

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

IRAQ

05 February 2003

Iraq Red Crescent Society

Appeal No. 01.55/2002 Appeal Target CHF 6.739.884

Programme Update No. 2 Period covered: July-December

“At a Glance”

Appeal coverage: 65.5%

Outstanding needs: CHF 2,322,723

Related Appeals: MENA regional programmes 01.93/2003

Summary: The escalating tension in the Middle East has hampered ongoing humanitarian efforts in Iraq. Nevertheless, the Iraqi Red Crescent, with Federation support, has continued its support of vulnerable people. In view of the general situation, the National Society has increased its focus on emergency preparedness.

Operational Developments

The Middle East has been dominated by international political developments with Iraq as the focus. Consequently, the Iraqi Red Crescent Society (IRCS) has been more under the spotlight as it continues its daily humanitarian work in support of vulnerable people. The Federation Delegation in Iraq has also been facing more challenges as it seeks to provide ongoing support to the National Society's work. Extra security planning has also been introduced. Delays in the implementation of assistance projects have been unavoidable.

The overall focus has been on accelerating the implementation of long-term disaster preparedness to strengthen the IRCS capacity to respond to any future emergency. On 23 December 2002 it was decided that the ICRC would assume the role of Lead Agency in Iraq.

Disaster Response

During the second half of 2002, the Federation continued its support to the IRCS in reaching the most vulnerable people through ongoing relief and rehabilitation projects. The following activities took place:

Rehabilitation of Primary Health Care Centers (PHCs)

Since 1999 up to mid 2002 the Federation, in cooperation with the IRCS and the Ministry of Health, rehabilitated 34 PHCs. In addition basic furniture and medical equipment has been supplied for a total of 72 PHCs. The Red Crescent and Federation is the major organization dealing with the rehabilitation of health facilities in Iraq. The physical rehabilitation of the PHCs is linked with different long term Red Crescent health activities.. These activities consist of Health Education, Polio and Measles eradication campaigns, training of local staff in cleaning and maintenance of the rehabilitated PHCs. The programme aims at improving the general health

situation in the country.

By the end of 2002, 11 PHCs were in different stages of an ongoing rehabilitation process (ten centers have been funded by the Netherlands Red Cross and one by the American Red Cross).

The starting date for the rehabilitation of the first PHC was 15 July. The first two rehabilitated PHCs were handed back to the Directorates of Health in the last week of December 2002. The furniture and medical equipment is distributed during the handover to the Directorates of Health. The MoH has developed a training manual on health issues in general and maintenance of the rehabilitated PHCs in particular. Staff training is planned to start as soon as possible after the handing over of all 11 PHCs to the Directorates of Health.

The implementation of the programme was delayed due to time-consuming discussions between the IRCS and the Federation regarding the planning and the implementation of the projects. An agreement was finally signed in April 2002. As result of these delays 5 out of 10 PHCs identified by the MoH and assessed by the IRCS/Federation engineers for the first stage had to be changed at the start of the project because:

- it was found during the finalizing of the project planning that several PHCs were under the management of the MoH but did not belong to the MoH.
- PHC management was given away to other organizations (due to the long wait before the project started).
- the newly selected PHCs required more funding than the initial group. The outcome of the tendering process resulted in an increased pressure on the budget. An important factor was also fluctuation in the exchange rate. Consequently it was decided to postpone the rehabilitation of one of the PHCs until finances became clearer.

All 11 PHC are planned be completed before the end of March 2003.

In the meanwhile the International Federation received a new funding from ECHO through the Netherlands Red Cross for the rehabilitation of an additional 6 PHCs and 4 Water Treatment Plants. The implementation of this part of the programme is experiencing similar delays, mainly due to the need to sign a new agreement with the IRCS and the MoH before rehabilitation can be contracted out.

Relief support to the most vulnerable in Iraq

Eight years of war followed by 12 years of sanctions have resulted in serious humanitarian suffering among the population of Iraq, both in the rural and the urban areas. Consequently the Federation and the IRCS included a special relief project in the joint Plan of Action for 2002.

The main objective of this project was "to alleviate the suffering of the most vulnerable population in the three Northern and in the Southern governorates. The total number of beneficiaries is more than 8.500 families living in the governorates of Dohouk, Erbil, Sulaimanyah, Basrah, Amara and Nasirya. The distribution will include the most needed items such as blankets, kerosene heaters. Further to provide safe drinking water by connecting the sites with public water network and hygiene environment by proper sewage drainage".

