

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

PAN AMERICAN DISASTER RESPONSE UNIT

28 June 2002

This Programme Update is intended for reporting on Annual Appeals.

Appeal No. 01.18/2002; Appeal Target CHF 1,916,067

Programme Update No. 1 Period covered: 1 January - 31 May 2002.

“At a Glance”

Appeal coverage: 58.7%

Related Appeals: 01.19/2002 Central America; 01.20/2002 Guatemala; 01.21/2002 Honduras;

01.22/2002 South America; 01.23/2002 Caribbean

Outstanding needs: CHF 791,634 (USD 533,482/EUR 537,828)

Update: During the reporting period, the internal structure of the Pan American Disaster Response Unit (PADRU) was strengthened and consolidated. One of the main areas of work was the drawing up of basic disaster response protocols and contingency plans in anticipation of potential disasters in the Americas, particularly in view of the forthcoming hurricane season. Two workshops were held in order to train regional intervention team (RIT) members: in Santa Cruz de la Sierra, Bolivia, and in Saint John's, Antigua & Barbuda. PADRU provided advice in disaster management and contingency planning in the context of the following disaster situations: volcanic activity in Mexico, floods in Bolivia, Ecuador and Peru, internal disturbances in Argentina, tremors in El Salvador and Panama, drought in Central America and flooding in Costa Rica and Panama. In addition, PADRU has continued to provide support for the operations in Belize and Cuba, in the wake of hurricanes Iris and Michelle which hit in late 2001.

Operational Developments:

Over the first five months of 2002, the Pan American Disaster Response Unit (PADRU) strengthened its internal structure by creating an organigram, defining specific functions relating to each post within the unit and, identifying outstanding personnel needs. One of the major tasks of the Unit was the formation of basic disaster response tools in coordination with the regional delegations of Central America, the Caribbean and South America including protocols and contingency plans, together with the launch of a programme in training and logistics for regional delegations and the 33 National Societies within Latin America and the Caribbean.

On 29 April 2002, an initial draft of the status agreement was exchanged between the Panamanian Government and the Federation. The Red Cross Society of Panama is supporting the Federation in negotiations with the government of Panama.

One of the major initiatives on the part of PADRU was the training of regional intervention team members. In April, a Spanish language Pan American workshop was held in Santa Cruz de la Sierra, Bolivia, for a total of 28 members of staff from 17 National Societies. Another workshop in English was held in May in Saint John's, Antigua & Barbuda, for 27 members of 9 National Societies, five branches of the British Red Cross and one branch of the Netherlands Red Cross. A representative of the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO) and OCHA-UNDAC participated in each of the workshops.

In the first five months of 2002, PADRU exchanged information on contingency planning and disaster management with the regional and country delegations in the Americas in the context of the following disaster events: volcanic activity in Mexico, floods in Bolivia, Ecuador and Peru, internal disturbances in Argentina, Colombia and Venezuela, drought in Central America and flooding in Costa Rica and Panama.

Disaster Response

Objective 1: To coordinate and, as necessary, participate in rapid disaster response at the request of a National Society facing a situation beyond its capacity.

In early 2002, PADRU's regional logistics unit (RLU), with the support of the Federation's regional delegation in Santo Domingo, procured a total of 29,495 zinc sheets and 12,000 kilos of nails for use in rehabilitation and construction activities which the Cuban Red Cross is carrying out following the passage of hurricane Michelle.

PADRU provided technical advice regarding the rehabilitation programmes under implementation by the Salvadorean Red Cross Society/Federation following the earthquakes of January and February 2001 in El Salvador, as to the selection of firms to undertake construction or rehabilitation of 25 health centres with funding from the Japanese Red Cross Society.

The water and sanitation delegate within the Unit supported the Belize Red Cross Society during the rehabilitation and construction phase of the operation in the wake of hurricane Iris, which includes the installation of 20 tanks for rain water collection.

In order to support the Guatemala regional delegation, PADRU provided a disaster management delegate to ensure regional coordination of the drought and food insecurity operation in Central America. The delegate undertook an evaluation of outstanding needs and the operation has been extended for a further five months.

PADRU supported the Red Cross Society of Panama with conducting a damage assessment survey in Bocas del Toro, Panama, the drawing up of a plan of action and the compilation of information as a basis for the publication of information bulletins during the floods which occurred in May in Panama. For a 15 day period, a PADRU disaster management delegate and a water and sanitation delegate were seconded to the operation carried out by the National Society during the floods in the Bocas del Toro region. PADRU also supplied a water tanker to ensure the distribution of potable water

At the end of May, PADRU procured 12 VHF radios, 12 antennas, 24 batteries and 3 software sets for portable computers, a repeater and telecommunication equipment in order to provide support to the Santo Domingo regional delegation and the Haitian National Red Cross Society. The RLU also provided support in researching suppliers, the purchase of goods and follow up for the hurricane Michelle operation. The RLU inventoried German Red Cross relief stock stored with the Panamanian Red Cross,

Objective 2: To consolidate, by the end of July 2002, the Pan American Disaster Response Unit and to further develop its capacity.

