

ANNUAL REPORT



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

MYANMAR

The Federation's mission is to improve the lives of vulnerable people by mobilizing the power of humanity. It is the world's largest humanitarian organization and its millions of volunteers are active in 178 countries. For more information: www.ifrc.org

Appeal No. 01.35/2002; Appeal target: CHF 893,557; Appeal coverage: 104%

Overall analysis of the programme w

By the end of 2002, signs of greater interest and a more positive attitude towards Myanmar among the international community, governmental and non-governmental organisations were clear, with positive implications for the Myanmar Red Cross Society (MRCS) as well as for the country as a whole. On the other hand, the state of the economy continued to weaken during 2002 and continues to have a serious impact on the most vulnerable. This evolving situation can be attributed to a number of political and economic factors including:

* Dialogue between the government and the opposition National League for Democracy (NLD) party, which progressed slowly but steadily with both the UN Special Rapporteur on Human Rights and Special Envoy, confirmed the continuing commitment to facilitate the process of political change in Myanmar. It is becoming clear that both sides are committed to proceed with national reconciliation. Although face to face meetings have not yet been achieved between government and NLD leaders, many issues and topics, particularly as regards the humanitarian agenda, have been discussed with both parties, and consensus agreed in some areas.

* The leader of the NLD was released from house arrest in May and since then has been allowed to travel within Myanmar, to meet with national and international organisations working within the country. In the latter months of the year, the opposition leader has also been given the opportunity to meet with foreign officials visiting Myanmar. A large number of other political detainees have also been released during the course of 2002.

* The UN conducted a comprehensive review of humanitarian issues in Myanmar in 2002, and identified 16 priority areas for action under four themes, namely: health, education, most vulnerable and advocacy. It is working to launch an extensive international appeal to respond to these identified humanitarian needs, with local and international NGOs recognised as implementing partners in 2003.

* ICRC strengthened its position within the country as well as its relationship with the government and continues to fulfill its mandate, with programmes largely in detention and orthopaedics. The International Labour Organisation (ILO) opened an office in Myanmar early in 2002. Other international aid agencies continue to plan and undertake relief and development programmes within the country although the areas in which they are allowed to work is sometimes restrictive.

* As an indicator of the economy, annual inflation is currently estimated at 30 per cent although the last quarter of 2002 showed a degree of stabilisation of the unofficial exchange rate of the kyat to the dollar (the kyat has steadily declined against the US dollar, from 320 in 2000 to 1,000 at the end of 2002). Prices of basic commodities such as rice and cooking oil continue to increase, (the price of a sack of rice doubled from beginning to year-end) and a high level of unemployment is thought to exist. Closure of the Thai-Myanmar border for a period mid-2002, due to re-ignited border clashes between the two countries, also affected the supply of basic commodities, fueling inflation. The contrast between those earning their salary in foreign exchange currency and others who are paid in kyat, is significant.

Against this background MRCS set its long-term objectives, clearly stating a commitment to become a well-functioning national society. During 2002 intensive discussions were held within the society and with the Federation delegation with regard to the need for a clearer definition and strengthened working relationship between governance and management. The first steps were taken with the establishment of three new divisions, namely, disaster management, health and communications, and the appointment of a new head for each division. Recognition of the need for a strong branch network, and improved internal communications precipitated work to begin on a comprehensive branch survey. Increasing attention was also paid to examining the systems and structures of the society and on each of the MRCS programmes, particularly as regards community-based health and disaster preparedness. Although significant progress was made, in most cases, the society was not able to achieve as much as it would have liked in 2002. This was due perhaps to an unrealistic time frame having been set for the accomplishment of significant structural, organisational and programme changes. Additionally, it was most unfortunate that due to the lack of capacity to undertake activities in key areas, significant funds that had been pledged could not be used and were lost to the society at year end.

