

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

13 June 2002

This Programme Update is intended for reporting on Annual Appeals.

Appeal No. 01.19/2002

Appeal Target CHF 3,890,674

Programme Update No. 1 Period covered: 1 January - 30 April 2002

“At a Glance”

Appeal coverage: 34.5 %

Related Appeals: 01.21/2002 Honduras; 01.18/2002 Pan American Disaster Response Unit

Outstanding needs: 2,590,134

Update: The promotion of integrated programming, with a model of the integrated community-based disaster preparedness programme is well advanced. A proposal was put forward in February at a meeting of relief directors, PNS representatives and disaster preparedness (DP) delegates, following which detailed input was provided, forming the basis of the current review. An evaluation of the Golfo de Fonseca project highlighted the potential of this project and the need to reinforce its integrated nature by further developing the DP and organizational development components.

During the reporting period, several initiatives were taken to generate strategic alliances with external partners, particularly in the context of the drought operation. Furthermore, a meeting between representatives of Central American national societies, Ministries of Health and the Pan American Health Organization resulted in an agreement focusing on enhanced cooperation. A regional planning meeting was held in March, focusing on the current appeal, the orientation of appeal 2003/2004 and the structures required in order to provide maximum support to the national societies in the Americas. This was followed by a harmonisation meeting with the ICRC, reviewing new models for Federation/ICRC cooperation.

Operational Developments:

The severe drought continues to affect El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras and Nicaragua, and it is feared that the El Niño phenomenon will further complicate the situation. Floods affecting Central American countries as of mid May have not impacted on drought stricken areas in which the Federation is implementing its operation, with

the exception of the departments of El Paraíso and Valle in Honduras. In those communities which were flooded, the planting of seeds under the agricultural recovery component had not yet begun. In certain communities where migro-irrigation systems are in place, following these heavy rains, it will be possible to begin the planting of seeds.

Disaster Response

The operation in response to the drought has been reinforced through the hiring of a regional coordinator who was seconded from the Pan American Disaster Response Unit (PADRU); activities identified in the appeal have proceeded on course within the limitations of the appeal response. At a meeting of relief directors and disaster preparedness delegates (see the DP section below), information was shared on a regional and country basis concerning the possibilities of further irregularities in rainfall and potential effects of El Niño later in the year.

For the response to the drought situation, please see appeal (31/01) Drought and Food Insecurity in Central America and related operation updates on the Federation's web site www.ifrc.org.

Fortunately, the disasters which occurred in the region over the reporting period were minor and were managed by the respective national societies through mobilisation of the national intervention teams (NITs).

Disaster Preparedness

Objective 1: To finalise and evaluate an integrated CBDP model; to implement and consolidate an integrated approach to community based disaster preparedness and risk management.

In accordance with the resolutions of the XVII meeting of Presidents and Technical Seminars which took place in Tegucigalpa in September 2001, work on the review of the community based disaster preparedness programme is well advanced and a proposal for a revised model is currently under finalization. The programme is being reviewed in order to build upon the successes and develop a more integrated community approach; this initiative also aims to ensure more appropriate support in view of vulnerabilities at community level, contributing to the development of the community in the medium and long-term.

Between late November 2000 and February 2001, a research team conducted the initial review of documents, and held interviews with national society and community members. In February, a meeting was held in Guatemala to present the initial results of the review to the disaster preparedness directors of the national societies of the region, with the participation of the DP delegates and the French, German, Italian and Netherlands Red Cross Societies. Representatives of UNDP, the Latin American Faculty of Social Sciences (FLACSO), the Guatemalan national disaster coordination body (CONRED), the Inter American Development Bank (IDB), OFDA and Médicos sin Fronteras (MSF) were also present. The initial report was circulated and feedback received from numerous stakeholders. In the first week of May, CBDP coordinators from the Costa Rican and Guatemalan Red Cross Societies began the development of the first new model based on recommendations from the review and the feedback received.

At a meeting of DP directors and DP delegates held between 17 and 18 April, the tentative integrated model was shared and approved by national society relief directors. The following aspects of the community based disaster preparedness programme were underlined: the need for an initial DP assessment, together with an analysis of vulnerability and capacity at community level. In addition, training components in health, principles and values, management of the environment, water and sanitation and project management are considered essential in order for the community to implement sustainable projects and to carry out effective risk management.

