

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

VIETNAM

17 June 2005

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: www.ifrc.org

In Brief

Appeal No. 05AA056; Programme Update no. 1, Period covered: 01 January to 31 March, 2005; Appeal coverage: 67.4%; Outstanding needs: CHF 284,921 (USD 240,236 or EUR 185,314). A significant pledge from the Japanese Red Cross is yet to be consolidated, which will satisfactorily cover the appeal.

[Click here to go directly to the attached Contributions List \(also available on the website\).](#)

Appeal target: CHF 874,667 (USD 728,586 or EUR 571,865).

Related Emergency or Annual Appeals: Southeast Asia regional appeal 05AA057

Programme summary:

The Viet Nam Red Cross (VNRC), supported by the Federation, continues to make progress in both the disaster management and organizational development programmes. Financial management in the headquarters and provinces has evidently improved. In addition, more Red Cross staff and vulnerable communities have better understanding and are becoming more proactive in disaster response and preparedness. VNRC will share its successful experience in mangrove plantation to assist the Indonesian Red Cross (Palang Merah Indonesia/PMI) in launching a similar project in tsunami-affected areas.

With continuous contributions, notably from the Japanese Red Cross and DFID¹, the plan and operational budget of this appeal are being revised to reinforce disaster management and organizational development activities. A total support of CHF 475,290 (USD 400,750) from the Japanese Red Cross is being consolidated for the mangrove project this year. With a new contribution from the New Zealand Red Cross, this appeal is expected to be fully covered.



The mangrove-planting project of the VNRC has benefited the livelihoods of 7,750 families in disaster-prone communities.

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¹ British government's Department for International Development

This Programme Update reflects activities to be implemented over a one-year period. This forms part of, and is based on, longer-term, multi-year planning. 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

Vietnam is suffering the worst drought of a 100-year cycle in Ninh Thuan, Binh Thuan, Central Highlands and Mekong areas. The dry spell, worse than that in 1998, started in October-November 2004. This is believed to be caused not only by global climate change but also unsustainable economic development in central coastal and highland provinces, some Mekong and northern provinces. According to the national centre for hydro-meteorology, there has been no rain for over five months. The current water level in northern plain provinces is 20 to 40 per cent lower than normal. In coming months, the north will also face a severe drought should there be no rain. The situation is becoming severe in Ninh Thuan, Binh Thuan, Dac Nong, Dac Lac and Gia Lai. According to the ministry of agriculture and rural development for Vietnam, over one million people are lacking clean water and over 500,000 will go hungry in April and May 2005. Currently, 180,000 people (about 36 per cent of the ministry's estimates) are facing food shortage while 47,000 others do not have enough water. Local people are forced to purchase clean water at very high prices or seek water from drills, river and stream. The pervasive drought has caused close to USD 100 million in economic losses, according to the ministry.

The Vietnam government distributed 6,000 tonnes of rice last December to drought- and flood-affected people and released VND 100 billion (CHF 77 million) to support drought-affected people with a food provision of 15,000 tonnes of rice and VND 98 billion (CHF 75 million) for improving irrigation systems. Communities and agencies in the country including the VNRC are helping people to find underground water from dried dams and rivers. A local non-governmental organization (NGO) has conducted an assessment and shared the information with others. Other NGOs also provided additional foods for the worst affected. Assistance is deemed sufficient and thus the government has not requested for external support.

Since avian influenza (bird flu) was first reported in December 2003 in Vietnam and other country, it has re-emerged again in the beginning of 2005. According to the World Health Organization (WHO), Vietnam has recorded 17 deaths among 49 cases, representing a mortality rate of about 35 per cent. Since December 2003, the country has recorded a total of 76 cases with 37 deaths, for a fatality rate of 49 per cent, over three periods of time. The UN health agency warns that changing patterns of cases may indicate the virus is becoming more infectious to humans. Actual figures are difficult to obtain as the virus has affected a wide range of areas particularly rural areas without statistical records. The government has been urged to tighten monitoring and surveillance measures to prevent the outbreak from spreading further.

VNRC takes part in generating public awareness of the bird flu and severe acute respiratory syndrome (SARS) through the training of Red Cross staff and members through its local networks. The New Zealand Red Cross has made a new contribution for a bird flu awareness project. The Federation is also supporting VNRC's health and care programme, including HIV/AIDS and health in emergencies through the Southeast Asia regional health and care programme (please refer to Appeal [05AA057, programme update no. 1](#) for details).

