

Programme Update

 International Federation
of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

Pacific

Appeal No. MAA55001

28 August 2008

This report covers the period 1 January 2008 to 30 June 2008.



Challenging geography and expensive transport costs make disaster preparedness stocks essential in responding quickly and effectively on the onset of disaster. The Pacific container programme, with the support of partner national societies such as the Australian, New Zealand and Japanese Red Cross, help the national societies in the Pacific work more efficiently to assist the vulnerable. **International Federation**

In brief

Programme summary:

The Pacific regional team continues to carry out its mandate in providing relevant technical support and capacity building to the national societies in the region. Regional meetings for all programmes were held with stakeholders in the Pacific region as well as the wider Asia Pacific zone to further improve the quality and efficiency of the regional office in the Pacific, while ensuring compliance with zonal and global goals of the Red Cross Red Crescent Movement. In addition, the regional office encouraged national societies to identify specific areas in which support was required from the International Federation, further promoting ownership of programmes while ensuring sufficient technical support was provided to the national societies who need it.

The regional office's disaster management programme also continued to support the Solomon Islands and Papua New Guinea Red Cross Societies in responding to both the tsunami and cyclone that took place in 2007 respectively. Under the health programme, greater focus has been placed on supporting the Kiribati, the Federated States of Micronesia, Samoa and Cook Islands Red Cross Societies in preparing and submitting their consolidated HIV plans in line with the HIV Global Alliance framework. Furthermore, with support from the regional office, efforts are underway to include Papua New Guinea Red Cross Society in the HIV Global Alliance by 2009. Meanwhile, the organizational development programme continues to encourage the national societies in the region to increase their institutional capacity and cooperation among themselves, including the Palau Red Cross Society in revising their statutes and governance training from a Cook Islands Red Cross Society board member to the newly-elected Board of the Solomon Islands Red Cross Society.

Financial situation: The total 2008 budget is CHF 3,603,911 (USD 3.43 million or EUR 2.2 million), of which 33 per cent is covered. Expenditure overall was 17 per cent.

[Click here to go directly to the attached financial report.](#)

See also: Solomon Islands: Earthquake and tsunami (MDRSB001), [Operations Update no. 7](#)
Papua New Guinea: Cyclone Guba (MDRPG002), [Operations Update no. 4](#)

No. of people we help: The Pacific regional office supports a total of 14 national societies in the region.

Our partners: During this period, the regional office worked with the 14 national societies in the region, the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) in two countries, the whole United Nations (UN) family based in Suva as well as national and regional organizations including the World Health Organization (WHO), the South Pacific Applied Geoscience Commission (SOPAC), the Pacific Island AIDS Foundation (PIAF), the Secretariat of Pacific Communities (SPC), the Asia Foundation/office of U.S. foreign disaster assistance (TAF/OFDA), AusAID and NZAID. Additional support comes from within the Red Cross Red Crescent Movement including the American, Australian, French, Japanese, New Zealand Red Cross Societies.

Context

The significant events which affected Red Cross programmes during the reporting period included:-

- The Oro province disaster response in Papua New Guinea, which dominated the whole of the Papua New Guinea Red Cross Society (PNGRCS) resources as well as the focus of the regional disaster management coordinator in the region during the first three months of the year.
- The ongoing tension in Fiji, especially its relationship with Australia, following the two death threats made against the high commissioner.
- Significant elections in Tonga and Solomon islands, which proceeded peacefully.
- Migrant workers schemes being implemented in both Australia and New Zealand which has an effect on family incomes throughout the Pacific.

The PNGRCS managed the Oro disaster response well – this is reported elsewhere both in this report and in the operations updates. The impact on the National Society as a whole, coming at the same time as the appointment of a new secretary general and a change in the International Federation engagement in Papua New Guinea is challenging but mostly positive. The National Society has emerged at the end of May with a clear plan for the rest of 2008 and into 2009. A support group consisting of the International Federation, Australian Red Cross, the New Zealand Red Cross and the ICRC will meet with the leadership regularly to support during the next two years.

