Cross volunteer camp and on World Red Cross and Red Crescent Day. Three hundred copies were published. A second issue is under production and a review of the quality of the publication is scheduled.

***Constraints***

The reorganization process within MRCS made it difficult to launch any programme activities in the absence of adequate staffing for the division.

**Objective 3:** To create public awareness of HIV/AIDS, malaria, TB and diarrhoea.

***Activities & Achievements***

No activities have been implemented against this programme objective to date.

***Constraints***

The reorganization process within MRCS caused delays and made it difficult to launch any programme activities in the absence of adequate staffing for the division.

**Objective 4:** To develop the leadership quality and capacity in MRCS.

***Activities & Achievements***

No activities have been implemented against this programme objective to date.

***Constraints***

The reorganization process within MRCS caused delays and made it difficult to launch any programme activities in the absence of adequate staffing for the division.

***Health and Care:***

Based on the recommendations of the MRCS health review (in August 2000) and advice from the Federation's regional health team, a strategic health planning process began in February 2001 at the national society. A staged approach to the development of the society's strategic health plan was adopted which should enable the MRCS to identify its roles, responsibilities and priorities within the main areas of health programming; community health, HIV/AIDS and first aid/CBFA.

**Objective 1:** To strengthen the capacity of the MRCS to design, develop and evaluate effective community health promotion materials for specific target communities.

***Activities & Achievements***

The Federation is facilitating the planning process of the MRCS, of which one result will be the identification and evaluation of community health promotion materials. To date two working sessions (in March and April) have taken place.

**Objective 2:** To improve the health status of targeted communities through their participation in identifying and prioritizing their health information and education needs.

***Activities & Achievements***

The strategic health planning sessions in March and April (see above) of the MRCS produced a clear definition of vulnerable communities. However full communities' participation has not yet begun.

***Constraints***

The reorganization process within MRCS caused delays in the implementation of the activities planned to achieve objectives one and two. It has been difficult to launch any programme activities in the absence of definitive staffing for the division.

***First Aid and CBFA Training Project***

***Objective 1:*** To strengthen the capacity of the headquarters' training division by enhancing staffing quality and staffing levels during the first two months of the programme.

***Activities & Achievements***

A staffing reorganization in April created 12 new posts in the four programme areas -- including training and dissemination -- to improve programme structures and strengthen headquarters capacity.

The assistant director of the MRCS training division attended the Federation facilitated Health Management Course in Thailand in February. She has made a two-year commitment to build the capacity of the society's health division and programmes. Information and skills from the health course will be disseminated to other staff through MRCS health training courses.

***Constraints***

The re-organization process within MRCS has taken longer than anticipated, due largely to the complexities of working for reform within the existing structure.

***Objective 2:*** To develop a training centre with adequate training materials within the first three months of the programme.

***Activities & Achievements***

The renovation of the training centre at MRCS headquarters was completed in May. This will facilitate training activities.

***Constraints***

None identified.

***Objective 3:*** To develop a CBFA training strategy to assist the most vulnerable communities with self-help health measures.

***Activities & Achievements***

Though no activities were possible in this reporting period, eight pilot geographic areas were identified for programming. This is expected to include:

- implementation of a CBFA strategy
- updating and training of first aid/CBFA trainers
- development of a monitoring system within the training division.

***Constraints***

The delay in establishing a training division (and the resulting lack of qualified and experienced staff at headquarters), made it impossible to implement the activities planned against this objective and three other objectives, namely:

***Objective 4:*** to update the training of first aid/CBFA training instructors and Red Cross volunteers;

***Objective 5:*** to develop a first aid curriculum for primary school Red Cross groups and modify teaching materials;

***Objective 6:*** to develop a monitoring system in the training division.

## ***Organizational and Resource Development:***

The organizational development of MRCS for 2001 centred on the need to clarify structures and responsibilities. While MRCS has shown commitment to this undertaking and a willingness to work with the guidance and support of the Federation, the actual process has proved challenging -- demonstrating its necessity. Existing structures, ambiguity regarding responsibilities and a weak human resource and financial base have impeded progress. However, the review and reorganization of the organization at headquarters level (clarifying governance and management responsibilities) was. This step will now be consolidated by completing the planning process for the society's development plan and facilitating the development of clear staffing and financial procedures for the headquarters.

***Objective 1:*** To review and revise the MRCS statutes and develop a clear and documented policy on the structures and responsibilities of the governing and management bodies; to improve the links between the MRCS headquarters and the state/division branches.

### ***Activities & Achievements***

A task force to review the present statutes in consultation with a legal adviser from the Federation was set up. It is comprised of representatives from the Executive Council, Central Committee, State/Division branches, Ministry of Justice, ICRC and the Federation's delegation.

A new organigram and staffing plan, which emerged from a review of the organizational and management structure, was approved by the Executive Committee. The completion of renovations to the MRCS headquarters, providing additional, well-defined office space for each department, should help promote a more cohesive and effective approach to programme coordination and support.

