

HONDURAS

CHF 4,056,000

Programme No. 01.19/2000

National Context

Honduras is one of the poorest countries in the Americas, with three-quarters of its 5.7 million people living in poverty. It has also received in recent years a quarter million refugees from Nicaragua and El Salvador, who are now dispersed throughout the country as “people without documents”. In 1998, Honduras was the country most severely devastated by Hurricane Mitch. It is now involved in a difficult and urgent rehabilitation process.

Country Assistance Strategy

The Honduran Red Cross (HRC) has a positive public image, built on its effective response to natural and man-made disasters and reinforced by the Hurricane Mitch relief, rehabilitation and reconstruction operation. However, the huge Mitch operation, which began in late 1998 and is still going on, brought the development of some of the Society’s services to a halt, and has confronted the HRC with major new challenges.

The Federation’s objective is to assist the HRC in institutional development, disaster preparedness and the building of resources. Programmes will be developed through the local Red Cross branches with the participating communities. The Federation will promote co-ordination between the HRC, Participating National Societies and NGOs. This assistance strategy will be implemented through support to the “Country Plan for Rehabilitation”.

Programme Objectives

Disaster Response

As part of the ongoing reconstruction and rehabilitation phase of the Hurricane Mitch operation, the Federation will assist the National Society implement a range of projects, from the rehabilitation or construction of housing to the development of social infrastructure in communities.

Disaster Preparedness

Specific support will be given to the HRC in enhancing its response capacity, developing its Disaster Response System, and establishing central and branch warehouses. In parallel, the Federation will give support to the HRC’s disaster preparedness programme, begun in 1997. The HRC will continue training of communities and volunteers, but will move on to introduce projects designed to reinforce the disaster preparedness capacity of vulnerable communities.

Health

The Federation will seek support for the National Society's blood programme, which through centres in Tegucigalpa and San Pedro Sula covers 40% of the country's needs. Assistance is needed to upgrade medical and technical equipment. Community health programmes will be supported all over the country, and particularly the "Golfo de Fonseca" cross-border project in one of the areas most affected by Mitch.

Humanitarian Values

The HRC enjoys nation-wide recognition of its services, but needs to associate its services more closely with humanitarian values and human rights. These issues will receive greater priority in the Society's dissemination and public information efforts. The advocacy role will be enhanced in all rehabilitation action.

Capacity Building

Ongoing efforts to strengthen the National Society's headquarters and its weaker local branches, part of a three-year programme, will be continued. Particular emphasis will be put on developing the branches' human resource base, increasing the sustainability of their programmes and building fund-raising skills. Support will be given to update the Statutes and train the branches' governance, and to strengthen the administrative structure. As a result, a more self-sufficient National Society, with a reinforced public image, should emerge after the Mitch operations.