In response to the tsunami of 26 December 2004, VNRC, through its networks and with agreement from the Vietnam government launched a national appeal for the affected people. There has been positive response in the country. Contributions amounting to over USD 3.2 million (about CHF 3.8 million) were made directly to sister societies in the tsunami-affected countries.

Disaster management

Background

The disaster management programme of the VNRC was established in the early 1990s and has evolved from a focus on infrastructure development (the establishment of disaster preparedness centres) through an organizational

development focus (development of human and material resources) towards a more community-based disaster management approach since 2000. Over the past decade, natural disasters have become more frequent, their scale larger and their impact more complex and, as a result, the demands made on VNRC have increased substantially. Disaster preparedness programmes have, therefore, aimed to strengthen capacity in terms of human resource development within the national society as well as in communities and to develop sustainable risk reduction activities. The Federation, through its disaster management officer, provides assistance to the VNRC disaster management activities. The Federation's disaster risk management unit at the regional delegation in Bangkok also provides support.

There was considerable achievement in terms of the four main expected results of this programme. In this reporting period, the Japanese Red Cross approved the request for a balance of funds to be carried over for the mangrove-disaster preparedness project and accepted the revised plan of action and budget in 2005 with a total support of CHF 525,183. DFID also confirmed a grant of CHF 133,000 for VNRC's disaster management programme in 2005.

The disaster management programme is also receiving bilateral support from the Danish Red Cross, Netherlands Red Cross, Spanish Red Cross/Disaster Preparedness Programme of European Commission Humanitarian Aid Office (DIPECHO) and Swiss Red Cross. Total bilateral funding in 2005 amounts to approximately CHF 1.4 million.

Overall goal

The impact of disasters on the most vulnerable people in Vietnam is reduced.

Programme objective

The VNRC fulfils its designated strategic and implementation role in the context of Vietnam's disaster management network.

Progress/Achievements

Expected result 1: Sufficient skilled human resources are developed for disaster management at its headquarters and in 11 of the most disaster-prone provinces to manage the national disaster management programme.

In the next reporting period, VNRC disaster management trainers will organize 16 community-based disaster management training courses for local Red Cross staff.

Expected result 2: Appropriate risk reduction activities are identified and undertaken by 10 disaster-prone communes by the end of 2005.

The mangrove plantations and those of other trees such as bamboo and casuarinas act as a buffer zone, reducing the speed and strength of sea tides, waves, river floods and winds. This helps protect coastal lands, river mouths, human lives and assets invested in long-term community and economic development. Vietnam is one of the most disaster-prone countries in the region. Every year, several typhoons breach sea dykes and cause damage to houses, crops and aquaculture. The VNRC began planting mangroves ten years ago in Thai Binh and Nam Dinh. The national society then constructed a sea dyke system along the country's east coast in Quang Ninh, Hai Phong, Ninh Binh Thanh Hoa, Nghe An and Ha Tinh provinces. With the support of the Danish and Japanese Red Cross societies, mangroves have been planted on 18,434 hectares in eight provinces along a 110-kilometre stretch of coastline. The trees create also an environment where marine life enriches the diets and provides livelihood for coastal communities. The VNRC estimates that the livelihoods of 7,750 families have benefited from the replanting and protection of the mangrove forests.

In Vietnam, the project is a reversal of a 50-year trend of deforestation due to shrimp farming, coastal development and chemical defoliants used during the Vietnam War. The Indian Ocean tsunami highlighted the life-saving benefits of mangrove forests along coastlines. Areas that had mangroves suffered the least destruction, as evidently reported in Malaysia, Myanmar and Thailand. Mangrove replanting is regaining grounds in the governments' agenda.

In the first reporting period, a total of 4,000 bamboo trees were planted at selected communes in Hai Phong and Quang Ninh provinces. Based on previous successes and local needs, bamboo planting along river banks has been supported by the Japanese Red Cross since 2001 and has been another disaster mitigation measure alongside mangrove plantation to reduce river flood velocity and to protect river dykes.

Planting ceremonies were organized in Hai Phong and Quang Ninh provinces with the participation of 100 local people. Six VNRC chapters in Quang Ninh, Hai Phong, Ninh Binh and Thanh Hoa provinces have made manual maps for planting a total of 365 hectares of mangroves in the second quarter.

Three computer sets have been procured as part of the mangrove disaster preparedness project funded by the Japanese Red Cross for VNRC branches in Thanh Hoa, Nghe An and Ha Tinh to improve their reporting capacity.