The Fiji situation with the interim government has a remote impact on target groups – economic through the slow down of the economy, leading to reductions in money in circulation. The Fiji Red Cross Society successfully responded to a cyclone in January and was highly praised for its work by all stakeholders.

Progress towards outcomes

Disaster management

Outcomes/Expected results

Pacific Island communities and vulnerable groups in particular, are safer and more resilient to disasters through national societies that are better prepared for effective emergency response and community risk reduction.

Achievements

A meeting for the regional disaster management staff was held in the Asia Pacific zone office in Kuala Lumpur in February 2008, chaired by the new Zone disaster management coordinator. This meeting was held in conjunction with zonal organizational development and health meetings for their respective regional staff, with a one-day plenary meeting to discuss cross-platform support. The meeting enabled regional staff to share input and best practices while ensuring a unified approach towards supporting the national societies in their respective regions.

The disaster management coordinator also attended the 2008 disaster managers' workshop in Geneva in February. This was the first meeting since early 2006, and also the first time there has been a general International Federation disaster management meeting since the new operating model was introduced. The meeting definitely showed that the Geneva-based disaster management staff has made serious plans to improve their support to the field.

An emergency management core group (EMCG) meeting was held prior to the Pacific national societies' partnership meeting (PPM) in April, with discussions at this meeting revolving around topics and decisions to be presented at the PPM, including the regional and/or national disaster response team training/formation and the container programme review that was carried out at the end of 2007.

The Pacific national societies' partnership meeting, organized by the International Federation, was held in Port Villa, Vanuatu in April 2008. At this meeting, the first since 2005, there were very positive outcomes from a disaster management perspective. The national societies decided that the current make-up of the EMCG had to change-- recognizing the benefits of membership, both Fiji and Solomon Islands Red Cross Societies agreed to stand down and be replaced by Samoa and the Cook Islands Red Cross societies, to ensure that all national societies in the region will have a chance at expanding their experience on all levels of disaster management. The Federated States of Micronesia Red Cross Society, having been a member since inception, but only attending the meeting once, pledged to attend the next three meetings. Papua New Guinea, being a new member, will remain, and Tonga will also continue to attend, and become the national societies' focal point. Membership will be reviewed again at the next partnership meeting.

All national societies also agreed to support the formation of a Pacific regional disaster response team, with full understanding that deployment is only at the request of the national society through the regional disaster management coordinator. A set of goals to be achieved, and to be reviewed at the next partnership meeting in 2010, both for the International Federation and the national societies, was also agreed upon. In addition the recommendations from the EMCG for the container review were accepted. Furthermore, a representative from the American Red Cross Society's Saipan chapter also attended the meeting. The inclusion of the American Red Cross in the meeting proved to be very positive step, with co-operation in disaster management activities discussed, and further discussion/meetings planned in the near future.

The 2008 disaster management forum is planned for June 2008, to be held in Nouméa, New Caledonia. This will be immediately followed by a training session in logistics in emergencies for selected national society staff. The curriculum is being developed by jointly by the French, Australian and New Zealand Red Cross societies as well as the International Federation's regional logistics staff. Incorporated into the training will be a short and simple container/warehouse stock control overview.

The regional disaster response team training is planned for the last week of July, to coincide with the South Pacific Applied Geoscience Commission (SOPAC) annual national disaster management office (NDMO) meeting in Nadi. This will enable Pacific-wide NDMO officers to see what they could expect in the way of Red Cross Red Crescent support in the event of a major disaster. Two Pacific United Nations Disaster Assessment and Coordination (UNDAC) officers will also attend.

Constraints or Challenges

The major constraint of this programme continues to be attracting funding from donors for the climate change adaptation and disaster risk reduction components. As a result, funding available through the International Federation no longer matches demand for projects being conceptualized by National Societies – money is being spent faster than it can be replenished with the risk of halting programmes in some countries at a pivotal point in their development. In an attempt to address this issue, further discussions are taking place with donors in an effort to secure ongoing multi-year funding. Efforts are also being made to develop the capacity of climate change and disaster management officers working on risk reduction to raise funds with in country donor support.