The process towards signature of a status agreement between the Federation in Panama and the Panamanian government is progressing well, thanks to the support of the Red Cross Society of Panama.

Through the Federation's vehicle leasing system, the vehicle fleet will be expanded to include eight 4x4 vehicles with a view to supporting regional delegations and national societies for both routine work and relief

operations. Several improvements have been made to the PADRU facilities and warehouse, including the security system, electric circuits and guttering, together with maintenance of the area where stock is warehoused.

The regional logistics unit worked during the first months of 2002 in completing inventories of satellite material in the regional delegations, together with the redistribution, maintenance and upkeep of 18 pieces of water distribution equipment including bladders, pipes and water purification systems. The Unit also dealt with the transfer, receipt and maintenance of the inventory of a container with water and sanitation equipment from the floods operation which took place in Venezuela in 2000.

As a result of collaboration with the telecommunications company, Ericsson, the RLU has in stock two Ericsson containers which include cellular telephone switchboards which can be transferred to the field in the event of disasters.

Disaster Response Preparedness

Objective 1: To develop and deliver a comprehensive disaster response training and capacity building service so that national society disaster response potential is maximized.

The drawing up and refining of three basic protocols in disaster response was the focus of the Unit's work in March and April, taking into account the criteria according to which a national society may request support from the Federation through a regional delegation, the criteria according to which a regional delegation may request support from PADRU and the criteria and procedures for the activation of PADRU and the basic operational structure to be put in place in the event of a relief operation in the field.

Between 16 and 18 April, the head of the RLU and the regional programme coordinator for the drought and food insecurity operation in Central America took part in a meeting of relief directors from Central America and Panama which was held in Guatemala with a view to harmonizing criteria in relation to relief plans and protocols.

With regard to training, PADRU worked on the standardization of methodology, the curriculum, materials and presentations for the RITs training programme both in Spanish and English. These materials were used for the workshops which took place in Santa Cruz de la Sierra, Bolivia, and Saint John's, Antigua & Barbuda.

In early March, a national intervention team (NIT) workshop was held for the Red Cross Society of Panama in coordination with the Guatemala regional delegation and with the participation of 20 members from the National Society branches, together with representatives of the National Societies of Chile, Guatemala, Honduras and Peru. Facilitators included the head of PADRU, the head of the RLU, a disaster management delegate and a consultant working with PADRU.

In the framework of inter-institutional cooperation, on 12 and 13 April, PADRU delegates implemented a training session on disaster management and cooperation for 16 members of Ericsson response in Central America. The Unit contributed to the drawing up of a protocol for transfer of the Ericsson containers with cellular telephone switchboards in the event of a disaster.

In view of preparations for the 2002 hurricane season, the directors general of 7 national societies from the Caribbean, representatives of three British Red Cross branches, representatives of the Caribbean regional delegation, PADRU and the International Disaster Response Unit (IDRU) of the American Red Cross met between 27 and 29 May to carry out contingency and response planning in anticipation of potential disaster situations.

One of PADRU's priorities is the inclusion in the RITs training programme of a gender policy specific to disasters. In the two RITs workshops held in Bolivia and Antigua & Barbuda, specific modules were introduced on the concept of non-discrimination of women, gender equality and the essential participation of women in disaster response situations, particularly from the woman's point of view as an actor in initial response and as part of a potentially vulnerable group during disaster events. The humanitarian charter within

the SPHERE project and the ten stipulations of the Code of Conduct were essential tools in the drawing up of material for the workshops.

In the course of the RITs training sessions, it was noted that the level of participation of women is currently around 20 per cent, as a result of which the regional delegations, PADRU and the 33 National Societies in Latin America need to try to ensure a gender focus in the area of relief work.

Objective 2: To contribute to and develop improved early warning systems and communications within and between regional delegations/National Societies, and to promote knowledge-sharing to foster institutional learning.

In February 2002, the head of PADRU took part in the evaluation of the Peru earthquake operation 2001 which took place in Arequipa with the participation of the president and the relief coordinator from the Peruvian Red Cross, the presidents of eight branches, the head of the Spanish Red Cross delegation in Peru, technical personnel from the Federation office in Peru and the head of the regional delegation for South America in Buenos Aires.

