

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

CENTRAL AMERICA

03 January 2002

This Programme Update is intended for reporting on Annual Appeals.

Appeal No. 01.26/2001

Appeal Target : Revised 9 August to CHF 3,155,099

Programme Update No 2. Period covered: 1 July - 27 December (last Programme Update issued 10 August 2001)

"At a Glance"

Appeal coverage: 87.3%

Related Appeals: 01.25/2001 Pan-American Disaster Response Unit; 01.27/2001 Guatemala; 01.28/2001 Honduras; 01.29/2001 Nicaragua; 01.31/2001 Central America Drought and Food Insecurity

Outstanding needs: CHF 2,753,093

Update: Progress was made during the latter part of the year in the regional programmes for Central America. In the area of disaster preparedness, there was efficient and early response to drought and floods in the region, as well as to hurricanes Iris and Michelle. A major success was the XVII Presidents' and Technical Seminars meeting held in Tegucigalpa in September, during which a number of protocols to guide future work were approved. The meeting also established efficient follow-up mechanisms to ensure implementation of recommendations. Several evaluations took place at the end of the year including that of DFID supported programmes and an informal review of community-based disaster preparedness (CBDP) projects in earthquake-affected communities. In early 2002, the results of the Golfo de Fonseca integrated pilot project will be evaluated.

Operational Developments:

The second semester of the year was marked by the terrorist attack on the United States of 11 September, the effects of which are beginning to be felt on the economies of Central American countries. The Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (CEPAL) anticipates growth of less than 1 percent in 2002 in the Americas. The region has also been affected by the fall in the price of coffee which has resulted in the closure of plantations and the increasing vulnerability of unemployed day labourers. Overall, the Inter-American Development Bank states that exports from the Americas fell by almost three per cent in 2001.

The drought in the region, the dramatic effects of which were most evident as of August, continues to cause food insecurity particularly in El Salvador, Honduras, Guatemala and Nicaragua. Hurricane Iris in late September/early October affected Petén and Izabal in northern Guatemala and the passage of hurricane Michelle in late October/early November resulted in severe flooding in Honduras and Nicaragua.

Elections were held in Nicaragua on 4 November and in Honduras on 25 November. In both cases, these were held in a calm atmosphere and brought new Presidents to power.

Disaster Preparedness

Much work during the latter part of the year focused on response to the drought situation in Central America, through the launch of an appeal and coordination of the regional response. Hurricanes Iris and Michelle affected Central America, and support was provided to the Guatemalan Red Cross and the Honduran and Nicaraguan Red Cross in the implementation of relief operations. In the case of hurricane Iris, the regional delegation supported the regional delegation for the Caribbean and provided the first regional intervention team (RIT), assisted in the needs assessment and the development of the plan of action. The emphasis on disaster preparedness during the XVII Presidents' and Technical Seminars meeting in Tegucigalpa in September, also resulted in intensive preparatory work with the National Societies.

Objective 1: To strengthen the community-based disaster preparedness (CBDP) programme and role of National Societies in preparing communities to play an active part in preparation for, response to and mitigation of disasters.

In El Salvador, the CIDA-funded CBDP programme was resumed and coordinators met regularly with facilitators to provide increased support and monitoring. The programme included the formation of community response brigades in selected communities. These brigades represent a further development of the community committees which give direction within the community in preparation and response initiatives. They are designed to facilitate a first community response and also to support ongoing preparation activities and awareness-raising in the community. Furthermore, in El Salvador, Guatemala and Costa Rica, micro projects in mitigation have been strengthened through enhanced community involvement and coordination both in the identification and in the implementation of projects. The community role has strengthened the social impact and the sustainability of these efforts.

The Red Cross Society of Panama was supported in the identification and design of an integrated programme proposal to be implemented by the Darién branch. The proposal, which is expected to be completed in early 2002, contains a water and sanitation component and is being designed with community involvement. A thorough analysis of the communities has taken place, together with the complex issue of displaced persons, and lessons learned from implementation of the Golfo de Fonseca project have been taken into account.