Expected result 3: Disaster preparedness skills and knowledge for school children, teachers and staff of local authorities in 11 provinces are enhanced.

Ten thousand mangrove planting books were printed and distributed to the local population including children in six provinces involving in mangrove plantation. This aimed to promote the mangrove plantation by the local communities themselves.

Disaster preparedness trainings were provided to 82 VNRC staff, people committee staff and mass organization staff at commune and district levels in Hai Phong province. Technical planting courses were held for 75 local people and staff, teaching basic knowledge of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and bamboo planting. The mangrove research centre has sent two action research teams to evaluate mangroves planted in Thanh Hoa and Nghe An provinces since 1997. The action research will be completed in October 2005 and the centre will organize a national workshop on mangrove impact and protection in cooperation with governmental institutions, NGOs and other international agencies.

The mangrove disaster preparedness project has been widely discussed through the media, such as the Voice of Vietnam and Vietnam Television, to raise awareness of and to improve the protection of mangroves. Seedlings of *Sonneratia* species have been transplanted from Hai Phong to Thanh Hoa province for adaptation with local conditions.

In the next reporting period, similar public awareness activities will continue and 72,000 disaster preparedness induction books for children and 2,350 teaching materials for teachers will be printed. The Japanese Red Cross will send two delegates to Vietnam as an exchange visit to share VNRC's experience in mangrove plantation in Hai Phong.

Expected result 4: An active role within local, national and regional networks for disaster management is taken by the national society.

VNRC staff, as part of the Federation's delegation, attended the World Conference on Disaster Reduction (WCDR) in Kobe, Japan in January 2005 and presented the mangrove disaster preparedness project. VNRC launched a national appeal, through its system and in cooperation with other institutions, to support tsunami-affected people in Asia. Total local contributions amounted to USD 3.2 million in kind and cash, reflecting the national society's international response capacity.

VNRC disaster management staff will participate in a regional disaster management meeting organized by the Federation's regional delegation in Bangkok, a DIPECHO consultative meeting, the fifth meeting of the Asian Disaster Preparedness Centre (ADPC) regional consultative committee on disaster management in Hanoi and other meetings organized by disaster management working groups from other NGOs.

The national society will also facilitate an exchange visit of Indonesian Red Cross (Palang Merah Indonesia/PMI) staff to learn VNRC's experience and knowledge of the mangrove disaster preparedness project in Nam Dinh province. PMI plans to carry out a similar project in tsunami-affected areas.

Outputs

The national society, at headquarters and grass-roots levels, has gradually improved its capacity in disaster management. VNRC disaster management trainers have become a core training resource for further training at local levels. Vulnerable communities have improved their capacity and understanding of their vulnerabilities. They are becoming proactive in disaster response and preparedness, and are actively involved in Red Cross and humanitarian activities. In addition to fulfilling its auxiliary role to the government, VNRC action continues to make progress towards achieving its disaster management strategy for 2010.

Constraints

Due to VNRC's heavy engagement in fundraising events to support the tsunami-affected people in the region, the annual review meeting of the mangrove disaster preparedness project did not take place as planned. The event will take place at the end of 2005.

Organizational development

Background

In recent years, the VNRC has been increasingly successful in expanding the coverage of its humanitarian activities throughout Vietnam and in raising its profile through successful responses to disasters as well as through helping to meet the health, social and material needs of the most vulnerable. However, the VNRC now faces a watershed in its history with developments outside its control likely to have an impact on its future. These include the withdrawal of salary support for staff at all levels of the organization and the possibility of establishing a decree through the national assembly recognizing the VNRC as the Red Cross Society in Vietnam.

There is recognition within the leadership of the national society that the structure of the organization needs to be reshaped to suit the new circumstances and the new programming opportunities. It is still unclear what form the new model will take but work on its design and roll out will be a priority for the next year. The outcome of the strategic planning process is key to this development and from it a more detailed organizational development strategy and plan will be constructed. This will include work on management and human resource practices, finance management systems, branch capacity and volunteer management guidelines as well as project management tools. In addition, the VNRC wants to develop a greater capacity to generate funds at all levels.

Overall goal

The lives of the most vulnerable people in Vietnam are improved.

Programme objective

VNRC meets the basic requirements of a well-functioning national society.

Progress/Achievements

Expected result 1: A comprehensive VNRC national strategy is in place, including strategies and plans for each core area and a cooperation agreement strategy (CAS) process is underway.