A proposal to ECHO for a special 'Winter assistance Project' was accepted in November 2002. 8.000 families will be selected according the criteria: female headed household with at least 3 children under 12 years old; an income less than 10 USD per month and the family has not benefited from a similar programme during the last 2 years. Families with a disabled person can also be included. During the first months of 2003 the selected families will receive: 3 blankets, kerosene heater, stove and lamp, a kitchen set, jerry can, towel and soap. The IRCS staff and volunteers have substantial experience in identifying beneficiaries, storing and distributing relief items, experience gained through many years of close cooperation between the IRCS and the Federation in implementation of country wide relief projects.

Rehabilitation of water and sanitation plants

Gradual deterioration of the infrastructure for water and sanitation during the last 20 years has resulted in a severe threat to the general health situation. Even though the UN Security Council Resolution 986 (oil for food

programme) has provided some improvement in the general health situation, there is a long way to go. Inability to maintain existing water and sanitation systems due to lack of spare parts, proper maintenance and cash, has resulted in a situation in which the existing water treatment plants and water network is unable to provide safe drinking water to the majority of the population. This is today the single most serious health risk factor in Iraq.

Consequently the IRCS and the Federation have decided to make special efforts to improve the quality of the water, especially in combination with rehabilitation of PHC - thus maximizing the impact of the RC/RC action.

A combined programme has been supported by ECHO through the Netherlands Red Cross for the rehabilitation of 6 PHCs and 4 Water Treatment Plants (WTP). The WTPs have been selected in the Qadisiya (Diwaniya) and Thi Qar (Nasiriya) Governorates.

The implementation has been delayed due to ongoing talks with the 'Water board' on how to implement these projects and the signing of agreements with the IRCS and the 'Water board', as well as extended discussions regarding the approval of a Wat/San delegate for the project..

Disaster Preparedness

The government established the "The High Committee to Assist Victims of Disasters" in 1992, this committee is in charge of Disaster Preparedness (DP) and Response (DR) throughout Iraq in emergency situations. The government has appointed the IRCS as lead agency and coordinator of this committee.

Members of the committee, next to the IRCS, are Ministry of Health, Ministry of Social Affairs, Directorate of Electricity, Water and sewerage authority, Ministry of Trade, Civil Defense.

In general the IRCS/Federation long term DP programme aims at preparing for the following potential disasters: oil pollution (Basrah and Baghdad), drought (Basrah, Nineva and Baghdad), earthquakes (Erbil and Nineva), consequences of the continuous sanctions (Basrah, Nineva, Erbil and Baghdad regions), ad hoc disasters and war.

Considering the increased risk for a military campaign against Iraq the implementation of the DP programme has been given highest priority by the IRCS. In a combined DP/community based first aid (CBFA) workshop, with the Directors and 4 additional participants from all the 18 governorates a special Plan of Action was agreed upon. The participants expressed unanimously that the priority needs are practical training and DP stock.

The below achievements have been accomplished during the second half of 2002:

Late September a focused project proposal, aiming at accelerating the implementation of the general DP programme, was prepared, seeking assistance for training of volunteers and procurement of relief stocks for some 15.000 families. This proposal was shared with potential donors - Embassies in Baghdad as well as Participating National Societies - in a special fundraising campaign. The response until the end of 2002 was positive with coverage of more than 65 per cent - and additional funds have been pledged. Support has been received from Swiss government, SIDA/Swedish RC, Japanese RC, Danish RC, Finnish Government/RC, Norwegian RC - both in cash and in kind. The UAE RC has provided bilateral contribution and discussions are ongoing with Iranian RC.

One of the early actions was a DP camp exercise held the first week of November 2002 and funded through a donation provided by DFID. 120 volunteers from all 18 IRCS branches completed a real-life 5-day Disaster Preparedness exercise, with strong support by the Regional delegation in Amman. Some 30 tents were erected as well as water tanks and distribution points, latrines, showers and a first aid station. On the job training was conducted on search and rescue, first aid, psychological support, evacuation of victims, water and sanitation and telecommunication systems.

On December 10 & 11, 2002 a workshop was organized in cooperation with the ICRC for 25 participants (one from each branch) on Safety and Stress, covering topics on Rights & Duties, First Aid in conflict situations and Psychological support: 'Helping the Helpers'.

From 13 until 23 December, 2002, the Federation Disaster Preparedness Manager, the Disaster Response Manager and the Information officer together with the IRCS Vice President in his capacity as Disaster Management Supervisor and the newly appointed Relief Manager in the IRCS HQ attended a regional Disaster Management workshop held in Iran. The workshop was facilitated by a DM team from the Secretariat in Geneva with support from the Regional Delegation in Amman. The objective was to develop the capacity of the MENA National Societies in the field of Disaster Management.