At the Presidents' and Technical Seminars meeting held in Tegucigalpa between 19 and 23 September, a recommendation was made that the CBDP programme methodology be revised to ensure that it takes on a more integrated approach. As a result of this decision and the recommendation put forward at the disaster preparedness conference held in El Salvador in May 2001, a revision of the CBDP model began in mid November with the establishment of a working group. The Pan American Health Organization (OPS), the Coordination Centre for the Prevention of Natural Disasters in Central America (CEPRENAC) and several key NGOs are supporting this initiative and participating in a consultancy group. The process is scheduled to be completed in early February 2002 with agreement among the National Societies, PNS and other actors on an integrated model for community based disaster preparedness planning. Initial consultancy meetings have been held in Guatemala, El Salvador, Honduras and Costa Rica.

Although a pilot project focusing on psycho-social support has not been realized at regional level, the Costa Rican Red Cross has worked with the university to provide workshops in some communities.

Follow up with communities affected by earthquakes, particularly those in which community based disaster preparedness projects were implemented, reflects strong evidence of the continued impact of the projects. Community members and Red Cross responders reported significant impact in areas of community surveys, needs assessment, evacuation and shelter establishment.

Objective 2: To increase the capacity of National Societies to prepare for and respond to local, national and regional disasters.

National intervention team (NIT) training courses were held in Honduras, El Salvador and Guatemala. A course to be held in Panama was re-scheduled for February 2002. Curriculum revision to ensure coordination of the NIT curriculum with that of the regional intervention teams and of the Field Assessment and Coordination Team (FACT) training, has been initiated with a meeting held in Guatemala in October and consolidation between material used for NITs training is taking place.

Following hurricanes Michelle and Iris and during operations in response to drought and floods, the NITs teams formed in El Salvador, Guatemala and Honduras demonstrated considerable added value to national society capacity, and will continue to evolve as an important part of the regional strategy. The regional delegation and national societies are working jointly to strengthen and institutionalize the role and contribution of the NITs in coordination with the RITs and PADRU.

Compilation of disaster plans was undertaken in preparation for the Presidents' and Technical Seminars meeting with a view to supporting the standardization of plans in the region and to facilitate the development of regional planning.

Discussions and technical support continues to take place with the Red Cross Society of Panama to assist persons affected by displacement and insecurity as a result of the conflict in Colombia. Better programming initiative (BPI) promotion has continued and presentations were made to several National Societies, together with identification of participants to attend the training of trainers' session in BPI in March 2002.

As a result of experiences in response from the earthquake operation in El Salvador and decisions taken at the meeting of directors of disaster response/preparedness and of RITs representatives held in Antigua in March 2001, a series of three further meetings were held with disaster response/preparedness directors. These resulted in the development and approval of a "regional agreement for mutual support in disasters" and the drawing up of associated protocols and decision flow charts. It was also agreed that regional standardization of training, disaster preparedness programmes and integrated disaster planning would be promoted, and this has begun with the support of the Pan American Disaster Response Unit (PADRU). With the recent nomination of the head of PADRU, it is expected that significant progress towards achieving integrated pan regional systems and planning will be achieved.

The regional delegation provided support to the National Societies of Costa Rica, Honduras and Nicaragua as a result of flooding caused by the passage of hurricane Michelle. The regional delegation also provided technical support to the Guatemalan Red Cross in the response to hurricane Iris and to the Salvadorean, Honduran, Guatemalan and Nicaraguan Red Cross Societies in the development of a regional approach to the drought situation and consolidation of the responses.

Objective 3: To consolidate and strengthen the regional disaster response network in coordination with the Pan American Disaster Response Unit.

The regional network was strengthened at all levels, from the community to the NITs and RITs, in coordination with the pan regional unit. All regional events focus on coordination and standardization which will facilitate mutual integrated response.

In June 2001, A SPHERE workshop was held in El Salvador for 25 current and future RITs members and delegates. To date, three national or regional delegates have followed FACT training, thereby

promoting integration of the response system between FACT, RITs and NITs. The regional delegation assisted PADRU in coordinating the holding of a pan regional logistics workshop held in mid December in Panama, with the aim of strengthening National Society capacity and knowledge of Federation response procedures. The support of PADRU has resulted in the development of further expertise in water and sanitation at National Society level.