The next step in this process will be the development of the final model jointly with the health and organizational development departments, and the sharing of this with PNS and national societies in June 2002 in order to present a unified proposal to DIPECHO and other organizations. It is expected that the final document with the

proposed new model of the community based disaster preparedness project will be in place by the end of June 2002.

During the reporting period, the regional evaluation of the CBDP programme financed by CIDA, Canada, was conducted and community-based micro-mitigation projects were completed.

Objective 2: To strengthen disaster preparedness planning and the disaster response capacity of the national societies in the region.

The Guatemala regional delegation, in coordination with the Pan American Disaster Response Unit, held a workshop for national intervention team training in Panama from 1 to 6 March. The Red Cross Society of Panama hosted the event, and the National Societies of Costa Rica, Guatemala, Nicaragua, Chile and Peru participated in the course. Two NIT workshops will take place in Costa Rica and Nicaragua in the second half of the year.

Between 17 and 26 March the first regional training of trainers course in the Better Programming Initiative (BPI) took place in Quito, Ecuador. The aim of the workshop was to create a network of facilitators from the National Societies and delegations of Central and South America, able to promote and disseminate BPI methodology in the Americas. As a result of the workshop, an implementation plan of action was drawn up for the six national societies which took part and the regional delegations of Guatemala and Buenos Aires.

In an effort to revise and standardise disaster related plans, the National Societies of El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras and Nicaragua are currently reviewing their national relief and disaster response plan. The Salvadorean Red Cross Society is undertaking an analysis of past experience and on 16 and 17 May met with the relief directors of the Guatemalan and Honduran Red Cross Societies in order to promote coordination, and as far as possible, to standardize procedures. The emergency response and contingency plans have been shared with PADRU for analysis and the development of standardized formats. PADRU has also done considerable work on the regional response protocols with support from the regional delegations, incorporating the 'Agreement for Mutual Support' approved at the Presidents' meeting in September. It is expected that revised national disaster response plans will be in place by the end of August 2002.

In April the meeting of the DP delegates and the relief directors as well as PNS representatives produced a progress update and a plan of action for the implementation of the resolutions of the Presidents' meeting, taking into consideration the Inter American Regional Committee (CORI) plan of action. At this meeting, the curriculum for DP training provided by the Secretariat was also reviewed and accepted as the basis for national society training. Directors will further review and select modules to be implemented during the second half of the year.

Pan regional coordination has been strengthened through a meeting with PADRU and regional delegations and through the planning meeting for the Americas conducted in early March in Panama. The 'Agreement for Mutual Support' and the 'Decision Making Guide' developed at the Presidents and Technical Seminars meeting in Tegucigalpa were also promoted and circulated amongst national societies and PNS in the region. In the interests of further developing the regional strategy and coordination, DP delegates participated in the development of a regional work matrix and regional delegation strategy meetings which took place in January in Guatemala and in Panama in March.

From 22 to 26 April the first Pan American regional intervention team course took place in Santa Cruz de la Sierra, Bolivia; the National Societies of Costa Rica, Guatemala, Honduras and Panama took part in the training sessions. The regional delegations have supported PADRU's lead in revising and consolidating the regional intervention team course, providing lesson plans and materials, as well as participating in the delivery of the training.

Work has begun to carry out inventories of all national societies and PNS in the region; the focal points for this exercise are the DP delegates at country level and the disaster preparedness coordinators within each national society.

Objective 3: To contribute actively to the development and dissemination of new ideas and research in the field of disasters and in the development of strategic alliances.

In addition to the integrated community disaster preparedness programme review mentioned under objective 1, two research projects are underway. A “design without borders” project is currently being initiated through the Norwegian institute “Norsk Form” and the Rafael Landivar university in Guatemala. The focus is on the design of temporary shelter accommodation. The project is coordinated by the health department of the Guatemalan Red Cross and is receiving support from the regional delegation. A presentation of this project was made at the regional meeting of relief directors and disaster preparedness delegates in April and feedback was provided. The second project is a research thesis on coordination in disasters in which the researcher is looking at the coordination between various levels and elements of the Red Cross, local authorities and community groups, in view of factors that lead to smooth implementation of plans and those which impede this. Research is being conducted with the cooperation of the Guatemalan Red Cross and the national and regional delegations. The regional delegation has also supported the grant application from CIDA for an investigator to conduct participatory research in association with the implementation of the Better Programme Initiative in the region. Should this grant be approved, research would commence in October 2002.