Regarding procurement of the DP stock the initial intention was to purchase the supplies locally in Iraq. Simultaneously steps were taken to prepare for procurement through the logistics department in Geneva, to make sure that time would not be lost if local procurement was not possible. This arrangement turned out to be crucial. For a number of reasons - mainly the fact that local procurement would take more than three months - it was deemed necessary to give up local procurement and to go for the second option.

Health and Care

The IRCS plays an important auxiliary role to the national Health and Care structures, with a clear focus on the community level. With its unique, in the Iraqi context, countrywide network covering all 18 Governorates, the IRCS has proven its significant importance in the delivery of the primary health care services to the population.

Community Based First Aid (CBFA)

CBFA, Health Education (HE) (previously called Health & Nutrition (H&NID)) and branch development has been implemented in a joint IRCS-Federation programme since 1997. This programme continued into the year 2002 (supported mainly by the Swedish and Norwegian Red Cross Societies).

Late November 2002 the IRCS and the Federation signed an agreement concerning handing over and implementation of this long-term programme. Also for this 'last phase' the Swedish and Norwegian Red Cross made funds available. It is expected that in 2003 the programme will be fully managed by the IRCS

The CBFA training of volunteers (720 in total) and the HE lectures were completed by the end of March 2002, the micro projects (1 in each branch) by the end of June 2002. A budget surplus made a 3-month mini-programme possible. In the period July–September each branch conducted additional HE lectures and the 18 branch trainers and the volunteers received refresher first aid training.

In the period 1 July–31 December:

- 18 branch trainers and 900 volunteers received refresher first aid training (mini-programme).
- each branch has conducted 90 HE lectures in PHCs, schools, mosques etc. (mini-programme)

In September the branch directors, branch trainers and branch coordinators participated in a 2-days workshop as a follow up of the comprehensive evaluation of the CBFA programme carried out in May 2002. The training programme is revised according to the recommendation given in the evaluation supported by the workshop conclusions.

IRCS/Federation agreement negotiations as well as new travel procedures have delayed the implementation of the 2002 programme until January 2003. The two donor societies, Norwegian and Swedish RC, have agreed to an extension of the programme until the end of May 2003.

War Remnant Programme

A project for social rehabilitation of land mine victims was agreed upon between the IRCS and the Federation in May 2000. The project mainly aims at activating and re-socializing remnant of war victims through training in income generating activities, but also at recruiting and training victims to be IRCS volunteers.

Two centers are foreseen to be constructed in Suleimaniya and Basrah. The BoQs have been prepared but due to long lasting and still ongoing discussions with the IRCS regarding the project agreement it is not clear yet when the actual implementation of the project can start. Repeated efforts by the Federation will hopefully break

the present stalemate in the beginning of year 2003. If not the future of the project has to be reconsidered.

The German Red Cross and the Norwegian Red Cross have been informed about the difficulties related to the lack of progress and have expressed willingness to extend the time frame for the implementation of the project.

Polio Eradication Campaigns

WHO and Ministry of Health (MoH) have chosen the IRCS, through the volunteer network all over the country, to take the responsibility for the follow up of the vaccination campaigns. Yearly, 2 campaigns (each consists of two rounds with 1-month interval) are conducted. The last round was in October/November 2002. The campaigns are planned to continue until 2005, providing no new cases of polio are detected. The monitoring programme, targeting high-risk areas to search actively for unvaccinated children, has improved the vaccination coverage significantly. The volunteers are highly motivated and the quality of their work has been very professional. The IRCS/Federation participation is highly appreciated by MoH, WHO and UNICEF.

Through leaflets distributed and TV-spots shown before and during the campaigns, the IRCS and the Federation have become visible to the people of Iraq in a positive way. In addition, leaflets/TV spots in the Kurdish language have been distributed/shown in the Northern 3 Governorates.

During the second half of year 2002

- 701 volunteers took part in each of the two rounds of the second 2002 Polio Eradication Campaign, including 505 in the monitoring and 150 as vaccinators.
- in the different campaigns the IRCS monitors found significant number of villages in rural areas not covered by the vaccination teams.

The first campaign round was financed by funds available from various donors from 2001. The second campaign round was financed partly by funds received from Qatar RC and from UNICEF. Discussions are ongoing with UNICEF for further support to the monitoring role of the IRCS volunteers.

HIV-AIDS

The 2002 programme is a part of the regional 2002 Appeal and was funded as such.