A NITs/RITs data base is being maintained and updated and has recently been modified in order to include more relevant information on team members.

The responses to the El Salvador earthquake, drought, floods and to hurricane Iris, together with the work carried out during the Presidents' meeting and other regional events in which all levels of the regional network take part, as well as the establishment and growing incorporation of PADRU, represents progress towards a strong regional network.

Objective 4: To enhance the integration and coordination of disaster preparedness activities among the components of the Movement and with external actors and project the Federation's strategies and expertise within the region.

During the reporting period, regular meetings were held between disaster preparedness delegates and disaster response/preparedness directors of National Societies in the region, particularly in view of the holding of the Presidents' and Technical Seminars meeting; planning over the next two years in disaster preparedness was reviewed. Recommendations from the disaster preparedness conference held in May were compiled, printed and disseminated.

Coordination with NGOs and UN agencies has been strengthened over the period. As part of the response to hurricane Iris, OXFAM provided livelihood assessment training to volunteers from the Belize Red Cross Society. WFP and the Federation have begun discussions with a view to reaching regional agreements; coordination during the drought operation has been positive, and in Guatemala resulted in an agreement between the Federation, the Guatemalan Red Cross and the WFP, as regards the provision of food to beneficiaries. The Pan-American Health Organization (OPS) is supporting revision of the CBDP methodology, together with CEPREDENAC, CARE, GTZ, CRS and World Vision (VM). All Federation training courses which involve members of partner organizations include sections on the SPHERE project, NITs/RITs, logistics and so forth. The Federation participated actively in the recent Hemispheric Conference in Costa Rica, with two plenary presentations and attendance at bilateral meetings.

Humanitarian Values

Objective: To support Red Cross school brigades and youth leadership training and to develop a peer education programme for HIV/AIDS focusing on youth.

Throughout the region, the youth network has carried out activities through school brigades. Progress has been achieved in harmonizing intervention criteria and educational material used by each of the National Societies. Recently, measurable indicators have been introduced against which results achieved can be tested.

On 11 December, an evaluation of the work carried out in the region in HIV/AIDS prevention took place in Panama with the participation of 140 young people. In the context of the work of school brigades and the youth network, there are currently the following numbers of trained HIV/AIDS facilitators: Costa Rica 188; Honduras 135; Panama 50; El Salvador 120. The following numbers of beneficiaries were reached during the year: Costa Rica 3,500; Honduras 16,800; Panama 2,000; El Salvador 665. Furthermore, other activities included the marking of World AIDS Day in Panama, El Salvador and Honduras, the Youth Week against AIDS held in Honduras, a vigil held in memory of

those who live with or have died from HIV/AIDS held in Panama and Honduras, together with the publication of magazines, folders and posters and the airing of radio and television programmes.

Health and Care

The regional programme for health and care in the community aims to support the Central American National Societies in the planning, implementation and evaluation of effective health programmes which target vulnerable groups.

Objective 1: To promote integrated community development through the Golfo de Fonseca pilot project focusing on:

- Community health care and health promotion.
- Community education in disaster preparedness.
- Basic sanitation and environmental protection.
- Branch development.

In **El Salvador**, after a pause following the earthquake, branches involved in the project, La Unión and Santa Rosa de Lima have increased activity. Over the reporting period, Intipuka branch began activities in preparation for full inclusion in the project. As a result of activities, personalities from the community, including a municipal health director, have become members of the Red Cross. The initial rehabilitation phase of La Unión branch was completed, including repair of the electrical and plumbing systems and of the roof and the construction of a warehouse in the branch grounds. New income-generating schemes were begun including an initiative in La Unión to cook meals to sell at football matches; the formation of an income generation commission at each branch will also facilitate such new projects. Weekly health training sessions for youth volunteers began, focusing on reproductive health and rabies since there had been an outbreak of the disease. First aid training sessions were held and new volunteers recruited. By the end of September, 51 persons had been trained and 29 had become active branch volunteers. Computer courses began in the La Unión branch for youth volunteers as the result of the donation from the Federation of a computer. Of the 12 communities selected, 11 formed volunteer committees in cooperation with the MoH, and weekly Red Cross visits to the committees have been made. As a result of the project, radio communications have been improved at the branches of La Unión and Santa Rosa de Lima.