A review of the plans for the four core areas of MRCS programming for 2001 was carried out. It re-established MRCS programme priorities for the year and set the context for a more detailed and longer term planning process, scheduled for the third quarter of 2001, which will seek to produce the society's four-year development plan.

### ***Constraints***

Progress has been steady but is constrained by the very structure that is under review.

***Objective 2:*** To develop a clear, well documented human resource development programme, to ensure that the MRCS develops existing staff resources and recruits new staff for essential programmes and support services.

### ***Activities & Achievements***

The Federation assisted the MRCS in conducting an assessment of human resources at its headquarters. New staffing requirements and existing human resources were mapped. A new organigram reflecting changes in the organization and in the management structure was approved by the Executive Committee and a revised staffing plan announced on 9 April.

The revised staffing plan for the headquarters creates 12 new posts in four divisions. Eleven of the posts were filled by members of the existing management staff. One external candidate was selected. Job specifications for headquarters staff were adjusted where appropriate under the revised structure; specifications for the 12 new posts were defined.

### ***Constraints***

Lacking a sustainable funding base, MRCS is unable to offer competitive employment packages.

***Objective 3:*** To develop and implement a clear, well documented policy on budgeting and accounting procedures.

### ***Activities & Achievements***

The memorandum of understanding (MoU) that clarifies the working relationship between MRCS and the Federation's delegation also addresses the necessity for basic financial procedures. It has provided a useful entry point for taking further steps in developing the national society's policy on budgeting and accounting.

### ***Constraints***

There is a lack of staff trained in financial management, procedures and reporting.

### ***Coordination and Management:***

The delegation continued to work closely with ICRC and some initial steps, with MRCS and ICRC, were taken to consider the development of a Country Assistance Strategy (CAS). The delegation, ICRC and MRCS took part in the regional Partnership Meeting in Phnom Penh. Meanwhile, the delegation faced some challenges in managing the Appeal based activities, as the slow pace of organizational change within MRCS constrained the process.

***Objective 1:*** To coordinate the development and relief assistance provided to the MRCS and lead the process of developing an inclusive Country Assistance Strategy for the society.

### ***Activities & Achievements***

The roles and responsibilities of the MRCS and the Federation's delegation were clarified and formalized by the signing of a MoU with respect to the Annual Appeal 2001/2002.

Initial discussions on the process for the development of a CAS were held between MRCS, ICRC and the Federation's delegation in late February. A presentation was then made to the participants of the regional Partnership Meeting in March, after which a provisional time frame for its production was established.

### ***Constraints***

The Federation's delegation recognizes the need to attract further support from the region to facilitate the CAS process.

***Objective 2:*** To work closely with the MRCS and the ICRC to ensure a well coordinated and integrated approach to assisting vulnerable people and communities.

### ***Activities & Achievements***

In-country Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement coordination was prioritized in 2001 and good progress in this area is evident. The close working relationship between the Federation, ICRC and the MRCS was demonstrated during the Partnership Meeting presentations in March 2001. Following the meeting, this relationship was consolidated through weekly meetings chaired by MRCS and attended by the ICRC cooperation delegate and the Federation's delegation.

A collaborative review of the Annual Appeal 2001/2002 will be conducted over the next quarter and will form the basis of a shared planning process for the Appeal 2002-2003. The main areas of joint focus will be disaster response, dissemination, health and organizational development.

### ***Constraints***

While there were no significant constraints, there remains a need for all components of the Movement to further clarify their respective roles in the sector of water and sanitation.

***Objective 3:*** To manage the Federation's country delegation in Myanmar.

### ***Activities & Achievements***

During January, work plans in line with the MRCS programming were drawn up. The funding status of the Appeal 2001/2002 was revisited in February, and the plans revised based on the funding realities. In line with the

concept of a 'serving leader' and supported by the process of action research, the Federation's delegation continues to facilitate rather than be operational in Myanmar.

### ***Constraints***

The relatively slow pace of organizational change in MRCS can at times be a challenge for the delegation as it seeks to facilitate rather than direct the process.

***Objective 4:*** To raise funds for MRCS operations.

### ***Activities & Achievements***

The Federation's Appeal 2001 continues to rely extensively on the support of the Japanese Red Cross and, to a lesser extent, of the Australian Red Cross. Following the Partnership Meeting, MRCS and the delegation recognized the need to raise the profile of programming in Myanmar by providing regular reports and exploiting opportunities to highlight the role of the society through publications.

The Partnership Meeting in Phnom Penh was used by MRCS and the Federation as a platform to highlight the potential and existing programmes of the Red Cross in Myanmar and to seek additional support from the region and partners for programme funding.

### ***Constraints***

The slow progress in organizational change within MRCS, the lack of credible programme documents, the perception that MRCS has an overly close working relationship with the government, and the sanctions placed on Myanmar by a number of states, continue to thwart fundraising efforts.

