

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

LEBANON

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The Federation's mission is to improve the lives of vulnerable people by mobilizing the power of humanity. It is the world's largest humanitarian organization and its millions of volunteers are active in over 181 countries.

For more information: <http://www.ifrc.org>

In Brief

Appeal No. 01.85/2004;

Appeal target: CHF 555,000 (USD 444,000 or EUR 366,000);

Programme Update no. 2,

Period covered: July-November 2004;

Appeal coverage: 83.9%;

Outstanding needs: CHF 89,453 (USD 77,000 or EUR 59,000).

[<click here for live contributions list>](#)

For 2005 Annual Appeals Lebanon and Middle East region: [<click here>](#)

For further information specifically related to this operation please contact:

- *Lebanese Red Cross, Gen Selim Layoun, President, e-mail redcross@dm.net.lb, phone: +961 137 2802, fax +961 137 8207;*
- *Beirut Delegation, Knut Kaspersen, e-mail ifrc1b03@ifrc.org, phone: +961 1365 374, fax +961365046*
- *Secretariat, Geneva, Evgeni Parfenov email evgeni.parfenov@ifrc.org, phone: +41 (0) 22 730 43 25, fax + 41 (0) 22 733 0395*

This Programme Update reflects activities to be implemented over a one-year period. All International Federation assistance seeks to adhere to the [Code of Conduct](#) and is committed to the [Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Disaster Response](#) in delivering assistance to the most vulnerable. For support to or for further information concerning Federation programmes or operations in this or other countries, or for a full description of the national society profile, please access the Federation's website at <http://www.ifrc.org>

Operational developments

President Emile Lahoud's six-year term was extended by the Parliament on 3 September for another three years. The move required a constitutional amendment, opposed by the parliamentary opposition and several government ministers. The extension came at the request of Lebanon's neighbour, Syria, which maintains 14,000 troops in Lebanon. The UN Security Council unanimously adopted Resolution 1559 on 3 September, calling for restoration of Lebanese sovereignty and the dismantling of all militias and foreign troops in the country. Four government ministers resigned in protest over the constitutional amendment and several opposition groups declared their support of resolution 1559. On 1 October, former Economy Minister Marwan Hamade, who resigned to protest the amendment, survived an assassination attempt while leaving his house in the central area of Beirut. Mr. Hamade is a member of the Progressive Socialist Party led by Walid Jumblatt. Mr. Jumblatt has also strongly criticised the

decision to extend the term of President Lahoud. An investigation into the assassination attempt has proved inconclusive.

Following the term extension of President Lahoud and the resignation of four ministers, Prime Minister Rafik al Hariri handed in his government's resignation on 20 October. A new government was sworn in on 27 October and will serve until new parliamentary elections are held in May 2005. The government is led by Omar Karami, a veteran Lebanese politician. The vice-president of the Lebanese Red Cross is the Minister of Education in the new government.

On 19 November, thousands of students demonstrated in support of resolution 1559 and against Syrian presence in Lebanon. Counter-demonstrations were held 30 November to support the new government. Those opposed to the constitutional amendment have organised themselves in preparations for the parliamentary elections and will probably enter electoral agreements to offer joint lists.

The new government is not expected to propose major new legislation nor push ahead for privatisation of state controlled companies as called for by Lebanon's donors until the next elections. Lebanon's debt is still near USD 33 billion, or 189% of GDP, making it the second most indebted country in the world measured per capita.

Health and care

Overall Goal: Provide improved community based health services by strengthening preventive health and care programmes and capacities with a focus on disease prevention and health promotion

Programme Objective:

Objective 1:

Based on an assessment of patient satisfaction, clinical outcomes and administrative & management systems of the LRCS health services in terms of quality, outreach, structure and training of staff and volunteers, LRCS reshaped its health and care programme aligning it to the development plan, the actual needs of the vulnerable segments of the population and plans and activities of the authorities and international organisations.

Expected results:

- The quality of clinical and user services has improved
- The activities have been prioritised and carried out on the basis of assessed needs among the most vulnerable population
- Improved coordination and cooperation with governmental and non-governmental health service providers has been achieved in line with LRCS' goals

Achievements:

A comprehensive assessment of the health services provided by the Lebanese Red Cross was conducted between 23 July and 21 August 2004. A survey team from the Lebanese consultancy company AIM (Allied Integrated Management) mapped the LRCS clinics against utilisation indicators and health seeking behaviour of clients. The assessment identified priority health services gaps in terms of accessibility, availability and affordability as well as community and user perceptions of the quality of LRCS services.

The survey team also reviewed and mapped other health services providers in areas which LRCS operates. The assessment was conducted in close cooperation and coordination with the Ministry of Health. A section on LRCS management and budget routines was also included in the final report. Although the assessment concluded that most clients had great respect for and valued the LRCS health services, criticism raised opportunities for improvement. The assessment further suggests that the current management model of the LRCS is complex and not conducive to provide the necessary planning, innovation, control and change needed to maximise the efforts of the organisation within its health services sector.