Recognising the real efforts and change of mindset within MRCS during the 2001 to 2002 period, as well as indications of change within the country as a whole, the Federation took the decision to strengthen the Myanmar delegation from the last quarter of 2002. This indicated to the national society and the Myanmar government, as well as to the wider Red Cross Red Crescent family and the international community, that a consolidated effort to strengthen the capacity of MRCS is underway. It is evident that a strong and capable national society in Myanmar is vital, if it is going to be able to make the best use of potential increased funding, and to be able to cope with added demands that will be made of it in the coming years. It must be noted however, that the Federation's overall effectiveness during the year dwindled, due largely to a completely new team being put in place with little or no overlap of delegates, and a period with just one (new) delegate running the delegation. The last quarter of the year should be considered a necessary learning period for the new team.

Another positive indication for the future development of MRCS is the strengthened relationship between the Federation and ICRC over the last quarter of 2002, with all three components of the Movement recognising that a consolidated approach to some of the legal and structural issues of the national society will benefit from a combined approach.

Recognition must also be given here to national societies who supported MRCS and the Myanmar delegation, through financial and material support as well as the provision of delegates. Particular note should be made of the long-term assistance of the Japanese Red Cross, and its continuing interest in the development of MRCS structures and systems as well as core programme areas. Other valuable support was received from the Australian, British, Finnish, and New Zealand Red Cross Societies.

Only time will tell if a renewed commitment of MRCS to becoming the most effective humanitarian organisation working within Myanmar, the additional resources and support provided by the Federation and ICRC, and the new interest and the close scrutiny of the international community on Myanmar affairs will bear fruit, and will support this vision.

Objectives, Achievements and Constraints w

Redefining the roles of governance and management cut across all aspects of MRCS's work over the past year, with a significant achievement noted in the establishment of a senior management team made up of heads of division. Equally important, although not yet fully realised, is the recognition of the need for a strengthened role for national headquarters in setting policy and guidelines, designing and initiating realistic programmes and projects, and providing leadership and support for capacity building of the branch network.

Disaster Management (Response and Preparedness) w

Objective 1 To improve the disaster management capacity, in particular at headquarters level

Achievements

The MRCS disaster management division strengthened from mid-year with the recruitment of a full-time head of division, programme coordinator, programme officer and two assistants, for logistics and accounting. Additionally, the appointment of the former director general of the Relief and Resettlement Department (Ministry of Social Affairs) to the MRCS executive committee, and the arrival of a disaster preparedness/organisational development delegate, saw the emergence of a strong disaster management team.

In cooperation with the Federation and ICRC, the society organised three disaster management workshops in Yangon and Mandalay, with participants coming from branches as well as headquarters. The workshops, the first in many years, provided a much needed opportunity for in-depth discussion on the Red Cross role in disaster preparedness and response, including how to improve capacity in these areas. The main outcome of the workshop was the draft of a disaster policy, which has been presented to governance for approval.

Together with the Myanmar delegation, MRCS organised a coordination meeting amid the 2002 flood relief operations, strengthening ties and working relations with other organisations and agencies working in the disaster response field. The successful launch of the World Disasters Report 2002 in October, bringing together government and non-government representatives for discussions, further highlighted the role the Red Cross can and must play with regard to disaster management in Myanmar.

Objective 2 Strengthen the disaster response system of MRCS

Achievements

During the year MRCS, assisted by the Myanmar delegation, ran several successful relief operations: fires in Myeik and Yenanchaung (January and March), flash floods in Kalaw (May) and floods in Mon, Kayin, Sagaing and Mandalay (August to September).

With assistance from the regional delegation, MRCS officially launched its disaster assessment and response teams (DART) in October, followed by an induction course in December with participants coming from all states and divisions. Based on discussions and feedback from the course, draft standard operating procedures and rules of conduct for disaster operations were finalised and presented to governance for approval.

A project to replenish the 17 MRCS warehouses throughout the country, most long empty and some in need of repair, was started at the end of the year. For the first quarter of 2003 a plan was established to restock and repair all the warehouses, with logistics and management training to follow. First discussions were also held with regard to the longer term sustainability of warehouse

management and timely stock replenishment, with branches themselves being responsible for a percentage of the disaster supplies.

Objective 3 Strengthen capacity to manage and implement a community-based DP programme

Achievements

A pilot project for community-based disaster preparedness was started in four villages in Ayeyarwady division and involved a number of new methodologies. These included participatory community assessment, the establishment of community disaster preparedness committees, village meetings, mapping of villages, and the preparation of risk reduction project proposals. Potential candidates were identified in each township for field officer positions, each of whom would be responsible for the coordination of MRCS activities in two villages in their respective townships.