***Objective 5:*** To represent the Federation and the Movement in Myanmar.

### ***Activities & Achievements***

The Partnership Meeting in Phnom Penh was used by the MRCS and the Federation as an opportunity to highlight the society's current and future programmes.

The establishment of an information and dissemination division provided a structure for MRCS dissemination activities. The publication of the MRCS newsletter (written in Burmese) has been a positive step in raising the in-country profile of MRCS.

The June issue of *FOCUS*, the regional Federation newsletter, contains several features on the MRCS, which should contribute to raising the society's profile and reasserting its commitment to being a more participatory member society of the region.

### ***Constraints***

The prolonged internal reorganization process and lack of appropriate staff for the information and dissemination division resulted in fewer activities than planned.

## ***Federation Delegation:***

The Federation's community development delegate completed her mission in April. The delegation in Yangon is currently composed of a head of delegation and a health delegate, with the support of two Myanmar staff. Following the initial steps in its reorganization, the national society proposed that the delegation use some of the new office space in its headquarters. This, it is hoped, will facilitate a closer working relationship.

The action research initiative in Southeast Asia should lead to greater support for the society from the Federation's regional office as well as greater involvement by the other national societies in the region.

## ***Monitoring & Evaluation:***

The monthly Heads of Division meeting, introduced this year, promotes better monitoring of programme activities. It is hoped that the Federation's regional technical units will also participate in monitoring and evaluation. MRCS has undertaken to provide monthly financial reports which will contribute to quarterly financial reports in the Programme Update.

### ***Lessons Learned:***

The steady but very slow progress in organizational development makes it clear that results depend not only on changes in knowledge, understanding and attitudes but also on the political reality of the country. A strong leadership committed to change and ready to take ownership of the process, decisions and changes is a prerequisite. To achieve its goals, the MRCS leadership needs more commitment to change itself, clear organizational vision and strategy at all levels and a greater focus on capacity building within its management.

Further lessons this quarter include the recognition that the Federation must broaden its donor base if it wants to maintain secure, longer term partnerships. Moreover, the delegation and MRCS must provide more information to the international community and develop a clear and realistic strategy for programming in the coming years. The Appeal process 2002-2003 will provide a valuable opportunity to position MRCS and the delegation for sound longer term external support. Finally, MRCS needs to strengthen its relationships with national societies in the region; it is the role of the Federation to help broker such relationships.

### ***Financial Update (see attached annex):***

Because of the constraints faced in programme implementation, only 25 per cent of the planned expenditure has taken place. Although increased expenditure is likely during the next quarter, the budget will be reduced by the next Programme Update to reflect the realistic level of spending.

### ***Outstanding needs:***

Under-expenditure, a positive balance and outstanding pledges mean that there is adequate funding for 2001. However, given the development of the MRCS health strategy and programmes, further support for health may be sought later in the year. The heavy reliance on financial support from the Japanese and Australian Red Cross Societies should be offset by support from other partners, such as those who expressed an interest in Myanmar during the Partnership Meeting in Phnom Penh.

### ***Conclusion:***

In the first half of 2001, the Federation was able to assist the MRCS in laying the foundations for a significant reorganization and strengthening of its management. However, the challenge for MRCS, and specifically some divisions, in the coming quarter is to maintain the momentum of this positive start. The Federation's delegation also recognizes the need to improve its reporting and communication so that partners can keep abreast of this important change process.

### ***Plans for the next quarter:***

The work in the next quarter will include completing the flood relief operation, taking further steps to develop a comprehensive health strategy, and working on the Federation's Appeal 2002/2003. Hopefully, further progress can be made in the organizational change process within MRCS.

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<b>Myanmar</b>						ANNEX 1
<b>APPEAL No. 01.45/2001</b>		<b>PLEDGES RECEIVED</b>			26.07.2001	
DONOR	CATEGORY	QUANTITY	UNIT	VALUE CHF	DATE	COMMENT
<b>CASH</b>						
REQUESTED IN APPEAL CHF ----->				<b>943,078</b>		<b>TOTAL COVERAGE 39.4%</b>
CASH CARRIED FORWARD				187,563		
AUSTRALIAN - RC		5,945	USD	10,573	22.06.2001	MRCS HEALTH STRATEGIC PLANNING WORKSHOP
NEW ZEALAND - RC		50,000	NZD	36,870	28.06.2001	CBFA
JAPANESE - RC		1,093,787	JPY	14,967	09.02.01	SECOND HAND AMBULANCE
SUB/TOTAL RECEIVED IN CASH				249,973	CHF	26.5%
<b>KIND AND SERVICES (INCLUDING PERSONNEL)</b>						
DONOR	CATEGORY	QUANTITY	UNIT	VALUE CHF	DATE	COMMENT
Australia	Delegate(s)			42,382		
Japan	Delegate(s)			78,849		
SUB/TOTAL RECEIVED IN KIND/SERVICES				121,231	CHF	12.9%