

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

15 November 2001

This Programme Update is intended for reporting on Annual Appeals.

Appeal No. 01.45/2001

Appeal Target CHF 943,078

Programme Update No. 2 Period covered: 1 July 2001 – 30 October 2001

“At a Glance”

Appeal coverage: 45.1%

Related Appeals: 01.40/01 South East Asia regional programmes

Outstanding needs: CHF 517,727

Update: Although the quarter has been dominated by the flood relief operation, steady progress has been made in reviewing the statutes as well as putting in place steps to move forward with the health and disaster preparedness (DP) programmes. The overall development process does, however, continue to be slow and is constrained by the lack of adequate human resources. It is hoped that the next quarter will see progress in finalising the statutes, in formulating the DP policy and addressing the staffing issue. While funding for the 2001 Appeal is adequate, the delegation continues to be overly reliant on one strong partner; there is, therefore, a need to diversify the donor base in 2002.

Operational Developments

Political events

A direct dialogue between the Myanmar government and the National League for Democracy (NLD) is underway; details of the dialogue have not been made public. More political prisoners have been released since January this year, the war of words in official media stopped and the activities of NLD and opposition parties are becoming more visible. Eight of 40 NLD offices in eight townships of Yangon division were permitted to open in June, of which nine could put up their old party signboards. A regular communication between the NLD offices and their national leadership began for the first time in many years. The Myanmar-Thai border, the Tachilek-Maesai pass, reopened and trade worth an estimated US\$ 222,000 per day resumed after a 5-month armed conflict between the two countries. Secretary-1, Lt-Gen Khin Nyunt, made a 3-day visit to Thailand in September which resulted in a formal agreement to increase mutual trust and adopt a more co-operative policy.

The ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) was held in Hanoi in late July where the EU expressed hopeful signs for a political settlement in Myanmar as well as stating that it would review whether to resume humanitarian assistance to Myanmar. The EU's participation in the meeting was seen as a positive response by the EU to the current political changes in Myanmar. This move was followed by the EU's statement on 21 September, announcing that it would provide humanitarian assistance to Myanmar worth US\$ 2 million for health care and other projects. The funds will be channelled through ECHO to non-governmental organisations in Myanmar over the next 12 months.

During August, Mr. Paulo Sergio Pinheiro, Special Rapporteur of the UN, submitted an interim report on the human rights situation in Myanmar to the UN General Assembly in which positive aspects on the political transition in Myanmar were presented.

In the meantime, a high-level ILO team visited Myanmar in mid-September and carried out a 3-week assessment of forced labour and other aspects of human rights. This was the first time in recent years that a foreign mission was given freedom of movement in Myanmar. The findings will be submitted to a meeting of the ILO's governing body in Geneva in November.

Despite evidence of changing weather patterns in Myanmar (for example, according to the department of meteorology, for the first time in 100 years, up until September 2001, no storm occurred in the Bay of Bengal), the monsoon was generally seen as good, with normal and above average rainfall producing optimum conditions for paddy farmers. The rice harvest in 2001 is expected to yield 13 million tonnes compared with 12.5 million tonnes in 2000. Out of the 13 million tonnes ten million is estimated to be reserved for local consumption and for next year's seeds. Other crops are also expected to produce high yields in 2001; the production of beans and pulses is expected to reach 2.5 million tonnes this year, up from 2.2 million tonnes in 2000. Maize is expected to yield 530,000 tonnes representing a 47% increase from 2000.

Disaster Response

During the early hours of 2 June 2001, the Mongdaing Reservoir burst its banks leading to severe flooding in the townships of Meiktila, Wundwin and Ma Hlaing, 67 km south of Mandalay, 560 km north of the capital Yangon. The floods affected approximately half the total local population (see Federation *Information Bulletin*).

Activities & Achievements

Myanmar Red Cross Society (MRCS) volunteers helped rescue 800 people from the floodwaters working together with local police and fire departments. The Society immediately provided 2,100 items of clothing, 2,000 cakes of soap and some medical supplies including syringes and gloves from the central stock in Yangon as well as some fresh water. Since a number of people sustained injuries during the floods, MRCS volunteers administered first aid. Red Cross volunteers also assisted with the distribution of food provided by the government, private donors and AMDA (Association of Medical Doctors of Asia).