Constraints

With respect to disaster response, the role of the Red Cross at both headquarters and branch levels is still unclear, and the need for improved internal and external communications and cooperation a cause for concern. Ongoing formulation of the MRCS disaster management policy and strategy and its dissemination are expected to improve the situation in future. However, concentrated and sustained efforts are now required to advocate to the government the need for a clear national disaster plan and a coherent coordination system, in order to address the root causes of the problems in the longer term. In addition, the need for a systematic and independent means of information collection for assessment and action purposes should to be pursued at every level and with all partners.

In respect to disaster preparedness, the approaches and programmes now being piloted in the Ayeyarwady division are new for the national society, and the lack of an appropriate and efficient project management systems (for follow-up support, financial transactions, monitoring, reporting, evaluation and so on) has delayed progress. It can also be said that while the level of interest is high among stakeholders, both MRCS members as well as villagers are not yet clear where the community based disaster programme is leading. The programme will need careful nurturing and a plan for extending it to other regions should be carefully examined.

Humanitarian Values w

Objective 1 Improve internal communication and dissemination of humanitarian values

Achievements

As a part of the society's structural review, a communications division was established mid-year, with a head of division, two programme officers and one accounting assistant appointed. The team worked closely with the MRCS executive committee member responsible for communications as well as with the new Federation head of delegation, who has a background in training and dissemination and long experience in Red Cross public relations and events.

The communications division played a key role in the organisation of MRCS publicity events (such as World AIDS Day) as well as the World Disasters Report and DART launches.

Publication of the MRCS monthly newsletter, suspended in the first quarter of the year, was restarted in the last quarter. Particular attention was paid to include substantial information from branches as well as news and announcements from headquarters. Links to national media have been pursued and strengthened and this was evident in increased media coverage of society events and programmes.

The communications division also played an important role in the design, translation and organising of the branch survey at the end of the year, as well as in the preparation of new proposals for a humanitarian values programme in schools.

Constraints

The relative newness of the communications division has meant a slow restart to communications activities. However recent discussions show that planning, and new and innovative project proposals are underway which should bear fruit in the coming year. The lack of basic equipment (computers, cameras, scanners, office furniture) was remedied by the year end with assistance from the Myanmar delegation and ICRC, thus ensuring the capacity of the division to carry out its tasks in the period ahead.

Health and Care w

Objective 1 Capacity Building in Health - develop the capacity of HQ Health Division, establish standard operating procedures, strengthen coordination and networking within MRCS and with other stakeholders

Achievements

Following the dedicated and substantial work undertaken by the MRCS health team and the Federation health delegate during 2001, MRCS developed and presented a five-year health strategy (2002-2006), launched officially in February 2002 with endorsement of the Ministry of Health. Subsequently, taking the lead of other key programme areas, MRCS created a new health division; appointment of a head was made mid-year with management responsibilities for all health programmes including those undertaken in cooperation with other organisations, and for the training department.

A consolidated effort by the new head of division to meet informally and formally with other players in the health field has led to a greater recognition of the role MRCS can play in health activities countrywide. Improved contact and communication has enhanced cooperation among health professionals both in government and NGOs. With the arrival of a new health delegate in the last quarter of the year, this further strengthened the support and resources at the disposal of the division.

Based on the health strategy, further work was undertaken towards the end of the year to develop specific programme and project areas, and to prepare a realistic plan of action for 2003. The confidence of, and level of trust between, health division staff and the delegation has improved with a growing recognition of the need for an integrated approach to health programming, and a need for much greater involvement of branches in health programmes. This integrated approach is one of the key components to promote the national society's responsibility and visibility.

Objective 2: Health Promotion (including HIV/AIDS prevention) - increase capacity to develop, implement and review health programmes, develop educational materials, develop a coordinating mechanism within MRCS and with other stakeholders

Achievements

An important pilot project for community-based first aid and HIV/AIDS education in Kengtung was proposed following the visit of Australian Red Cross officials and MRCS staff. Work continued in Yangon and Australia for the development of a project proposal, which was accepted at the end of the year by AusAID. The preparatory phase for the project began in December 2002.