The programme coordinator's move from El Salvador to **Nicaragua** on 20 September has resulted in more direct contact with the branch in Chinandega, an area much affected by poverty and disaster. Over the reporting period, meetings took place in El Salvador and Nicaragua between the project teams working in both countries in order to exchange experiences and put forward potential solutions. Regular meetings are held with representatives of the Spanish Red Cross which is also working in the Chinandega region and which is focusing on strengthening institutional capacity. In cooperation with the MoH, a family census was carried out in 25 communities and health brigades were formed. 495 health brigadeers were selected and will make up health committees in each of the 25 communities. A two day training in disaster preparedness was held and a health promotion day took place in Santa Teresa community with the participation of 30 Red Cross volunteers and some 400 of the local population. Community campaigns were undertaken in fumigation, treatment of insect breeding sites, water chlorination and clean ups; a survey of schools within the communities included in the project took place, looking particularly at sanitation issues.

An evaluation of activities taking place under the Golfo de Fonseca project is planned in early 2002 and terms of reference are currently being drawn up.

The regional health delegate is working with the National Societies of the region to set up health departments, particularly in the "Mitch" countries which have considerable funding for health activities. Departments have been created within the Guatemalan and Honduran Red Cross Societies, and the Salvadorean Red Cross is in the process of setting up a department.

Coordination with PNS improved considerably and promising strategic alliances are in place, particularly with OPS and UNICEF.

Institutional and Resource Development

The regional organizational development programme was hampered by the lack of a regional delegate during the last six months of the year. It is expected that a delegate will take up the position in early January 2002. However, significant progress was achieved in the area of communications, as described below.

Objective 1: To support and strengthen National Society governance and management

The series of training workshops focusing on national society governance and management planned and conducted jointly with the ICRC, continued during the second semester of the year. By December, all National Societies had undertaken at least one workshop involving personnel from headquarters and branches. In discussions with the ICRC, it was agreed to conduct follow-up training workshops during the year 2002, with the possibility of providing more tailor-made content to address specific National Society needs.

Objective 2: To promote integrated strategy and programme development.

The Costa Rican Red Cross was closely supported during its self-assessment process, and a specific workshop focusing on strategic planning and Strategy 2010 was held as a direct result of this. A second workshop will take place in early 2002.

Objective 3: To promote human resource development and volunteering.

The regional delegation continued to provide technical support to the Guatemalan national commission on volunteering and participated in its national forum.

A three day workshop on gender and multiculturalism was held in September for delegates and staff of the Guatemalan regional and country delegations.

Objective 4: To promote financial resource development

Little progress was achieved during the reporting period in this area.

Objective 5: To strengthen National Society capacity in communication and information.

The long-distance education project: 113 persons completed the educational sessions over the year: 55 from the Nicaraguan Red Cross, 23 from the Costa Rican Red Cross and 35 from the Red Cross Society of Panama. The three basic modules have been completed and participants have begun work on module IV focusing on resource development. The material for the institutional development module has yet to be printed, given a lack of funds. In the year 2002, the project will be expanded to include the Guatemalan Red Cross. Those who graduate from the course become “information promoters” and contribute to the information network which is being strengthened throughout the region.

Pilot Project for capacity building in communication: a main focus of work over the reporting period was the strengthening of communications departments at headquarters level and the creation of communications functions in the branches. At branch level, communicators are working with volunteers and developing contacts with journalists in the area. By December, there was a total of twelve communication offices at branch level: three in each of the National Societies of Costa Rica, El Salvador, Nicaragua and Panama which are participating in this project. An important development during the reporting period was the support from governance for the development of communications departments which was achieved through the approval of two documents entitled “guidelines for communications and image for the Americas sub region 1” and “the decalogue of communications and

disasters". This took place during the XVII Presidents and technical seminars meeting held in Tegucigalpa in September last. Six National Societies in the region: Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua and Panama carried out training courses for journalists, together with workshops for Red Cross personnel. A particular success was the teaching of a university diploma in communication and disasters which was carried out by the Guatemalan Red Cross, training 30 university teachers within the communications/media faculties on the subject of communication in disasters. The course was completed on 1 December. In addition, a total of 13 new communication materials were produced during the year.