MRCS requested the immediate support of the International Federation to assist nearly 4,000 homeless people in three townships. MRCS and the Federation identified 750 highly vulnerable families affected by the flooding in Wundwin, Meiktila and Ma Hlaing townships, and decided to provide emergency relief supplies in the form of food commodities, food containers, blankets, plastic sheeting for shelter, protective clothing, water containers and water purification tablets.

In response to the MRCS request, the Secretariat published an Information Bulletin and released 50,000 CHF from disaster relief emergency fund (DREF) to support the immediate relief operation. Further contributions were received including US\$65,000 from Oxfam Australia through Australian Red Cross.

The MRCS relief operation continued into July focusing on the provision of assistance to the most vulnerable families in nine villages in Meiktila, ten villages in Wundwin and one village in Ma Hlaing townships. Following routine programme monitoring, a second rehabilitation phase began in August in

two villages in Wundwin, one village in Ma Hlaing and two villages in Meiktila townships. This involved the distribution of additional food and clothing, the provision of a safe drinking water system, sanitation materials and the repair of a small wooden bridge.

An evaluation workshop for the flood operation will be held in November to review the relief operation and share experiences and lessons learnt.

Disaster Preparedness

During this reporting period the disaster preparedness/disaster response (DP/DR) division has been busy with the flood relief operation. The newly established DP/DR division has gained valuable experience and is now more familiar with Federation procedures and disaster policy. The DP/DR division also worked on developing the MRCS DP policy, the establishment of an emergency disaster response team and on CBDP activities in selected geographic areas.

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 relationship to other concerned organisations and government departments.

Activities & Achievements

On the basis of the World Disasters Report 2001 (WDR 2001) and on the 'work in progress' to develop an MRCS disaster preparedness policy, MRCS and the Federation organised a WDR 2001 launch and disaster seminar on 25 September. The Federation supported MRCS presentations which complimented presentations made by government departments such as the Department of Relief and Resettlement, the Department of Irrigation, the Department of Fire and the Department of Meteorology and Hydrology. This was followed by a panel discussion with the participation of a number of NGOs.

The Federation regional disaster response officer visited MRCS from 11-12 October to discuss the DP policy and other disaster management issues. A further workshop to finalise the policy will take place in December 2001 in Myanmar.

The head of DP/DR division attended a first regional disaster management cooperation meeting held in Malaka on 9-12 of August and obtained some guidance as to how to develop the MRCS DP policy.

Constraints

Due to the flood operation, the progress to develop the DP policy was slow. However, the regional support is expected to accelerate the process.

Objective 2

To increase the capacity of people to cope with the effects of disaster through the development of a CBDP strategy and the establishment of a well-trained Red Cross volunteer network.

Activities & Achievements

Participatory Learning and Action (PLA) workshops are now planned for two villages in the Ayeyarwady division.

Constraints

CBDP Officers at the township level have not yet been identified.

Objective 3

To establish Emergency Disaster Response Team (EDRT) at NHQ and in selected CBDP pilot areas.

Activities & Achievements

No activities during this quarter.

Constraints

There are 2 reasons for the delay: the flood relief operation and as well as limited management follow up and support within MRCS. This is currently being addressed.

Objective 4

To improve communication and co-ordination mechanisms between national headquarters (NHQ) and the grassroots level.

Activities & Achievements

Activities aimed at improving communication and co-ordination mechanisms have not commenced. However, the flood relief operation further highlighted the need.

Constraints

The constraints are largely due to the time spent on the flood relief operation and to the lack of committed follow up by the respective MRCS managers.

Objective 5

To improve the functioning of the National Society's 18 warehouses and ensure their replenishment with relief goods/materials.

Activities & Achievements

Warehouse related activities have not yet commenced. However, a representative of the DP/DR division will visit and assess six warehouses in Yangon, Mandalay, Myikyina, Sittway, Kayin and Ayeyarwady States/Divisions in November for replenishment of relief goods.