Following the successful workshop on 'characteristics of a well-functioning national society' in December 2004, a planning committee was formed to take forward and develop some of the ideas that came out of the workshop. The main terms of reference of this committee was to develop strategies to address some of the weaknesses of VNRC at organizational and programming levels. This committee met regularly and sought comments from the central executive board as well as organized three workshops in Hanoi, Hai Phong and Binh Duong to receive comments on these strategies and on the amended strategic plan for 2005-2010, and a final draft for this has been developed. A mapping exercise was also started which will form the basis of a Cooperation Agreement Strategy (CAS) to be completed later in the next quarter of the year.

Expected result 2: VNRC has a defined legal base and clear dissemination strategy.

A central plank of the organizational development programme for 2005 is to facilitate the preparation of a decree recognizing the VNRC to be promulgated by the national assembly. Many activities have been completed during

the reporting period to take this forward. These include the collection and collation of government legal documents; translating Red Cross decrees from sister national societies, such as the Chinese and Cambodian Red Cross societies; meeting legal experts from the national assembly, ministry of justice, and government offices to obtain support and advice; and producing a draft for the VNRC decree and submitting it to the central executive committee of the national assembly.

During the reporting period, discussions were also held between VNRC, the Federation and the ICRC, over the development of a dissemination strategy. The following activities are also planned:

- Organize an induction workshop on the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement in Hanoi and Ho Chi Minh City in May and in the central province in June or July.
- Develop and publish a training manual in Vietnamese on the Movement for the training-of-trainers (ToT) courses.
- Facilitate the production of a television programme by Humanity TV in June and July on the review of Federation's role and achievements in the humanitarian movement of Vietnam in the last decade and the future cooperation between VNRC and the Federation.

Expected result 3: *VNRC has increased capacity to design and implement programmes and services in an effective and professional manner, including improved performance in finance management, planning and reporting.*

All planned activities were conducted in Vietnam in the first quarter with the support of the Federation's regional finance development delegate. One VNRC finance staff member from the headquarters received IT training. Ten Red Cross staff members at provincial and district levels in Thanh Hoa province received training in budgeting using the *MS Excel* software. With six finance workshops conducted during the reporting period, the project of providing finance training for accountants in 64 provinces was finalized. VNRC's deputy head of finance conducted an evaluation in selected provinces. Computer equipment was purchased and delivered to selected provinces. Internet connections were also established in five selected provinces as part of a pilot programme to test the feasibility of internet reporting.

In the next reporting period, VNRC headquarters will organize additional refresher training sessions for Red Cross chapters' accountants and budget holders.

Expected result 4: *VNRC has increased ability to generate resources for its core and programme costs.*

VNRC has run a number of campaigns over the past nine months collecting USD 6 million. The government assigned the national society the responsibility of collecting funds for use in the tsunami-affected communities in four countries: Indonesia, Thailand, Sri Lanka and India. VNRC was able to collect over USD 3 million in this campaign so far this year.

Planned activities:

- Organize fundraising workshops in Lang Son and Dong Nai provinces in May and June.
- Launch a small income-generation project for the poor ethnic people in Lang Son province from May to July.

Outputs

Through the regional finance development project, financial and non-finance staff at VNRC headquarters and provincial levels have a clearer understanding of financial regulations, have increased skills in financial planning, budgeting and reporting and are thereby able to provide quality and timely information and reports to management for planning, monitoring and decision-making purposes, and to government and donors. The financial department has the necessary competent human resources, tools and equipment to perform effectively.

VNRC has demonstrated its capacity to generate resources if required. The national society hopes to develop further fundraising strategies to make use of this potential.

Constraints

There has been limited engagement and willingness from the VNRC to implement institutional changes in the national society including solving human resources problems in the headquarters to meet partner national society demands and requirements. Except in the area of finance development, progress made in the area of organizational development was on an ad hoc and uncoordinated basis. It is clear that the best chance of success lies in the marriage of organizational development and programming, and the use of project management to bring about incremental organizational developments and changes in thinking.

Implementation and management

The Federation has a clear role in Vietnam which focuses on two main areas: assisting the VNRC in capacity building and strategic planning, and coordinating partner national society input to the national society. This new role has involved a practical application of the Strategy for Change in Vietnam and implied, to some parties, a withdrawal by the Federation from its programme management responsibilities. This was eventually backed up by financial support for Federation core costs including the representative's salary from the majority of partner national societies. In 2005, there were eight of these societies operating in the country: the American Red Cross, Australian Red Cross, Danish Red Cross, French Red Cross, Netherlands Red Cross, Norwegian Red Cross, Spanish Red Cross and Swiss Red Cross. Seven of these ran an office in the same building in Hanoi but operated in different parts of the country with some inevitable overlap. Total support from partner national societies will be approximately USD 3 million.