Humanitarian Values

Objective 1: To support the promotion of the Red Cross principles internally and externally.

A youth strategy was drawn up for the period 2002 - 2005 whereby the regional youth programme sets out its major goals: to advocate for the participation of youth as an integral part of national society development; to develop the leadership skills of youth volunteers; to implement the youth policy and strategy in each of the national societies; to advocate for youth representation in the national society governing bodies; to promote active participation of youth in community development, health, disaster response and preparedness and in the *promotion of the fundamental principles and humanitarian values.*

In Panama, the National Society includes information on the Red Cross principles in all types of training courses, whilst in the Mexican Red Cross dissemination of the fundamental principles is part of the training of youth volunteers. In Honduras, volunteers involved in the school brigades are given training on the fundamental principles and in Costa Rica, workshops and courses are also given on this theme. Over the reporting period, the induction course for volunteers in Honduras was revised, together with the regulations governing volunteer participation in the National Society.

Objective 2: To develop and support Red Cross advocacy initiatives.

In Panama, through the youth programme, workshops focusing on HIV/AIDS were carried out in three cities for the benefit of 2,000 children. As a result, 50 new volunteers also joined the programme and will work in the dissemination of information on HIV/AIDS. In Mexico, HIV/AIDS dissemination work began recently; in early 2002, the first workshop was held for 40 facilitators who were trained in HIV/AIDS related topics. In Honduras, to date, workshops have taken place in 26 cities throughout the country with a total of 17,420 participants. The youth programme in El Salvador has carried out seven workshops in seven communities of four cities, reaching 2,940 children.

The youth programme launched a pre-campaign in anticipation of World Red Cross Day, the main aim of which was to involve as many schools and youth organizations as possible in the fight against HIV/AIDS related stigma.

Objective 3: To support Red Cross school brigades and youth leadership training.

In Mexico, during the reporting period, three training of trainers workshops were held, as a result of which 114 new volunteer facilitators were trained to work with the school brigades.

Objective 4: To promote initiatives in peace-building and non-violence

In January, the Costa Rican Red Cross held the national Red Cross youth camp in which 632 young people from all parts of Costa Rica participated, together with four volunteers from the Salvadorean Red Cross, and 14 from the Nicaraguan Red Cross. The main objectives of the camp were the promotion of national/international friendship and education in the culture of peace. The participants learned to strengthen their own sense of values and to respect the values of others.

Health and Care**Objective 1: To support and strengthen national society health departments across the region, focusing on their capacity to develop and deliver sustainable health programmes which are in line with Strategy 2010.**

Over the reporting period, the Salvadorean Red Cross Society officially established a community health department with three members of staff. One of the achievements over the reporting period is the formation of the Honduran Red Cross (HRC) health commission. A national health coordinator, administrative assistant and an assistant responsible for projects linked to HIV/AIDS are now working in the HRC health department. In Guatemala, the delegation has helped the Guatemalan Red Cross to draw up a profile for a community health assistant to continue progress with IMCI (Integrated Management of Childhood Illnesses). Meanwhile, the local staff member responsible for health in the delegation joined the GRC and the American Red Cross in a number of meetings and branch visits to learn about IMCI in order to begin preparatory work in the four branches identified for Federation support.

Objective 2: To strengthen and increase HIV/AIDS programming.

As the regional health delegate completed his mission on 10 April, the regional delegation is currently in the process of recruiting a new regional health delegate who will be based in Guatemala. One of the immediate priorities of the health delegate will be the drawing up of a strategy for the region as regards HIV/AIDS programming. In Honduras, a pilot project focusing on HIV/AIDS prevention and reduction of stigma will be initiated. The project manager was recruited in May and is currently drawing up a plan of action for project implementation.

Under the Cocibolca project in Nicaragua, HIV/AIDS awareness sessions and first aid training were held in four branches, reaching a total of 40 communities.

A meeting held on 10 - 12 April between representatives of the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO), Ministries of Health and Red Cross Societies in the region focused on potential cooperation in the area of HIV/AIDS (see the section on regional cooperation). Discussions centred on strengthening peer education, joint campaigns to reduce stigma and to promote the rights of infected persons, improved care for HIV/AIDS patients and their families, and the possibility of working in communities with HIV positive children.