A suggestion to review the existing management model of the LRCS, including the medical-social department, restructure the organisation and implement stricter budget control was included in the final recommendations of the assessment.

A meeting between the Federation, LRCS, Ministry of Health and AIM is scheduled for 15 February 2005 to start the work of detailing a Plan of Action to implement the recommendations and conclusions of the assessment.

Impact:

- The health services assessment will assist the LRCS implement necessary changes to its health services provision, thus ensuring improved quality of its services. The assessment also calls for greater emphasis on public health issues and a reduction of clinical care which is in line with the Federation's Strategy 2010.

Constraints:

- A recent change in the government, with a new Minister of Health, has delayed the work of detailing a Plan of Action for the LRCS.

Objective 2:

Primary health care and social services throughout the country are consolidated and expanded with a shift in emphasis from curative intervention to community based health education and prevention involving increased number of youth volunteers into health and social services.

Expected results:

- New community based preventive health initiatives have been launched in the health centres
- An HIV/AIDS coordination group has been established at national level
- HIV/AIDS trainers were educated for raising awareness in the communities
- Integrated awareness campaigns for sexually transmitted diseases (STI), HIV/AIDS and other infectious diseases have been organized
- Successful mobilisation, training and retention of volunteers to support health awareness programmes have been addressed.

Achievements

The community based health initiatives will be launched in the health centres as soon as the Plan of Action, following the health assessment, is completed. It is expected that activities will be launched early 2005. The newly established women's clinic in Beirut aimed at screening women with a low income for osteoporosis and breast cancer has proved successful and will be self-sustainable in 2005. These services are not part of the national health system, nor covered by insurance. The low fees charged by the LRCS undercuts all other alternatives.

The HIV/AIDS activities in the LRCS is still divided between three departments; education, medical-social and youth. They are working in close collaboration with the NAP (National AIDS Programme) of the Ministry of Health in Lebanon.

The workshop for 35 nurses from the Lebanese Red Cross with invited participants from the Palestine Red Crescent held 11-14 March 2004 was planned to be repeated in December but has been postponed to early January 2005. The workshop is focusing on counselling techniques for HIV/AIDS victims and their families as well as general prevention work through dissemination. The workshop was prepared in collaboration with the NAP/Ministry of Health. Main topics addressed during the trainings are:

- Psychological support
- Reintegration of HIV/AIDS positive patients into society
- Access to medical treatment in Lebanon
- Social assistance and rights for families
- Dissemination

The youth volunteers continued their STD and HIV/AIDS peer education programme throughout Lebanon. Workshops were held in 11 youth centres with 25 participants each. The workshop lasted three days and covered topics such as scientific information, risk groups, stigma, discrimination, condom use and life skills (e.g. self-esteem, decision making, peer pressure). A Training of Trainers (ToT) workshop with 23 participants was also organised to increase the overall training capacity of the youth department. A major campaign was also launched

at the American University of Beirut (AUB) with an exhibition, a 'Run for AIDS' and a theatre play; "Portraits of a Life".

Impact

- Access to screening for osteoporosis and breast cancer for low income women in Beirut, capacity for up to 2,000 patients a year, whilst maintaining financial sustainability for the LRCS.
- Improvement in life quality for 800-1000 HIV/AIDS patients and their families through access to counselling and anti-stigma activities.
- Continued close cooperation between the Lebanese Red Cross and the government's National AIDS Programme (NAP).
- Extensive training on STD and HIV/AIDS among high school and university students throughout Lebanon ensured through 275 new peer educators.
- The number of STD and HIV/AIDS infected people remains stable in Lebanon while an increase is recorded in neighbouring Syria and throughout the region.

Constraints

- Delay in government funds will negatively impact on services provided
- Lack of LRCS coordinating mechanisms for HIV/AIDS response, still a departmental prerogative
- Heavy dependency on government funds

Disaster management

Overall Goal:

The LRCS is capable of providing effective disaster response and preparedness through a functional internal and external cooperation and well established coordination mechanisms.

Programme Objective:

Disaster management is reinforced through effective disaster response, preparedness and mitigation aimed at preventing and alleviating the suffering of vulnerable communities.