Another smaller but ongoing constraint that is the recognition and acceptance of the Red Cross as valued partners in the climate change and disaster risk reduction particularly at the national level. While substantial progress on this front has been made through the implementation of programmes in country there is still work to be done to raise the profile of the movement in this regard. This will also assist the issue of national societies funding in country.

Health

Outcomes/Expected results

1. Vulnerability to HIV and its impact reduced through preventing further infection, expanding care, treatment, and support, reducing stigma and discrimination and enhanced national society capacity to deliver effective HIV interventions.

Indicators: By the end of 2009

- Six national societies have developed HIV plans as part of the Pacific regional HIV plan of the Global HIV alliance
- Four national societies have adequate financial and monitoring resources to conduct HIV interventions in the community
- Increased (%) of people express accepted attitudes towards people living with HIV

2. Targeted communities are sufficiently self reliant in order to lead a healthy lifestyle through effective and evidence-based national society community-based first aid interventions

Indicators: By the end of 2009

- 4 national societies scale up their community based first aid trainings
- 4 national societies have an emergency health plan in place
- Increased (%) of targeted people demonstrate adequate knowledge of diabetes

Achievements

Four national societies – Kiribati, the Federated States of Micronesia, Samoa and Cook Islands, have prepared and submitted their consolidated HIV plans in line with the HIV Global Alliance framework. The Samoa and Federated States of Micronesia Red Cross Societies' plans have been referred to the HIV unit in Geneva for peer review while the other two plans are currently undergoing review at the regional office before being referred to Geneva. In addition, two other national societies – Papua New Guinea and Fiji Red Cross Societies - have indicated their interest in joining the HIV Global Alliance and developing their HIV plans as per the Global Alliance format in the time to come.

In line with the national societies' HIV plans, the regional office successfully applied for and will receive funding from the Global Fund round 7, starting from July this year for the next five years. These funds shall include HIV interventions at regional level and for four national societies who are currently in the Pacific component of the Global Alliance. The regional health delegate has had two meetings with the representatives of Pacific island AIDS Foundation (PIAF), a regional people living with HIV organization, and is accepted as a major partner by PIAF. The two organizations shall soon be entering into a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to work jointly in the Pacific. The regional health delegate supported the participation of two representatives – one each from Solomon Island and Kiribati Red Cross Society, to attend the 11th International Colloquium on Voluntary Blood Donation as part of strengthening voluntary non-remunerated blood donor recruitment interventions in these two national societies.

In addition, the regional health unit facilitated a regional community-based health and first aid workshop, the second of its kind globally, in March, with the aim of introducing the participants into the new 'community-based first aid in action' process, in particular the new volunteer's manual. The workshop, hosted by Cook Islands Red Cross, was attended by 19 participants from six Pacific national societies and facilitators from the health and care department in Geneva ([Click here for the workshop report](#)). During the subsequent partnership



A workshop activity on voluntary non-remunerated blood donor recruitment being carried out in the Cook Islands with six participating national societies and facilitated by International Federation health staff. **International Federation**

meeting of the Pacific national societies, all of them reaffirmed their commitment to initiate and scale up their respective community-based health and first aid programmes. The regional health delegate conducted a regular dialogue with the focal persons in the World Health Organization (WHO) and the Secretariat of Pacific Communities (SPC), to discuss the development of a Pacific framework on chronic diseases and the role of Red Cross Red Crescent Movement in it. The framework is being developed by SPC and is expected to be completed by June this year. The regional health delegate also met with the representatives of Australian Red Cross and AUSAID to discuss future interventions under their strategic engagement as well as the inclusion of public health in emergencies' components under it.

Constraints or Challenges

The lack of adequate funding continued to be a constraint during the reporting period. An example of affected projects include the challenge of initiating a regional project on chronic diseases, as part of the community-based health and first aid programme. To address this issue of lack of funding, the regional health unit is trying to link up with the SPC to explore potential funds that may be available in the region for addressing chronic diseases.

In addition, national societies will have to strongly consider including chronic disease prevention interventions into their respective community-based health and first aid plans and are encouraged to look to access funds available in their countries, particularly with their respective ministries of health, with technical support made available by the regional health delegate.