Objective 3: To promote integrated community development through the Golfo de Fonseca pilot project.

In **El Salvador**, over the reporting period, using the "Where there is no Doctor" manual, the project coordinator based at the la Unión branch trained two technical project staff in the areas of nutrition, child growth monitoring and vaccination in preparation for a nutritional survey in selected communities.

A decision was taken to prioritise the construction of a warehouse and garage for the Santa Rosa de Lima branch, and the planning of the second phase of branch rehabilitation for the La Unión branch began by renovation of the bathrooms and internal and external painting of the branch premises.

Three meetings took place with the Intipuka branch to discuss how the project could best benefit the branch and which should be the areas of cooperation. Furthermore, the project staff facilitated a strengths and weakness analysis of the branch.

To improve the communities' response to disasters, the project purchased two first aid kits per community to supplement those provided to schools last year. In February and March, the first phase of the community disaster preparedness workshop was held in all communities, and each community formulated a risk map.

In **Nicaragua**, at national level, an assistant joined the health department who will provide support to the project. In Chinandega, new branch management, elected at the end of last year, took up office at the beginning of January. In preparation for the evaluation, information was gathered at all different levels of those involved in the project and was later discussed in a meeting with the branch management and the health department of the Nicaraguan Red Cross. As a result, it was decided to appoint a new project coordinator who took up office on 1 April.

With the use of the manual, "Where there is no Doctor", the project field staff were trained in home remedies, the use of modern medicines, the use of antibiotics and first aid kits, and in each of the 25 communities involved, first aid training of community volunteers was completed.

The external British Red Cross (BRCS)/Federation evaluation of the Golfo de Fonseca project due to take place early in the year was postponed until April. Much of the reporting period was taken up with preparation for the evaluation and in participation in the review. Tools designed for the evaluation were: a community self assessment format to be used as baseline information for future community visits; a series of branch focus group studies regarding the branch participation in the project areas; a strengths/weakness analysis within each branch and at headquarters level to pinpoint areas of need; a volunteer baseline study to be used as a basis for formulating a volunteer database.

The evaluation which was led by an external consultant with the participation of two members of the British Red Cross staff, a member of the Secretariat in Geneva, the project coordinator, the regional organizational development (OD) delegate and members of the health departments of the Salvadorean and Nicaraguan Red Cross, took place between 4 and 25 April. Results were largely positive, stressing the potential of the project. Recommendations include that the project should be considered as a programme, made up of different country projects; that the health component had been implemented most, but that more emphasis was required in the areas of disaster preparedness and particularly in organizational development, and the need for the regional team of delegates to become more involved in the project as it evolves. A full evaluation report is under preparation.

The evaluation team held a debriefing session with the Guatemala regional delegation on 22 April. It was agreed that the regional team should contribute more fully to the design and implementation of pilot integrated community development programmes and projects.

Organizational and Resource Development

On 28 December 2001, a regional organizational development delegate joined the regional delegation, following some eight months during which the previous OD delegate had worked as acting head of regional delegation.

Objective 1: To support and strengthen national society governance and management.

The regional OD delegate participated in two meetings of the Statutes revision committee of the Guatemalan Red Cross, which also included a representative of the ICRC and the Federation's head of country delegation.

The Statutes of the Nicaraguan Red Cross are under revision; a committee has been established and an agenda and work programme put forward. It is anticipated that the revised Statutes will be in place by November 2002. A workshop on governance and management was held for the governing board of the Nicaraguan Red Cross which took office in January 2002. The workshop was facilitated by the ICRC and the Federation and focused on self-assessment of the National Society and guidelines for National Society governance, leading to discussions on the role of the governing body.

Based on the previous work of the head of the country delegation in Nicaragua, and after a meeting in Managua with the regional OD delegate, a written commitment was obtained from the President of the Nicaraguan Red Cross to commence an organization-wide change process which will begin in June 2002, facilitated by the regional OD delegate. As a result, it is expected that a new strategic plan, together with operational plans for the headquarters and branches, will be developed by the end of the year.

The self-assessment process is to take place in El Salvador, Guatemala and Nicaragua in 2002, having been completed in Costa Rica, Honduras, Mexico and Panama in 2001.

Objective 2: To promote the development of integrated programmes at branch level, addressing basic community needs.