Constraints

The constraints are largely due to the time spent on the flood relief operation and to the lack of committed follow up by the respective MRCS managers.

Humanitarian Values

Since the Information and Dissemination Division has not yet been fully established (three critical posts remain vacant) the capacity of the Division remains limited.

Objective 1

To increase the communications capacity of MRCS NHQ by restructuring its information and dissemination division.

Activities & Achievements

Due to the delay of staffing, there were not any activities related to increasing capacity building of the division during this period. The Federation office will try to solve the issue by the end of this quarter in cooperation with ICRC; this will include further technical support through a visit from the Federation regional office in Bangkok.

Constraints

The lack of appropriate human resources and inadequate salary scale in MRCS.

Objective 2

To publish and issue a MRCS pamphlet, a newsletter and a magazine (free of charge for the first 6 months after which they will be sold to the communities)

Activities & Achievements

A bimonthly newsletter in Myanmar has been published and distributed to branches regularly since May. The newsletter is welcomed by as many as 325 Red Cross branches across the country. However, a MRCS pamphlet and a magazine have not yet been published.

Constraints

The lack of human resources in the information & dissemination division.

Objective 3

To create public awareness of the danger of HIV/AIDS, malaria, TB and diarrhoea.

Activities & Achievements

The health information pamphlets and signboards have not yet been produced.

Constraints

The lack of human resources in the information & dissemination division.

Objective 4

To develop the leadership quality and capacity in MRCS.

Activities & Achievements

The leadership training course has not been implemented. However, it will be held either in November or December targeting the leaders of RC volunteers across the country.

Constraints

Lack of leadership/initiative by the head of division, who has been busy with his government-assigned job.

Health and Care

The executive committee of MRCS is committed to building a health profile throughout the country yet many challenges remain: MRCS has a lack of capacity as governance and management are not separated, the health division is responsible for ambitious donor-lead projects (none of which are Federation supported) and health matters are handled by a number of Divisions. Meanwhile, MRCS has completed the first draft of its five year strategic health plan and have also agreed to a future staffing structure to support implementation of the plan.

Objective 1

To strengthen the capacity for MRCS to design, develop and evaluate effective community health promotion materials appropriate for specific target communities.

Activities & Achievements

Work has commenced on a Red Cross HIV/AIDS information brochure to be disseminated to all Red Cross branches. The aim of the brochure is to provide information to branches and volunteers on Red Cross principles, basic facts on HIV/AIDS and options for volunteers caring for positive people in the community. A draft is almost complete and it is anticipated the comic strip preparation component, featuring the work of Red Cross volunteers, will take place in November. MRCS volunteers actively participated in the Federation's regional comic strip competition.

MRCS is in the process of nominating 2 PLWHA (People Living with HIV/AIDS), 1 Red Cross volunteer and 1 Red Cross staff member to attend the Home and Community Care Conference in Chiang Mai in December this year. Should this be approved, this will be the first time any organisation in Myanmar has had people living with HIV/AIDS (PLWHA) attend an international HIV conference.

Constraints

Lack of management staff and systems and technical staff are the major constraints hampering concrete and sustainable development in health.

Objective 2

To improve the health status of targeted communities through their participation in identifying and prioritising their health information and education needs.

Activities & Achievements

The first draft of the MRCS strategic health plan is now complete following a twelve-month internal consultative process lead by the Federation health delegate. MRCS plan to consolidate its work in HIV/AIDS, reproductive health, blood donor recruitment, first aid and health education over the next five years.

The initial strategy for each section was developed by a small working group (membership varied depending on the technical area under consideration). This was then considered by the large working committee (including all members of the Executive Committee) and opportunities for their consideration and input were encouraged. A small group comprising the President, Dr Than Swe, Dr Tun Sein, Daw Myo, U Hla Myint (senior staff) reviewed the draft.

The health and training divisions participated in the Federation's appeal process which was designed to support their strategic health plan.