Special project on disaster preparedness, media and the web site: A separate web site for disaster preparedness initiatives has been created. Disaster preparedness workshops and activities held in the region include a component relating to information and the media to promote awareness of the role of communications.

Development of the Regional Delegation's web site: Through the support of a technical consultant, the presentation of the regional delegation's web site has been improved. Informal training sessions have been provided to those responsible for the web page in the National Societies of El Salvador, Honduras, Guatemala, Ecuador and Uruguay. Coordination with the regional delegations in the Caribbean and South America has improved considerably and the publication of articles and information on the web site during the emergency operations in response to hurricanes Iris and Michelle was well managed. The regional delegation for Central America also worked in coordination with the regional delegations for the Caribbean and South America to provide information and articles relating to World AIDS Day and World Volunteers' Day.

To date, a total of 181 articles have been published on the web site over the year, as opposed to 78 in 2000 and 52 in 1999. As of mid December 2001, 641 electronic messages were received compared to 397 in the year 2000. It is estimated that, on average, there are a total of 7,166 visitor sessions per day to the regional delegation web site.

Regional Cooperation

Objective 1 To promote the training and recruitment of delegates from the region.

A planned Basic Training Course (BTC) in South America did not take place. However, there has been good progress on the recruitment of regional delegates. During the reporting period, 50 percent of delegates working in Central America were from the region.

Objective 2 To promote effective cooperation between the National Societies of the region and Red Cross partners.

The successful Presidents' and Technical Seminars meeting took place in Tegucigalpa in September and centred on key themes of strategy 2010. The structure of the meetings allowed for more interaction between national society governance, staff and volunteers, and promoted active participation and dialogue with a wide range of external partners. The role of volunteers was discussed widely, leading to a shift in paradigm, from the traditional youth, relief and women volunteers to a more integrated vision including "social" volunteers better equipped to deliver services in community health and disaster preparedness.

During the meeting, a number of key documents and protocols were finalized and adopted, including a regional agreement on disaster cooperation. A separate report is available and a mechanism for follow up is being established.

A special session of the Inter American Regional Committee (CORI) was also held during the meeting. It was agreed to develop a concrete plan of action for the implementation of the Santo Domingo

Declaration, in order to provide closer follow-up of its recommendations. The regional delegation supported the drafting of a document in a small commission of three National Societies, the ICRC and the Federation, and this has now been circulated to all National Societies for their comments.

Between 21 and 23 November, the Mexican Red Cross hosted a convention in which some 3,000 volunteers from the National Society took part. The Federation gave three presentations: one on the SPHERE project, one on Strategy 2010 and one on volunteerism in the region. Throughout the Convention, the Federation maintained an information stand providing information on the work in the region.

Objective 3 To promote effective cooperation, partnerships and alliances with non-Red Cross partners.

The launch of the World Disaster Report in July 2001 took place according to a different format. Five external partners provided a critical analysis of the main points, followed by a forum debate. The event was well attended and also covered on national television.

A status agreement with the government of Guatemala was finally signed on 14 September after almost four years of negotiations. The agreement has now been passed on to various government departments as part of its formal ratification process.

Regional Coordination and Management

Objective 1 To manage and coordinate Federation support to National Society programmes in the region effectively and efficiently.

After almost four years in Guatemala, the head of regional delegation left in early December to take up another position in the Federation; a new head of delegation has been appointed and will arrive in country in late January/early February 2002.

The regional delegation for Central America was selected for an external evaluation of programmes supported under the DFID partnership. The evaluation took place in October and initial indications are that the evaluation was favourable, stressing, however, the main challenges of long term planning and funding for regional delegations, as well as staffing issues.

Over the reporting period, initial steps were taken towards the setting up of a regional reporting unit which will eventually also cover the delegations in the Caribbean and in South America. The regional reporting delegate who joined the delegation in early July, held discussions with the delegates from the Caribbean and South America delegations, seeking solutions to ensure information flow and coordination. The delegate is currently covering the editing of all standard Federation reports in the Americas, together with a number of donor-specific reports. Some progress has been made in meeting the Federation's minimum reporting requirements. During the latter part of the year, emphasis was placed on the appeal documents for 2002 and in the first semester of 2002, the focus will be on the establishment of the reporting unit and identifying training needs and methodologies.