In accordance with the standardization of disaster response mechanisms, PADRU began a process of compilation of information on the formulation of contingency plans, with a view to issuing a guide with standardized formats to assist the national societies in the Americas in improving contingency planning.

PADRU provided both technical and financial support to the Guatemalan Red Cross and the Guatemala country delegation during the Participatory Hygiene and Sanitation Transformation (PHAST) workshop which took place in Guatemala between 24 February and 1 March. As a complement to the workshop materials, the PHAST water and sanitation participative methodology was translated into Spanish with the support of the Netherlands Red Cross.

In February, PADRU's water and sanitation delegate took part in a meeting in Washington of the health department of the Secretariat, regional health delegates and representatives of the Pan American Health Organization. The delegate also took part as a lecturer in the Conference on Sanitation in Emergencies which was held between 10 and 12 April in Loughborough, United Kingdom.

In order to reinforce cooperation and coordination, members of PADRU have participated in regular meetings with the heads of the regional delegations in Central America, South America and the Caribbean.

Between 9 and 13 April, the head of PADRU took part in the refresher workshop for OCHA-UNDAC teams in Santo Domingo.

Coordination and Management

Between 7 and 9 March, a coordination meeting was held with regional disaster preparedness delegates from the three regional delegations in the Americas, the head of PADRU and the Federation's head of operations for America and the Pacific, with the aim of achieving an overall agreement regarding the RITs training programme, together with an appropriate format for the drawing up of protocols outlining the system for activation of response mechanisms to ensure improved planning in the Americas for disaster preparedness and response.

PADRU ensured logistics support for the organization of the annual planning meeting for the Americas and the harmonization meeting with the ICRC which took place in Panama City between 11 and 15 March. In this meeting, officers from the Americas department and all regional delegates working in Latin America and the Caribbean took part.

During the first five months of 2002, discussions were held with the World Food Programme (WFP), ACNUR, UNICEF and Médicos sin Fronteras to enhance coordination and nurture potential strategic alliances.

The regional delegation for South America in Buenos Aires seconded a Red Cross DP officer to PADRU for three months to work on standardization of training materials and the curriculum for the RITs course, together

with a disaster preparedness delegate from the Spanish Red Cross who was seconded from Bolivia to work for a two month period in order to draw up disaster response protocols.

Outstanding needs

The accomplishments of PADRU to date have been well supported from the Irish Government, the Canadian, British and Spanish Red Cross Societies, and DFID. A large percentage of the appeal, however, is yet uncovered.

It is also vital to obtain funds to promote human resources who were trained in the RITs workshops through grants, trainee assignments and rotation systems which can be implemented during disasters as well as in preparedness work.

Funds are urgently required to purchase two kits for disaster management delegates with a lap top, satellite telephone and basic software, plus one kit for finance and administration in disasters with a lap top with CODA finance software to be used as contingency equipment in view of the arrival of the hurricane season.

For further details please contact: Olaug Bergseth, Phone : 41 22 740 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>.

John Horekens
Head
Relationship Management Department

Santiago Gil
Head
Americas Department

| Pan American Disaster Response Unit | | | | | | ANNEX 1 |
|--|----------|-------------------------|------|------------------|------------|---------------------------------|
| APPEAL No.01.18/2002 | | PLEDGES RECEIVED | | | | 28.06.2002 |
| DONOR | CATEGORY | QUANTITY | UNIT | VALUE CHF | DATE | COMMENT |
| CASH | | | | | | |
| REQUESTED IN APPEAL CHF -----> | | | | 1'916'067 | | TOTAL COVERAGE 58.7% |
| CASH CARRIED FORWARD | | | | 314'990 | | |
| BRITISH - GOVT/DFID | | | | 12'500 | 19.02.2002 | |
| CANADIAN - RC | | | | 150'000 | CAD | 155'040 04.06.2002 |
| IRISH - GOVT | | | | 350'000 | EUR | 512'295 28.03.2002 |
| SUB/TOTAL RECEIVED IN CASH | | | | 994'825 | CHF | 51.9% |
| KIND AND SERVICES (INCLUDING PERSONNEL) | | | | | | |
| DONOR | CATEGORY | QUANTITY | UNIT | VALUE CHF | DATE | COMMENT |
| CANADA | | | | | | 19'712 |
| GREAT BRITAIN | | | | | | 88'541 |
| SPAIN | | | | | | 21'355 |
| SUB/TOTAL RECEIVED IN KIND/SERVICES | | | | | | 129'608 CHF 6.8% |