As a result of the overall Federation priorities and the 2001 regional development of a training manual, the IRCS, in cooperation with the Health Delegate and the Regional Health delegate, has submitted a HIV/AIDS programme proposal to the Regional Delegation. This programme aims at increasing the HIV/AIDS awareness of the volunteers in the 18 branches and is the first step to a more comprehensive 2003 programme designed within the CBFA/HE structure.

As a preparation the IRCS Secretary General, responsible for the health programmes, participated in the Thailand conference in December 2001, the Federation Health Programme Manager in the regional Damascus Trainer of Trainers (ToT) in December 2001 and the Health delegate in the Libyan ToT workshop in April 2002.

Late October 2002, the IRCS with support from the Federation staged the country's first training workshop on HIV/AIDS in Baghdad. 36 Red Crescent volunteers were trained to become trainers in their respective branches, and spread the word about the realities of HIV/AIDS. Officially there are 233 HIV-positive people in Iraq, of whom 121 have developed AIDS. Two volunteers from each of the 18 IRCS branches were given detailed knowledge about HIV/AIDS, communication methods, leadership and training skills. Both female and male participants had practical sessions on condom use, still a highly sensitive issue in Iraq.

Cooperation with the Ministry of Health has proved successful thus far, 4 members of staff from the government-run Center for Research and Studies on AIDS were among the trainees. Four representatives from the Lebanese Red Cross Society facilitated the 5-days workshop in co-operation with the regional Health Delegate in Amman.

Today the Red Crescent is the only organization in Iraq that trains non-specialized people on HIV/AIDS. For the past two years, two-hour modules about the virus, ways of infection and means of prevention, have been included in all IRCS first aid training sessions.

The newly trained volunteers were to give six one-day lectures to their fellow colleagues in their respective branches before the end of the year. In 2003, the IRCS awareness campaign will primarily target students in high schools and colleges.

Promotion of Humanitarian Values and Fundamental Principles of the Movement

From 28 until 30 December 2002 a Communications workshop was organized by the IRCS in co-operation with the Federation, Regional Delegation and the ICRC. 24 participants (one from each branch and invited media persons) received lectures on News, Communication, dealing with press and the use of Internet.

During the period the newly appointed Head of the IRCS Information Department and the officer, responsible for information and reporting, in the Federation delegation were sent to Amman for a six week on the job training in the RD with a clear focus on the reporting and information functions.

A constantly ongoing activity is to establish and to maintain close relations with the different embassies in Baghdad. A special "drive" in this regard was initiated in relation to the fundraising campaign for the accelerated DP project.

During the period the overall political development related to Iraq has resulted in a considerable increase of media interest. Consequently the Federation delegation has been involved in a large number of international media contacts - both directly in Iraq and more long distance. A number of field trips for media teams and representatives for Diplomatic missions have been arranged by the Delegation as well.

Organizational Development

It is important to note that all the Federation/IRCS programmes include a strong component of capacity building and organizational development.

One of the objectives in the Federation appeal for 2002 is to *"increase the governance, leadership and management capacities of the IRCS including the establishment of an organizational platform, followed by the establishment of core group departments and hand over between the Federation and the IRCS"*

In terms of progress it has to be understood that the second half of 2002 has been dominated by the prevailing political developments. Consequently the focus has been on implementation of the DP programme and related activities. In addition the IRCS has been increasingly preoccupied with the different coordination roles - National Emergency Committee and International NGO,s - that have been given to the IRCS by the Government.

An key factor in this regard is also that an important change in the leadership of the IRCS took place during the second half of 2002. The Head of the International department - the focal point for OD - was replaced by a new person, who has no RC experience. Understandably, the more long term OD process - self assessment, 5 year plan, second generation CAS - in the IRCS was coming to a halt. Taking these factors into consideration it is not likely that a more structured OD process can be resumed within the foreseeable future.

The process of establishing the Health and Relief departments in the IRCS has continued during the period. The two new departments are now established in a newly constructed office extension to the IRCS. The Federation has funded the construction. In line with this process, discussions are ongoing regarding hand over of programme responsibilities between the IRCS and the Federation. It has estimated that this process will be completed for the Health programmes by the end of March 2003.

One serious shortcoming in the daily work is that the approval of new delegates - followed by the visa process - takes an increasingly long time. Since several months the Federation Delegation has been involved in such a process for the DP and the Wat/San delegates - so far with no progress.

Regional cooperation

During the reporting period the cooperation between the Regional delegation in Amman and the Country delegation in Baghdad has been expanding considerably with the RD providing active support in all areas of Federation/IRCS joint activities in Iraq. This positive development is planned to further increase during 2003.

The IRCS is visited by an increasing number of delegations - RC and non-RC - both from the region and other parts of the world. In some cases bilateral cooperation agreements have been signed - most recently with the UAE RC.