A comic booklet on the prevention of HIV/AIDS (in the Myanmar language) was designed during the year, though the publication date was delayed several times. The final draft was ready for printing in December.

Training in peer education and HIV/AIDS awareness programmes continued throughout the year with support from partner organisations. Postcards, featuring a winning local design from a regional art competition to promote AIDS awareness, were printed and distributed widely throughout the country.

The society organised a special event to promote HIV/AIDS education and launched the Federation 'The truth about AIDS. Pass it on...' anti-stigma campaign on World Red Cross Red Crescent Day. Officially opened by the Minister of Health, the event was attended by some 600 people, including Red Cross volunteers from across the country, journalists, diplomats and representatives of international and local NGOs.

Objective 3: First Aid - MRCS develops and disseminates updated first aid materials, enhances its capacity to manage and implement effective FA programmes, and has effective systems for quality assurance, reporting and logistics in its FA programme

Achievements

Through a cross-divisional working group, the society continued preparation of a first aid policy covering the role of MRCS in respect to community based first aid, volunteering and training. The final draft is scheduled for presentation to governance early in 2003. Work also moved ahead on the revision of the first aid manual to bring it in line with ASEAN standards, and a translation made of the Federation guide to 'First Aid and HIV/AIDS' in the Myanmar language.

First aid training and training of trainers courses continued throughout the year, both for Red Cross participants and the private sector. The first aid training centre was equipped with additional reference materials, posters and mannequins. Discussions began on expanding the role of the training department to include all aspects of Red Cross training and to establish it as a department independent of the health division, though still working in close cooperation.

Constraints

Although a clear strategy was established for the health division, a lack of cohesion between staff and a dearth of real leadership for the division resulted in fewer results than anticipated during the year. Problems also resulted from issues such as: Red Cross health programmes funded by other organisations not being seen as a part of the MRCS health programme causing internal confusion, competition and mistrust; health programme staff not seated together causing further distancing between programme staff; lack of understanding of the wider picture of Red Cross health responsibilities and potential; and insufficient and often non-cooperative information sharing between colleagues.

First aid training programmes and services still need revising and improving, with a greater emphasis on community-based first aid becoming increasingly important and relevant to branches.

Generally, national society management, capacity and processes in the health sector (as in many other task areas) are not sufficient to support networking either internally or with external partners. However it must be stated that by the year end, with a new team in place, there were good reasons to be optimistic about the future capacity and performance of the division.

Organisational Development w

Objective: Strengthen the capacity of the MRCS to meet the needs of the most vulnerable - develop a revised set of statutes for the society, prepare a cooperation agreement strategy (CAS), develop and implement human resources and fund-raising plans, formulate a branch development strategy and plan, and design a new Myanmar Red Cross youth programme, strategy and pilot programme

Achievements

The most marked organisational achievement during 2002 has been the recruitment of a team of capable management staff at headquarters, to head newly formed divisions. This allowed the national society to gradually achieve the first real demarcation between governance and management.

A plan to re-establish a finance and administration division is under consideration, and discussion to improve the society's financial accountability and sustainability continues.

A comprehensive branch survey was prepared in the last quarter of the year, with a branch development officer recruited to work in the delegation to support and guide the national society. The wide-ranging survey has been planned in several phases, the first being a questionnaire to be completed by Red Cross committees at all levels (including states and divisions, districts and townships). The first phase commenced in December with questionnaires, together with guidelines on how to respond, distributed across the country. The survey has been recognised as a key element in the move to strengthen the countrywide network and each individual branch capacity, and for the preparation of this component of the MRCS strategic plan. Results and the analysis are, therefore, a vital exercise for the national society. It also holds great interest to potential donors, supporters, and perhaps critics, of the national society.

Another important step for the national society has been organisation of the first strategic planning meeting in December, attended by MRCS executive committee members, senior management, Federation delegates and the ICRC cooperation delegate. This first 'Movement' meeting, together with day to day contact between MRCS members and delegates, has helped forge a sense of trust and partnership and nurtured an understanding of organisational development issues. Consequently, there is evidence of greater ownership of the organisational process among MRCS leadership.