The organizational development delegate participated in the evaluation of the Golfo de Fonseca project which took place in April, particularly in view of the OD component (see health and care section above). In the course of the evaluation, the OD delegate facilitated a workshop at the Chinandega branch with the participation of representatives from the executive board, the management and volunteers. The OD delegate also met with the Canadian Red Cross delegation in Managua to ensure that the CRC's proposed project in three branches will not conflict with the proposed Nicaraguan Red Cross change process, which will be facilitated as of early June.

Objective 3: To promote human resource development and effective volunteer management.

The regional OD delegate met with the head of the American Red Cross (ARC) regional delegation in Guatemala regarding the conditions for potential use of a volunteer management manual developed by the ARC. Collaboration with the ARC's organizational development staff was also discussed with a view to consolidating efforts undertaken in OD.

Over the reporting period, in order to promote the integration of the "social volunteer" the induction course for volunteers in Honduras was revised, together with the regulations governing volunteer participation in the National Society.

Objective 4: To strengthen national society capacity in communications and information and to support activities in communication and advocacy.

The regional annual meeting with the directors of communication of six national societies in Central America took place at the end of February in Antigua Guatemala. Discussions focused on the need for improved internal communication, on guidelines for the strengthening of capacity in communications and national work plans for 2002.

A new group of students were identified to take part in the long distance education programme (LDEP) in Costa Rica and Panama. A workshop was held in Cuba between 27 February and 1 March in order to introduce the programme to the National Society. A total of 20 participants took part including representatives of branches, journalists and the director of communications. An analysis of how the LDEP programme strengthens capacity in communications took place, and it is anticipated that the programme will begin in Cuba during the second half of the year.

The national societies of El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Panama, Nicaragua, Uruguay and Venezuela are now managing their own web sites with the technical support of the regional delegation's web master. Staff from the Guatemalan and Salvadorean Red Cross Societies received training in the development of, management and updating of web pages. The regional information/reporting delegate for the Caribbean also undertook training with the Guatemala regional delegation's web master, in order to construct and maintain a web site for the Caribbean region, to be launched on Red Cross day, 8 May.

The Guatemala regional delegation facilitated the organization of the annual "Inter American Red Cross Forum on Communications and Development" in coordination with the regional delegation for South America. The forum took place in Bolivia in mid May.

Constant dialogue was maintained with the communications departments of each of the national societies and a total of 8 news articles from information promoters were posted on the web.

In Costa Rica, a work plan has been established for information promoters (those who graduate from the LDEP). Identification of the additional three branches which will be included in capacity building initiatives is in progress, as well as the definition of priorities as regards information for each branch. The Nicaraguan Red Cross has selected three further branches for participation in the capacity building project; furthermore, formal agreements between these branches and the headquarters have been signed. The Red Cross Society of Panama has also selected three additional branches and a number of information workshops have been held. Information promoters have launched a community radio programme from the Bugaba branch in the department of Chiriqui. The project is on hold in El Salvador at present, as a result of changes taking place in the communications department.

Objective 5: To promote awareness and provide technical training on disaster information issues and practices for national societies and the mass media.

Four lectures were given by the regional information delegate at the Rafael Landivar university on new information technologies for disasters and the code of ethics in information management. An average of 200 students attended the lectures. Training materials were further developed and the modules from the long distance education programme were revised and updated, based on results of the course last year. An interactive CD for distance learning was created and placed on the web.

A specific section for health issues was created on the regional web site, together with a section for the launch of the global campaign against HIV/AIDS related stigma and discrimination. Much work was carried out during the reporting period in preparation for the launch of the campaign.

The Costa Rican Red Cross celebrated the first disaster preparedness fair between 18 and 22 March in order to promote awareness of the work carried out by the National Society in the area of DP. Conferences were attended by an average of 150 people per day, and there was good media coverage of the event.

Regional Cooperation

Objective 1: To promote effective cooperation between the national societies of the region and Red Cross partners.

In order to implement more effectively and efficiently the Federation's *Strategy 2010*, the Regional OD delegate facilitated a one-day workshop in Guatemala to help all Federation delegates in the region to assess their strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats as a regional team and to propose a regional team development plan. This internal OD process was finished in a further all-day meeting in Panama. This exercise will serve as the basis for improving the regional team's services to National Societies and PNSs working in the region. The OD delegate began working closely with the new HoRD to write a regional strategic plan based on these analyses, and covering a four year period.