Objective 2 To support the financial management of the Federation regional and country delegations in Central America and the Caribbean.

During the reporting period, the work of the regional finance unit (RFU) resulted in improvements in the accounting work carried out in the Americas. As a result, during the last quarter of the year, all delegations completed their accounting on time and also sent in a timely cash request, in accordance with procedures. In addition, each delegation receives feedback and follow up from the RFU on its accounting work. All annual appeal budgets for programmes in the Americas for the year 2002 were processed under the BuSy format.

The finance and administration delegate, together with the finance officer, received support from the RFU in the setting up of the finance office within PADRU in Panama. A mission to Belize resulted in timely completion of all financial donor reports for the hurricane Iris operation. In addition, the unit assisted in completing outstanding ECHO reports due from the Caribbean region.

The regional finance unit is serving all delegations in the Americas since, as of October 2001, it is also liaising with the regional delegation for South America.

Outstanding needs

The revised budget for the appeal in 2001 received a coverage of xxx per cent. Donors are encouraged to provide support for appeal 01.19/2002 - this year's appeal for Central America - to continue to consolidate the progress achieved in 2001.

For further details please contact: Olaug Bergseth, Phone : 41 22 730 45 35; Fax: 41 22 733 03 95; email: bergseth@ifrc.org

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>.

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Central America Regional Programmes						ANNEX 1
APPEAL No. 01.26/2001		PLEDGES RECEIVED				03.01.2002
DONOR	CATEGORY	QUANTITY	UNIT	VALUE CHF	DATE	COMMENT
CASH						
REQUESTED IN APPEAL CHF ----->				3'155'099		TOTAL COVERAGE 87.3%
CASH CARRIED FORWARD						
SECRETARIAT PROG SUPPORT				433'595		
BRITISH - RC				770'994	04.01.01	GOLFO DE FONSECA
BRITISH - GOVT (DFID GRANT)				900'000	03.02.01	PARTNERSHIP IMPLEMENTATION PLAN 2001
BRITISH - RC				20'000	02.03.01	REGIONAL REPORTING DELEGATE
BRITISH - RC				63'397	01.08.2001	COUNTERPART IN RELIEF & DEVELOPMENT WORKSHOP
CANADIAN - RC		4'000	USD	6'672	05.12.2001	DIRECT TO HONDURAN RC
NORWEGIAN - GOVT/RC		150'000	NOK	28'245	30.03.2001	REGIONAL REPORTING
NORWEGIAN - GOVT/RC		778'302	NOK	148'789	15.05.2001	INSTITUTIONAL & RESOURCE DEV.
NORWEGIAN - GOVT/RC		100'000	NOK	18'679	27.11.2001	OD & HEALTH
NORWEGIAN - RC		50'000	NOK	9'339	05.12.2001	DIRECT TO HONDURAN RC
PRIVATES		100	USD	163	17.10.2001	
SWEDISH - GOVT		37'100	SEK	6'444	13.03.01	COORDINATION & MANAGEMENT
SWEDISH - GOVT		175'000	SEK	30'467	13.03.01	INSTITUTIONAL DEVELOPMENT
SWEDISH - GOVT		287'500	SEK	48'846	17.05.2001	INSTITUTIONAL DEVELOPMENT
SWEDISH - RC		50'000	SEK	7'915	05.12.2001	DIRECT TO HONDURAN RC
SUB/TOTAL RECEIVED IN CASH				2'493'545	CHF	79.0%
KIND AND SERVICES (INCLUDING PERSONNEL)						
DONOR	CATEGORY	QUANTITY	UNIT	VALUE CHF	DATE	COMMENT
Canada	Delegate(s)			79'671		
Netherlands	Delegate(s)			59'959		
Norway	Delegate(s)			59'959		
Great Britain	Delegate(s)			59'959		
SUB/TOTAL RECEIVED IN KIND/SERVICES				259'548	CHF	8.2%