MRCS has agreed to a future staffing structure for the health division that separates governance from management by appointing a head of the health division. These discussions formed part of the strategic health planning and appeal process. This will be the first division within MRCS that plans to appoint a head of division and be supported by two senior desk officers with technical expertise. Provision for such staff has been made in the Appeal 2002 and MRCS recognises that they must contribute to staff salaries in the short to medium term. A workshop on transitional staffing arrangement and roles and responsibilities will be held in November, prior to advertising the positions.

MRCS received invitations to attend the Blood Donor Advisory Group meeting and Health in Emergencies workshop during December in Bangkok. Ms Daw Myo, a senior staff member currently working in the Health Division will attend the blood donor recruitment workshop.

Constraints

Overall the process has been hampered by a lack of human resources as well as the technical and management capacity within MRCS. Donor funded projects (UNICEF, UNHCR, FPIA) receive preferential treatment as MRCS has full management and contractual obligations for these projects. MRCS lacks any 'core' staff in the health division dedicated to MRCS health work so this greatly impacts on the ability to co-ordinate and integrate existing and future activities.

First Aid & CBFA Project

Objective 1

To strengthen the capacity of NHQs' Training Division through completion of staffing, within the first two months of the programme.

Activities & Achievements

The staffing is almost complete though one instructor is still to be appointed.

Constraints

The slow progress in recruitment has slowed the process.

Objective 2

To develop a training centre with complete training materials within the first three months of the programme.

Activities & Achievements

Necessary materials have already been purchased and arranged.

Constraints

None.

Objective 3

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

Activities & Achievements

During the process of formulating the MRCS strategic health plan, the first aid policy (including CBFA) was formulated. Though there was much discussion, a CBFA strategy has not yet been finalised.

Constraints

The lack of real community representation at the grassroots level is a key constraint in developing community based approaches. This however is being addressed and the current RC volunteer network is seen as an appropriate entry point.

Objective 4

To update the training of first aid and CBFA training instructors and Red Cross volunteers.

Activities & Achievements

During this period, four First Aid Training of Trainers (ToT) 2 week courses were conducted by the training division. The detail is as follows:

First Aid ToT Course					
Time	Place	Target areas	No. Participants		No. of failure
			Male	Female	
June	Yangon	RC Yangon Division	30	12	8
July	Yangon	Lower Myanmar: Kayah, Kayin, Bago(E&W), Mon, Taninthari, and Rakhine	25	5	0
September	Mandalay	Upper Myanmar: Kachin, Mandalay, Magway, Sagain and Chin	31	14	5
October	Lashio	Shan East, West and South	30	8	0

A total of 116 male and 39 female RC volunteer instructors passed the course but 13 Red Cross (RC) volunteers were unsuccessful. Additional training was provided for those who failed.

The content of the training course was discussed in the form of an evaluation questionnaire. The training division will look closely at the results of the evaluation and improve the content of the course work and facilitation methodology.

Constraints

Due to the delay in the establishment of the training division, programme implementation has been behind schedule. The training division is now preparing 4 CBFA training courses in Kayah and Kayin

States, and Bago East and West Divisions. The training should be completed in November and December.

Objective 5

To develop a first aid curriculum for primary school Red Cross groups and modify teaching materials.

Activities & Achievements

A textbook has been drafted for primary school Red Cross groups. The main contents are as follows: a portrait of Henry Dunant, the RC emblem, a history of school RC, RC poems, MRCS, human body, injuries, prevention of diseases and first aid. 6,735 primary school children have attended the primary school RC course since January this year. The courses were conducted in 19 townships across five states/divisions such as Yangon, Shan South, Rakhine, Magway and Ayeyarwady. Primary school teachers as well as children welcome the activities.

Constraints

None.

Objective 6

To develop a monitoring system in the training division.

Activities & Achievements

Due a lack of time this has not been implemented.

Constraints

Time constraints.