Constraints

Discussions on the revision of MRCS statutes, still in the nascent stages, were disrupted early in April with the departure of the executive committee member responsible, and no one else in the society willing to take over. The preliminary draft, developed by the former statutes review team, based on the Federation model and the Cambodian Red Cross example, requires further development.

Although a strategic plan has been prepared for health, other specific programme areas and an overall strategic plan for MRCS development has not been established. While initial work has been undertaken with regard to disaster management and branch development, it must be recognised that the planning process requires careful timing and coordinated preparatory steps. A CAS can only be prepared on the basis of a strategic plan, or possibly developed in parallel, and this was not achieved in 2002 as foreseen. With hindsight, the original timeframe perhaps did not give sufficient recognition to the fact that development of a strategic plan and a CAS are both time consuming processes. Both not only involve the MRCS executive committee and headquarters staff (with support from the Federation and ICRC delegations), but require inputs from and dialogue with branches and the society's board of governance.

With respect to the emerging new structure of headquarters and a new management team, it must be noted that the lack of a coherent human resources policy and procedures (recruitment, job descriptions, contracts, appraisal, salary scale and so on) has posed significant difficulties in the restructuring process. Headquarters staff now perceive themselves as divided into three groups: 'Federation supported' staff, in the recently set-up divisions; 'regular' staff in the old structure for whom there is not yet a clear consensus on how to bring them into the new structure; and 'project' staff working in programmes and projects funded by bilateral partners.

Discussions started on the preparation of a new school and youth programme, but further work is needed, and a clearer focus agreed on what and how this programme can be realised.

Coordination and Management w

Achievements

Myanmar Red Cross has recognised the need for significant change in its structures at national and branch levels, and in its programme and service delivery, if it is to become a well-functioning national society. Significant efforts have been made during the year to begin a 'change process'. Indications show that this trend will continue over the coming year(s) with the development of a strategic plan and CAS, partnership agreements and (particularly in the areas of disaster response and health programmes) a stronger status and more visible and independent persona. Increasing contacts and cooperation with other agencies, and with existing and potential partners, demonstrate an increased tendency to see MRCS as the most far-reaching and competent organisation to provide humanitarian relief and community-based programmes.

The new delegation has committed to supporting MRCS as it develops, expands and implements its programmes. It will continue to provide assistance particularly in organisational development: revising the legal base, statutes, policies and procedures; coordinating emergency response; and design and implementation of community-based disaster preparedness and health programmes. Additionally, the delegation has further developed working relationships with other international agencies and organisations in-country as well as embassies present in Myanmar, attempting to position MRCS and the Red Cross in general as the leading humanitarian organisation in the country.

The ICRC has committed to working in cooperation with the Federation and MRCS, particularly in the development of the society's legal base and statutes, dissemination and emblem protection programmes, organisational development of the society, and in matters of relationship with the government.

Constraints

The continual portrayal of Myanmar negatively in the international arena, has severe implications on current interest in and support to MRCS. Clearly, further attempts must be made by the Federation, together with ICRC, to provide assistance to MRCS as it works towards becoming a well-functioning national society. At the same time, it needs to recognise its shortcomings and challenges, and tackle some of the issues faced.

For the day-to-day work of the Myanmar delegation, the fact that the Federation does not yet have a status agreement with the government complicates financial and organisational management matters, and in-country travel. In addition, it necessitates considerable work for both MRCS and the delegation in obtaining the entry and travel permits of visitors from abroad.

Regional Cooperation w

Achievements

This year has seen increasing participation of MRCS in regional meetings and fora, although there were some occasions when the political situation of the country did not allow for travel abroad.

National society leaders have been asked to present papers at a number of meetings, and staff members and volunteers alike have benefited from regional training courses. Study visits to neighbouring national societies to take part in competitions and to understand how other societies design and implement their programmes and projects have also been useful.

Both the regional delegation and regional finance unit have been instrumental in discussions and the further development of a number of key programme areas, providing training support and guidance particularly in the areas of disaster management, organisational development, health, communications and financial management. The regional delegation also assisted with recruitment of the branch development officer for the delegation, and identified trainers from the South East Asian region for workshops and seminars in Myanmar.