Organizational development

Outcomes/Expected results

- Increased national society institutional capacity when coordinating and responding to disaster and public health emergencies.
- Strengthened national society capacity in emergency preparedness and post emergency response.
- Strengthened community capacity in preparedness and post emergency response.

Achievements

In this reporting period, progress has been achieved through the provision of tailored support in increasing institutional capacity within several national societies. The Palau Red Cross Society has instituted a process to revise their statutes; Kiribati Red Cross Society has completed a revised draft and Fiji Red Cross Society has adopted their approved statutes. The Federated States of Micronesia Red Cross Society has completed a draft five-year strategic plan as well as an action plan for the coming year, and the other national societies have outlined their intent to instigate a revision of their respective plans. Supported by the International Federation, a Board member of the Cook Islands Red Cross Society has provided governance training to the newly elected Board of the Solomon Islands Red Cross Society, and considerable efforts have been made to strengthen ties between the Northern Mariana Islands chapter of the American Red Cross and the north Pacific national societies. Furthermore, Pacific national societies have also made their commitment toward peer support among themselves to increase capacity throughout the Pacific while the regional office has strengthened ties with the other regions through the zone office to improve opportunities for support to national societies. Each of these approaches increase national society capacity to prepare for as well as coordinate and respond to emergencies.

Constraints or Challenges

A key challenge facing the organizational development programme is providing adequate support from a poorly resourced regional base to twelve developing national societies. Efforts to address this are being made both internally and externally to the International Federation. Internally, the focus is greater emphasis on working through and in alignment with other regional programmes both in the regional office and across the Asia Pacific zone, to improve sustainability of organizational input and increase efficiency of support. Externally, the strategy is threefold: enhancing partnerships between national societies, improving coordination mechanisms between support agencies, and increasing the pool of support agencies to and for the national societies.

Working in partnership

The single biggest event during the reporting period was the partnership meeting, held in Vanuatu in April 2008. All Red Cross stakeholders in the region were represented – the main result being that regional directions were agreed for the national societies and International Federation, supported by the ICRC.

Additionally, the emergency management core group has been seen to be a successful coordinating body of members. As a result, health and organizational development groups, similar in scope and authority to the disaster management core group, were formed by the national societies at the partnership meeting.

Meetings are held on an ongoing basis with stakeholders throughout the region. The Papua New Guinea Red Cross and the Solomon Islands Red Cross are the two societies in the region which have completed a cooperation agreement strategy process. The Suva regional office remains the main focal point for the membership to reach regional organizations operational throughout the Pacific.

In the Solomon Islands as part of the response to last year's tsunami, the national society, supported by the International Federation in country and from the regional office, has engaged with their government at various levels, including supporting the government in fulfilling its coordination mandate.

The regional health unit continued to interact regularly with the four members of the HIV Global Alliance in the Pacific in developing their respective HIV plans. The HIV Global Alliance manual was shared and discussed with the partner national societies to better support them in developing their plans, which aim at scaling up their HIV interventions. The regional office also partners with SOPAC through regular interaction and meetings. The partnership aims to develop water and sanitation initiatives in the region, implemented by the Pacific national societies with SOPAC seeking to provide technical and limited financial support to the International Federation. SOPAC will also assist the regional office in developing a Pacific regional water and sanitation proposal as a technical partner and linking with potential donors including AUSAID. Regular interactions with WHO have focussed on partnering together in developing interventions aimed at prevention of chronic diseases in the Pacific region.

Contributing to longer-term impact

The Cook Islands, Solomon Islands and Fiji Red Cross societies have been leading the way in applying the standard International Federation vulnerability and capacity assessment tool in the Pacific context – all in quite different environments but in partnership with other humanitarian actors. Notably, the Fiji Red Cross Society has been working in partnership with government, the secretariat of SOPAC, UNDP Pacific centre and the Asia Foundation/ office of U.S. foreign disaster assistance (TAF/OFDA). This extensive partnership is running a pilot project helping affected communities determine their vulnerabilities and capacities in Navua, Fiji. Partnerships such as this are part of the essential steps in building sustainable knowledge with the Fiji Red Cross and the wider Fiji humanitarian community of practitioners.