On 14 and 15 March, a meeting focusing on the Federation-ICRC harmonisation process was attended by both institutions' heads of delegations and organizational development/cooperation delegates of the Americas, as well as key persons from the respective headquarters in Geneva. The outcome of the meeting was a plan for Federation-ICRC harmonisation for Latin America and the Caribbean identifying main areas of cooperation and priority countries.

In order to support this process, the institutional development delegate based in Honduras who completed his mission at the beginning of May, has been assigned as regional communication delegate in Mexico as of early June. In close cooperation with the ICRC, he will focus on reinforcing Movement activities in advocacy, communication and promotion of the Fundamental Principles and Humanitarian Values.

During the reporting period, the new HoRD visited all the national society Presidents in the region, to assess their needs as regards support and to strengthen the communication links with the regional delegation. During these visits, the HoRD met PNS representatives and external stakeholders to present updates on programmes and strategies.

Objective 2: To promote the training and recruitment of delegates from the region.

The organization and staffing unit of the Secretariat organized the annual human resource seminar which took place in Geneva between 22 and 26 April. The administration coordinator from the Guatemala regional delegation who is responsible for human resources, attended the seminar dealing with major human resource issues and attended by national societies, delegations and representatives of the ICRC. The seminar focused on working with diversity, different methodologies for recruitment and sharing of experiences, promoting a network of human resource professionals.

It is anticipated that candidates from the Americas will attend the spanish-speaking Basic Training Course to be organized by the regional delegations of Buenos Aires and Guatemala in the second half of the year.

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

Dialogue was initiated with the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB), Guatemala office, to assess the possibilities of collaborative efforts with the regional delegation, as well as with the Guatemalan Red Cross. A similar dialogue was undertaken with the Guatemalan office of UNAIDS. Contact was also made with some of the key Guatemalan businesses and the international advertising agency, Saatchi & Saatchi, to assess potential collaboration with the regional delegation and the Guatemalan Red Cross.

Steps were taken over the reporting period to create links between the Red Cross regional youth network and external partners. Meetings were held with representatives of Save the Children and there is interest in creating alliances in the area of HIV/AIDS, disaster preparedness, promotion of a culture of peace and first aid. The youth section of the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) was also approached and dialogue established on potential cooperation.

The Federation disaster preparedness trainee delegate in Guatemala is participating in monthly meetings of a group of leading Guatemalan business men/women working to alleviate the suffering caused by the drought. The group has offered to donate seeds to the Guatemalan Red Cross for one of the most drought-affected areas.

The HoRD and a team of delegates met with managers of La Prensa Libre (one of the major newspapers in Guatemala) to obtain support for both the regional delegation and the Guatemalan Red Cross in the campaign against the drought. The regional OD delegate, together with the head of the country delegation for Guatemala, the Vice President and the Director General of the Guatemalan Red Cross met with two consultants regarding the next steps in the development of a marketing strategy for the Guatemalan Red Cross.

Each of the country delegations held meetings with ECHO representatives in January 2002, in order to determine funding possibilities through the European Union. The HoRD also held a meeting with the ECHO representative for Central America based in Nicaragua to discuss future cooperation with ECHO which is focusing primarily on programmes in food security, water and sanitation and health. In Nicaragua, the Nicaraguan Red Cross, the PNS and the Federation have formed a consortium with a view to presenting a joint funding proposal to PRRAC in early July.

A collaboration meeting was held between 10 and 12 April in Antigua Guatemala with 48 representatives of Red Cross Societies, Central American health authorities, the Federation and the Pan American Health Organization. Results focus on concrete actions to be undertaken to realise cooperation in the areas of disaster response and health; community health, HIV/AIDS and blood. A memorandum of understanding between the Federation and PAHO was signed on 15 May 2002. It is anticipated that such cooperation will result in strengthened national efforts for HIV/AIDS through a strategic Red Cross/PAHO/Ministries of Health alliance; an improved situation as regards recruitment and retention of voluntary blood donors; strengthened alliance mechanisms to carry out joint community health actions (IMCI); strengthened national disaster preparedness, response and mitigation capacity through effective coordination by Red Cross/PAHO/Ministries of Health.