The Federation's coordination role will become less significant over the next year since five of the partner national societies have either decided to scale down their operations or to completely withdraw from the country for various reasons. This is on one hand related to the successful results Vietnam has achieved in poverty alleviation and in development with additional support, and on another related to continuous lack of will from the VNRC to deal with the retention and recruitment issues of competent human resources at the headquarters level. The Belgian Red Cross finished its project at the end of 2004. The Australian Red Cross will close its office in June 2005 given more support from the World Bank on HIV/AIDS. The Danish Red Cross will complete its programme as planned at the end of 2005.

Partner National Society	Project	Timeframe
American Red Cross	Education and child nutrition - phase I	May 2004 to Oct 2005
Australian Red Cross	HIV/AIDS prevention, education, care and support programme	Until 31 June 2005
Danish Red Cross	Primary health care - phase III Disaster preparedness programme in the in Red River Delta – phase III	2001 to 2005
French Red Cross	Road safety (first aid and prevention campaigns)	Oct 2004 to Sept 2006
Netherlands Red Cross	Street children and human resource development (31,000 beneficiaries)	Jan 1998 to Dec 2005
	Disaster preparedness and climate change (30 communes)	May 2003 to Dec 2005
	Community development (7 communes)	Apr 2005 to Mar 2006
Norwegian Red Cross	Capacity building/organization development	Jan to Dec 2005
Spanish Red Cross	Community-based disaster risk management	Nov 2004 to Feb 2006
	National information resource guide on disability services	Apr 2005 to Apr 2006
	Community development and branch strengthening (continuation) Vocational training and micro-credits to poor and disabled youths in the north and central provinces	Until July 2005
Swiss Red Cross	Ho Gui village relocation: hospital, school, water supply and strong houses	July 2005
	Eye care services for school	
	Hand tools for poor families	

The Federation's representative will complete his assignment at the end of May 2005. A number of options are being discussed between the regional delegation, the Secretariat in Geneva, partner national societies and VNRC.

These include: not finding a replacement but maintaining the local office in Hanoi; replacement by a Federation representative who will support other delegation in the region; closing the Federation's office. While a decision is yet to be made, it is generally felt that the Federation should maintain an office in Hanoi both beyond May 2005 and into the medium and long term. The need to have a presence is clear; to take advantage of future changes in the VNRC approach which might afford opportunities for the development of capacity building and community programmes; to maintain a link between the regional delegation and VNRC; to scale up with relative ease in the case of an emergency; and to continue the work of supporting the VNRC in disaster management. The delegation recently signed an agreement with People's Aid Coordinating Committee (PACCOM) enabling the Federation to remain until early 2008. Now that ICRC is becoming more involved in the country, it is also important to agree on strategies that aim to pull VNRC back into the mainstream and to assist it in its own reinvention as a national society with a true Red Cross identity.

[Contributions list below; click here to return to the title page and contact information.](#)

CASH

REQUESTED IN APPEAL CHF ----->			874,667	TOTAL COVERAGE	
				67.4%	
OPENING BALANCE			295,449		
BRITISH - GOVT/DIFD GRANT			209,000	01.01.05	DISASTER PREPAREDNESS, INSTITUTIONAL DEV., NATIONAL COORDINATION
CAPACITY BUILDING FUND			36,775	18.01.05	FINANCE DEVELOPMENT
NEW ZEALAND - RC	23,000	NZD	18,722	01.04.05	BIRD FLU EDUCATION PROJECT
SUB/TOTAL RECEIVED IN CASH			559,946	CHF	64.0%

KIND AND SERVICES (INCLUDING PERSONNEL)

DONOR	CATEGORY	QUANTITY	UNIT	VALUE CHF	DATE	COMMENT
GREAT BRITAIN	DELEGATE(S)			29,800		
SUB/TOTAL RECEIVED IN KIND/SERVICES				29,800	CHF	3.4%

ADDITIONAL TO APPEAL BUDGET

DONOR	CATEGORY	QUANTITY	UNIT	VALUE CHF	DATE	COMMENT
SUB/TOTAL RECEIVED				0	CHF	