Expected results:

- A thorough review of the current ambulance services has been launched resulting in improved management practices and effectiveness – eventually phasing out Federation support
- The number of trained first aid volunteers gradually increased through continued recruitment and training in 2004
- New ambulances have been procured with Federation support as part of an ongoing fleet upgrade. The Federation funds will have a 30% match from selected branches
- A disaster management unit has been established by mid 2004
- Upgraded logistical services and systems have been introduced
- A National Intervention Team has been established, its members trained and coordinated by the disaster management unit with activation mechanisms in place allowing the team to respond quickly
- The scope and need for a Vulnerability and Capacity Assessment has been defined by mid 2004 and, pending agreement with the governance, the VCA has been launched by the end of 2004
- An Emergency Plan setting out areas requiring Federation assistance has been completed

Achievements:

The review of the LRCS ambulance services is delayed until early 2005. The ToR will be presented to potential external partners in January 2005. The ambulance services continue to be the most visible activity of the LRCS, yet remain a financial burden on the society. A fund established by former Norwegian UN peace keepers posted in South Lebanon from 1978-1998 has established a link with the Lebanese Red Cross with the aim to donate 30 ambulances decommissioned by the Norwegian Army for use in South Lebanon. A team from the fund toured Lebanon in early October 2004 and will now follow up with the Norwegian Armed Forces, Norwegian government and the Norwegian Red Cross to ensure a smooth implementation of the project.

A total of 1759 people passed the Lebanese Red Cross First Aid course June to November. This is an increase compared with 2003, and the predicted target of a 10% increase year-on-year from 2003 to 2004 will be exceeded. The Federation handed over one new ambulance at the end of the year. The ambulance went into service in the Achrafiye district of Beirut. The local Achrafiye Red Cross committee (i.e. branch) contributed 30% of the total cost. Further ambulance procurements will be halted until the Norwegian UNIFIL memorial fund has finalised their negotiations for a donation of 30 decommissioned ambulances from the Norwegian Army and the assessment of the ambulance services is completed.

The chairman of the LRCS disaster management committee was scheduled to take part in a workshop for National Intervention Teams (NIT) held in Syria during December 2004. The participation will open up for a similar training in Lebanon, albeit altered to fit the Lebanese context. A possibility of bilateral cooperation with societies specialising in snow and mountain rescue is being considered.

A VCA committee is established with representatives from relevant LRCS departments. The VCA committee is expected to conduct training January-March 2005, with the actual assessment completed by June. The chairman of the VCA committee took part in the VCA ToT held in Alicante, Spain, last July.

Impact:

- More than 70,000 missions by the first aid/ambulance services, an increase compared with the same period in 2003
- Exceeded the target of first aid trained people
- VCA committee established, plan for training assessment staff agreed and a Plan of Action decided

Constraints:

- Delay in government funds will negatively impact on services provided
- Ageing ambulance park with few options for ambulance renewal outside Federation assistance
- High cost of ambulances (VW) due to hike in Euro currency exchange rates, new ambulances are now cheaper Mercedes models leading to increased maintenance costs

Organisational development

Overall Goal:

To support structural and operational changes to the LRCS which will form a platform for improved effectiveness of its governance resulting ultimately in improved service delivery and advocacy capacity.

Programme Objective:

The LRCS' service delivery is increased and improved through a strengthening of its foundation and capacity.

Expected results:

- The LRCS has been providing quality services based on a comprehensive development plan encompassing short, medium and long term priorities
- The national society's institutional performance has considerably improved with its statutes amended to ensure adequate participation of the constituencies
- A well functioning governance has been revitalised through an election process that attracts qualified and committed members of the leadership at the headquarters and in the branches
- The quality of human resources has improved based on effective recruitment procedures, training and development schemes for volunteers and staff
- The local branches with decentralised management responsibilities in their respective communities have better capacity to provide services
- A strategic work plan has been launched following a broad consultation process which was the basis of a development and resource mobilisation strategy

Achievements:

Activities related to the development plan and governance training is further delayed due to the ongoing election process. The extraordinary general assembly planned at the end of 2003 has yet to be convened, but LRCS expects

that the assembly will be held during February 2005. All practical arrangements have been completed to hold the assembly. Two central committee meetings on 24 November and 9 December approved the final proposed changes to the statutes opening up for a revised representational system (see Programme Update 1).

Discussions are continuously held between the LRCS (both governance and management) and the Federation Representative. The election process, including review and amendments to the statutes, remains a priority for the LRCS. Following the election process, focus will be on training the new governance. Request for leadership training of the management and a systematic approach to staff development are also key focus areas.

Volunteer recruitment is not meeting expected targets, although new introductory courses are expected to have an effect over the coming months.

Impact:

- Agreement on process to formulate a development plan
- Election process initiated with clear agreement on representation for all constituencies
- Proposed amendments to the statutes received endorsements from the Central Committee
- Study on volunteerism will give impetus to formulate a concrete strategy for improved recruitment, training, retention and management of volunteers in the Lebanese Red Cross

Constraints:

- Difficulties getting agreement on development plan due to uncertainty over economic situation
- No centralised planning function in the Lebanese Red Cross
- Severe funding shortage from government contracts with less funding for administration overhead costs
- No resource development plan or centralised function responsible for fundraising