During the reporting period, visits to the Finnish and Norwegian Consulate and Embassy were scheduled with the participation of the HoRD and the regional information delegate. Future visits to the Embassies and cooperation agencies of Britain, Canada, Denmark, Holland, Sweden and the USA are being arranged.

Coordination and Management

Objective 1: To manage and coordinate Federation support to national society programmes in the region effectively and efficiently.

Following the departure of the head of regional delegation in December 2001, a new head of regional delegation reached Guatemala at the end of February 2002. With the imminent recruitment of a regional health delegate, the regional delegation will benefit from a full team in place. The HoRD was briefed in Geneva and also attended the induction course for delegates at the Secretariat in April 2002.

The regional team participated in the planning meeting for the Americas which was held in Panama between 11 and 13 March. The meeting focused on objectives for 2002 and orientation for 2003/2004, particularly in view of the reduction in scale of delegations currently in the "Mitch" countries.

In Nicaragua, cooperation and collaboration between the PNS present in the country and the Federation has been reinforced, providing an opportunity to integrate programme planning with the Nicaraguan Red Cross more effectively in the major areas of health, DP and organizational development.

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

Over the reporting period, the regional finance unit (RFU) consolidated the tasks which are included in its mandate. In March, all delegations in the Americas carried out the closure of the month with no delay. One of the financial analysts spent two months (March and April) working at the Secretariat in the Finance Operations Service in order to gain first hand experience of the work carried out in Geneva. This has also helped to build the capacity of the RFU.

Between 25 February and 1 March, the RFU undertook a mission to the regional delegation for South America in Buenos Aires to work with the regional finance officer and the delegates. The team verified the standard of work carried out by the delegation and found the finance staff to be well qualified, fully aware of Federation procedures and knowledgeable about the region and the projects. Minor issues were reviewed in view of improvements.

A first draft of a contingency plan relating to the management of finances in a disaster situation was drawn up in coordination with PADRU.

Objective 3: To set up a pan regional reporting unit in order to ensure effective support to the regional and country delegations of Central America, South America and the Caribbean in reporting issues and to build capacity for reporting in the Americas.

All reports, both Federation standard and donor-specific, are now channelled through the Guatemala regional delegation. The regional reporting delegate focused on the review and editing of the annual reports 2001 for programmes in Central America, the Caribbean and South America. A meeting was held in February with the information/reporting delegate in El Salvador and the information/reporting officer in Honduras to discuss how best to improve cooperation. It was agreed that exchange of information and experience should be promoted between reporting delegates in the Americas.

The regional reporting delegate attended the NITs workshop in Panama in early March in order to facilitate a session on reporting and the appeal launch process.

Lack of funding prevented further steps being taken towards the creation of the pan regional reporting unit.

Outstanding needs

Given the current shortfall, further funding is urgently required in all programme areas, in particular, disaster preparedness, health, organizational development and coordination and management. Lack of funding over the second quarter may jeopardize programme implementation.

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						ANNEX 1
APPEAL No. 01.19/2002		PLEDGES RECEIVED				13.06.2002
DONOR	CATEGORY	QUANTITY	UNIT	VALUE CHF	DATE	COMMENT
CASH						
REQUESTED IN APPEAL CHF ----->				3'890'673		TOTAL COVERAGE 34.5%
CASH CARRIED FORWARD				574'250		
Programme support				416'500		
Programme support RFU				141'700		
BRITISH - GOVT/DFID				125'000	19.02.2002	ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT, DISASTER PREPAREDNESS/RESPONSE, COMMUNITY HEALTH
UNITED ARABE EMIRATES - RC		30'000	AED	13'164	15.05.2002	COMMUNITY HEALTH & IMCI, REPORTING
SUB/TOTAL RECEIVED IN CASH				1'270'614	CHF	32.7%
KIND AND SERVICES (INCLUDING PERSONNEL)						
DONOR	CATEGORY	QUANTITY	UNIT	VALUE CHF	DATE	COMMENT
CANADA	DELEGATE(S)			30'882		
GREAT BRITAIN	DELEGATE(S)			36'468		
NETHERLANDS	DELEGATE(S)			2'628		
SUB/TOTAL RECEIVED IN KIND/SERVICES				69'978	CHF	1.8%
ADDITIONAL TO APPEAL BUDGET						
DONOR	CATEGORY	QUANTITY	UNIT	VALUE CHF	DATE	COMMENT
SUB/TOTAL RECEIVED				0	CHF	