Constraints

Some degree of difficulty in obtaining timely permission for overseas travel has meant that opportunities for visits to neighbouring societies, and attending meetings and training courses have been limited. Both the financial situation of MRCS and the funding for development and programme support remains precarious, due largely to the small group of donors from PNS and governments.

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INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION OF RED CROSS AND RED CRESCENT SOCIETIES

Interim report	
Annual report	X
Final report	

Appeal No & title: 01.35/2002 Myanmar
 Period: year 2002
 Project(s): PMM000, 002, 005, 160, 301
 Currency: CHF

I - CONSOLIDATED RESPONSE TO APPEAL

FUNDING	CASH		KIND & SERVICES		TOTAL INCOME
	Contributions	Comments	Goods/Services	Personnel	
Appeal budget	893,448				
less					
Cash brought forward	235,170				
TOTAL ASSISTANCE SOUGHT	658,279				
<u>Contributions from Donors</u>					
Australian Red Cross (DNAU)	568				568
British Red Cross (DNGB)	41,310				41,310
Finnish Govt.via Finnish Red Cross (DGNFI)	29,547				29,547
Finnish Red Cross (DNFI)	8,446				8,446
Japanese Red Cross	209,859				209,859
New Zealand Red Cross #01 (DNNZ01)	29,446				29,446
AUSTRALIA				32,525	32,525
FINLAND				7,721	7,721
JAPAN				63,737	63,737
TOTAL	319,176			103,983	423,159

II - Balance of funds

OPENING	235,170
CASH INCOME Rcv'd	319,176
CASH EXPENDITURE	-428,927

CASH BALANCE	125,418

Appeal No & title: 01.35/2002 Myanmar

Period: year 2002

Project(s): PMM000, 002, 005, 160, 301

Currency: CHF

III - Budget analysis / Breakdown of expenditures

Description	APPEAL Budget	CASH Expenditures	KIND & SERVICES		TOTAL Expenditures	Variance
			Goods/services	Personnel		
<u>SUPPLIES</u>						
Shelter & Construction		9,763			9,763	-9,763
Clothing & Textiles	58,200	3,230			3,230	54,970
Food & Seeds		31,299			31,299	-31,299
Water & sanitation		11			11	-11
Medical & First Aid	6,970	9,152			9,152	-2,182
Teaching materials		666			666	-666
Utensils & Tools						
Other relief supplies		46			46	-46
Sub-Total	65,170	54,165			54,165	11,005
<u>CAPITAL EXPENSES</u>						
Land & Buildings						
Vehicles						
Computers & Telecom equip.	7,670	16,182			16,182	-8,512
Medical equipment						
Other capital expenditures	11,270	3,101			3,101	8,169
Sub-Total	18,940	19,284			19,284	-344
<u>TRANSPORT & STORAGE</u>	22,786	6,369			6,369	16,417
Sub-Total	22,786	6,369			6,369	16,417
<u>PERSONNEL</u>						
Personnel (delegates)	218,160	138,655		103,983	242,638	-24,478
Personnel (national staff)	78,105	71,722			71,722	6,383
Sub-Total	296,265	210,377		103,983	314,360	-18,095
<u>GENERAL & ADMINISTRATION</u>						
Assessment/Monitoring/experts		1,105			1,105	-1,105
Travel & related expenses	28,292	20,970			20,970	7,322
Information expenses	53,157	9,046			9,046	44,111
Admin./general expenses	64,770	42,530			42,530	22,240
External workshops & Seminars	245,789	26,571			26,571	219,218
Sub-Total	392,008	100,222			100,222	291,786
<u>PROGRAMME SUPPORT</u>						
Programme management	60,245	28,919			28,919	31,326
Technical services	18,034	8,659			8,659	9,376
Professional services	20,000	9,605			9,605	10,395
Sub-Total	98,279	47,183			47,183	51,097
Operational provisions		-8,672			-8,672	8,672
Transfers to National Societies						
TOTAL BUDGET	893,448	428,927		103,983	532,910	360,538