Institutional and Resource Development

MRCS continues to show a commitment to the organisational development (OD) process. However, the existing management structure (ambiguity regarding responsibilities) and a weak human resource and financial base has slowed the progress. The human resource issues are only slowly being addressed. In the Federation Appeal 2002-2003, the OD task force identified three new areas to be addressed: an income generation project, a year study of branch development and a youth programme.

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 NHQs and the states/divisions branches.

Activities & Achievements

The MRCS OD task force, ICRC and the country delegation commenced a review of the statutes (last revised in 1979). The OD task force comprised of Daw Khin Than Tin, Hon. treasurer, Col. Aung Tan, Executive Director and Dr. Tun Sen, EC member, the cooperation delegate of ICRC and the Federation Head of Delegation. Using the *Guidelines on National Society Statutes* and the *Cambodian Red Cross Statutes* (as an example), the OD task force has made some progress with the review. The atmosphere of the process is frank and candid among the participants who share a common aim to draft new MRCS statutes by end of 2001.

In parallel to this process, MRCS has agreed to a future staffing structure for the health division that separates governance from management by appointing a head of health division. Provision for such staff has been made in the Appeal 2002 and MRCS recognises that they must contribute to staff salaries in the short to medium term.

Constraints

None.

Objective 2

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

Activities & Achievements

During this period, not everything has progressed well, particularly with regards to staffing of the information & dissemination division. However, there were two positive developments: ICRC has expressed an interest in assisting with salary support for the staff of information & dissemination division and MRCS have agreed to a future staffing structure for the health division.

English and computer training courses have commenced in September, targeting a small number of existing staff that are expected to join the information & dissemination division or the international relations division.

Constraints

A lack of qualified and experienced manpower at MRCS headquarters as well as the related issue of unrealistic salary scales.

Objective 3

To develop and implement a clear and well-documented policy on budgeting and accounting procedures.

Activities & Achievements

The MoU clarifying the roles and responsibilities of MRCS and the Federation delegation established the context and support for the development of clear policy and procedures concerning budgeting and accounting. However, there was some confusion and about the financial procedures between MRCS divisions and the Federation delegation during the first couple of months. It has proved to be a good learning process for all concerned.

A senior finance officer will soon be appointed by MRCS, after some delay. This appointment will help financial procedures run more smoothly and effectively than before. Monthly cash request from divisions should be more accurate and time bound.

Constraints

The delay in recruitment of a finance officer has delayed the process.

Co-ordination and Management**Objective 1**

To co-ordinate the development and relief assistance provided to MRCS and lead the process of developing a country assistance strategy (CAS) with MRCS.

Activities & Achievements

The country delegation has been working with MRCS (DP/DR division) for the flood relief operation in Meiktila, Wundwin and Ma Hlaing townships for the last five months.

The health strategy plan (5-year plan) has almost been completed. It should make a significant contribution to the CAS process as well as other programme areas.

Co-ordination between Myanmar, Bangkok and KL to support the Federation delegates has been maintained. Both the flood operation and annual Appeal process (2003-2003) were a good learning process for team work in the region.

Constraints

There were no major constraints.

Objective 2

To work closely with MRCS and ICRC to ensure a well co-ordinated and integrated approach to assisting vulnerable people and communities.

Activities & Achievements

A weekly Statutes meeting has enhanced the link between MRCS, ICRC and the Federation. The ICRC and the Federation delegation have worked closely on the appeal process, exchanging opinions, considering drafts and revising them together. Particular areas of joint concern are the first aid programme, conflict preparedness and capacity building. The cooperation delegate of ICRC frequently attends first aid training sessions as well as and DP/DR meetings.

Constraints

Further information on the ICRC supported health programmes would be useful to the process.

Objective 3

To manage the Federation country delegation in Myanmar.

Activities & Achievements

There is a weekly meeting in the country delegation to discuss programme-related issues including financial transactions, regional/Geneva management information, weekly work schedule and the travel and living situation (including security). The working atmosphere has considerably improved.

Constraints

None.

Objective 4

To raise funds for the MRCS operation.