Coordination and Management

Federation's delegation has been operating in line with the objectives outlined in the Strategy 2010: *The Federation Delegation's main objective has been to initiate, develop and support the capacity building of the IRCS, through a variety of activities reflecting Strategy 2010 which meets the need for support to the most vulnerable people, and to promote the participation of support from partners within and outside the Movement, coordination with the ICRC, national and international NGO, s*"

Due to the increased workload on the IRCS from the concerned authorities and from visiting delegations, the IRCS has less time for coordination meetings within the Movement. Weekly follow up and planning meetings between the IRCS and the Federation Delegation have lately become biweekly. In the early part of the period tripartite meetings between the IRCS, ICRC and the Federation were arranged on a monthly basis, but later on it has been impossible to find the time for such meetings.

At the same time additional rules for travel permits outside Baghdad have been introduced by the Iraqi authorities, for national staff as well as expatriate delegates.

The Federation's Delegation work in Iraq is becoming more complicated and time consuming. To meet the time limits of the different projects is an increasing problem. By the end of last year a number of PNS have been visiting Iraq: Sweden, Norway, Netherlands and UAE (twice). Visa procedures have been initiated for Danish and British RC. In addition ECHO visits have been facilitated twice.

An increasingly important issue is the security of the Federation delegation - in relation to the overall political development. The general security regulations for the delegation were revised to have them more in line with the ICRC rules. Secondly, in November, special security regulations were prepared in the light of the increased risk for a military campaign - again in line with the ICRC's new regulations.

For further details please contact: Evgeni Parfenov, Phone : 41 22 730 4251; Fax: 41 22 733 03 95; email: parfenov@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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Iraq						ANNEX 1
APPEAL No. 01.55/2002		PLEDGES RECEIVED			15.01.2003	
DONOR	CATEGORY	QUANTITY	UNIT	VALUE CHF	DATE	COMMENT
CASH						
REQUESTED IN APPEAL CHF ----->				6'739'884		TOTAL COVERAGE 65.5%
CASH CARRIED FORWARD				509'823		
AMERICAN - RC		50'000	USD	81'820	19.11.2001	HEALTH PROGRAMME
AMERICAN - RC				9'435	10.04.2002	MEASLES
BRITISH - GOVT/DFID				50'000	07.08.2002	DISASTER PREPAREDNESS
DANISH - RC		500'000	DKK	98'000	11.12.2002	DISASTER PREPAREDNESS
ECHO (01006)		750'000	EUR	1'099'500	21.10.2002	REHABILITATION PRIMARY HEALTH CARE CENTRES, WATER TREATMENT PLANTS AND PIPE NET, HEALTH & NUTRITION INFORMATION
ECHO (01012)		510'000	EUR	747'660	13.11.2002	DISTRIBUTION OF NON-FOOD ITEMS
GERMAN - RC				18'000	12.06.2002	FAD IRAQ DELEGATION APRIL TO JULY 92
JAPAN RC		10'000'000	JPY	121'140	16.12.2002	
NETHERLANDS - GOVT		378'702	EUR	555'177	25.07.2002	
NORWEGIAN - GOVT/RC		1'257'497	NOK	253'011	29.10.2002	DISASTER PREPAREDNESS, CBFA, ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT
NORWEGIAN - RC		400'000	NOK	80'481	29.10.2002	CBFA, ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT
QATAR - RC				25'000	18.09.2002	POLIO ERADICATION CAMPAIGN
SWEDISH - GOVT		1'350'000	SEK	213'435	28.05.2002	CBFA, COORDINATION & MANAGEMENT
SWEDISH - GOVT		1'000'000	SEK	159'000	11.10.2002	ENHANCE DISASTER PREPAREDNESS DISASTER MGT
SWISS - GOVT				225'000	18.10.2002	DISASTER PREPAREDNESS CAPACITY
PRIVATE DONOR ON LINE		300	USD	498	18.02.2002	
PRIVATE DONOR ON LINE		100	USD	161	03.06.2002	
SUB/TOTAL RECEIVED IN CASH				4'247'141	CHF	63.0%
KIND AND SERVICES (INCLUDING PERSONNEL)						
DONOR	CATEGORY	QUANTITY	UNIT	VALUE CHF	DATE	COMMENT
DENMARK	DELEGATE(S)			44'846		
FINLAND	DELEGATE(S)			37'454		
NORWAY	DELEGATE(S)			59'794		
SWEDEN	DELEGATE(S)			27'926		
SUB/TOTAL RECEIVED IN KIND/SERVICES				170'020	CHF	2.5%