The Cook Islands Red Cross are in the final stages of planning a new headquarters building which will double as a cyclone shelter. This is mainly funded by Cook island government – supported by the New Zealand government. The relationship between the Cook Islands Red Cross Society and their government is a possible model for other countries. Part of the national budget for disaster management activities, partly funded by donors, is earmarked for the national society so that it can carry out its auxiliary role.

Some concrete approaches have been taken by the International Federation and national societies to share lessons learned, best practices and quality standards in and across programmes by having national society staff work for each other – either in an exchange visit format or deployment in disasters. This will hopefully encourage national societies replication of successful elements of programmes.

In the Solomon Islands, Papua New Guinea and Fiji, the Red Cross disaster responses have resulted in opportunities for the national societies to champion the use and implementation of a Code of Conduct in practice. The government coordination bodies have all agreed in principle prior to disaster to use such tools.

In health, the regional health delegate shared and discussed about the HIV Global Alliance with regional non-governmental organizations, in particular with PIAF. The HIV Global Alliance manual was very useful and helped in setting up a Pacific non-governmental organizations' alliance which will be coordinated by PIAF. The International Federation, along with PIAF and Pacific Council of Churches (PCC) are the three key stakeholders in this Alliance and shall be soon signing a Memorandum of Understanding with PIAF on future ways of working.

In this reporting period, the organizational development programme worked with the other regional offices as well as the Asia Pacific Zone office in ensuring a coordinated approach to developing fact sheets and updating the CD used in sharing best practices in the region. The Pacific organizational programme also

uses a regional approach to share national society newsletters between all national societies, regional meetings for sharing experiences, lessons and encouraging national society peer support.

Looking ahead

The major events in the first half of 2008 include the restructuring of International Federation support to the Papua New Guinea Red Cross Society, resulting in a greater role for the regional office in Suva; the ongoing (if winding down) disaster responses in Solomon Islands and Papua New Guinea as well as the partnership meeting in Vanuatu. All of the above events will have impact on shaping the way we work in the coming months. The disaster responses should be completed during the second half of 2008. Furthermore, the directions agreed upon at the partnership meeting in Vanuatu are being used to guide the development of plan and appeal for 2009-2010.

The focus for health and care in the remaining part of the year will be on launching and consolidating the Pacific component of the HIV Global Alliance. With the funds scheduled to be available from July 2008, the regional health delegate will work out the planning details with the four recipient national societies and ensure that their HIV interventions are feasible. The regional health delegate will also be working with some national societies on modalities of initiating the community-based health and first aid programme while working with the health and care department in Geneva on the finalization of the 'Community-based First Aid in Action' manuals (including the monitoring and evaluation framework for the same). The major components of community-based health and first aid, as identified jointly with the national societies will include first aid instructor trainings, water and sanitation, public health in emergencies, chronic diseases and communicable diseases.

The two regional priorities for the organizational development programme for the second half of the year are in the areas of volunteering development (sensitization workshop), governance (evaluation) and ways forward to be developed. Tailored support will focus on strategic development with Kiribati Red Cross and follow-up with individual societies after the volunteering development workshop. At this point, it is expected that sufficient funding will be sourced for at least the volunteering development workshop and tailored support with Kiribati Red Cross. Additional efforts will be made to develop fact sheets and other sharing mechanisms within the region and zone.

How we work	
<p>The International Federation's activities are aligned with its Global Agenda, which sets out four broad goals to meet the Federation's mission to "improve the lives of vulnerable people by mobilizing the power of humanity".</p>	<p>Global Agenda Goals:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduce the numbers of deaths, injuries and impact from disasters. • Reduce the number of deaths, illnesses and impact from diseases and public health emergencies. • Increase local community, civil society and Red Cross Red Crescent capacity to address the most urgent situations of vulnerability. • Reduce intolerance, discrimination and social exclusion and promote respect for diversity and human dignity.
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