Activities & Achievements

There have been some positive signs of donor interest in Myanmar. The British Red Cross, Norwegian Red Cross and Swiss Red Cross have all expressed some interest. The Australian Red Cross obtained relief funds from Oxfam Australia. The British Government (DFID) humanitarian department visited Myanmar and ECHO made further funding available to Myanmar.

Constraints

There were no major constraints though future fund raising could be complimented by taking further steps to develop MRCS capacity in the area of resource development.

Objective 5

To represent the Federation and Red Cross/Red Crescent Movement in Myanmar.

Activities & Achievements

The Federation country delegation organised a launching of the World Disaster Report 2001 and DP seminar jointly with MRCS. All the participants, including international organisations and government officers, welcomed the report. The health delegate and HoD attended UN Agency sponsored conferences as well as a human rights meeting. The country delegation is a regular member of the International Non-Governmental Organisation (INGO) meeting.

Constraints

There are none.

Federation Delegation

The country delegation consists of Yutaka Oiwa, HoD based in Yangon, Margarete Roberts, health delegate, based in Yangon and two local staff, Ma Mandar finance officer and Ma Sandy administration officer.

Monitoring & Evaluation

The MRCS monthly head of division meetings, facilitated by the HoD, are tasked to monitor programme implementation. The Federation regional technical units continue to make regular visits to support the process. During this period, the country delegation welcomed a regional disaster response officer and an OD review team. There were also effective support from the regional office during the flood relief operation.

MRCS provides monthly financial reports, which are monitored in-country by the delegation. These form the basis of quarterly financial reports to donors from the country delegation (in consultation with the regional finance unit).

Lessons Learned

Though progress has been slow in some areas, the most successful strategies to support development have been where considerable time is taken to build consensus. Equally approaches that involve the provision of sound practical advice which is supported by hands-on coaching, has proved to be more successful in bringing about learning and change. As mentioned above, MRCS learnt a number of important lessons from the flood relief operation.

Financial Update (see attached annex)

During 2001 funding has been received from the Japanese, Australian and New Zealand Red Cross Societies. Given the outstanding pledges there are adequate funds to cover planned activities in 2002.

Plans for the next quarter

The following are key areas to be addressed during the next quarter:

- drafting a DP/DR Policy;
- review and drafting the MRCS Statutes;
- staffing issues and working procedure of the health division and information & dissemination division.

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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 further information concerning Federation operations in this or other countries, please access the Federation website at <http://www.ifrc.org>.

Peter Rees-Gildea
Head a.i.
Relationship Management Department

Hiroshi Higashiura
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Myanmar						ANNEX 1
APPEAL No. 01.45/2001		PLEDGES RECEIVED			14.11.2001	
DONOR	CATEGORY	QUANTITY	UNIT	VALUE CHF	DATE	COMMENT
CASH						
REQUESTED IN APPEAL CHF ----->				943'078		TOTAL COVERAGE 45.1%
CASH CARRIED FORWARD				187563		
AUSTRALIAN - RC		5'945	USD	10'573	22.06.2001	MRC'S HEALTH STRATEGIC PLANNING WORKSHOP
AUSTRALIAN - RC		20'000	AUD	17950	24.08.2001	HEALTH
AUSTRALIAN - GOVT		9'927	USD	16'121	02.11.2001	HEALTH PROGRAMME HIV/AIDS BROCHURE
AUSTRALIAN - GOVT		2'247	USD	3649	02.11.2001	HEALTH PROGRAMME, CONFERENCE ATTENDANCE FOR HEALTH DELEGATE
NEW ZEALAND - RC		50'000	NZD	36870	28.06.2001	CBFA
JAPANESE - RC		1'093'787	JPY	14'967	09.02.01	SECOND HAND AMBULANCE
SUB/TOTAL RECEIVED IN CASH				287'693	CHF	30.5%
KIND AND SERVICES (INCLUDING PERSONNEL)						
DONOR	CATEGORY	QUANTITY	UNIT	VALUE CHF	DATE	COMMENT
Australia	Delegate(s)			58'808		
Japan	Delegate(s)			78'850		
SUB/TOTAL RECEIVED IN KIND/SERVICES				137'658	CHF	14.6%