

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

VIETNAM

13 May 2003

Appeal No. 01.64/2003

Appeal Target: CHF 2,591,325 (USD 1,774,704 or EUR 1,759,745)

Programme Update No. 1; Period covered: January to March, 2003

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 over 180 countries. For more information: www.ifrc.org

In Brief

Appeal coverage: 27.5%; %; for details please refer to the Contributions List for this appeal available on the Federation's website.

Outstanding needs: CHF 1,879,744

Related Emergency or Annual Appeals: N/A

Programme Summary: The Viet Nam Red Cross (VNRC) continues to be well supported by sister Red Cross societies, enabling a successful continuation of ongoing programmes as well as contributing to a further expansion in programme and branch development activities. While an expansion provides increased help for many vulnerable people in Vietnam, it also puts more pressure on VNRC in terms of coordination and management. Based on VNRC's request for Federation assistance, the delegation, with its reduced and now more focused role, will continue to provide advice and assistance to VNRC overall capacity building and organisational development process, including strategic planning and facilitation of partnerships.

Operational developments

Vietnam is one of the countries in the region affected by Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS). The outbreak began with a single traveler entering the country from Hong Kong end of February who, shortly after arrival in Hanoi, was hospitalised for treatment of severe respiratory distress and fever.

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Following the patient's admission, several hospital staff became sick with similar symptoms. By end March, 58 cases, including four deaths, were reported in Vietnam. This figure has since increased somewhat, but the situation seems to have stabilised with very few new cases reported and Vietnam is now regarded by the World Health Organisation (WHO) as being SARS free. Thanks to early detection of the disease, and strict and effective measures by Vietnamese health authorities, the outbreak has been well controlled and the majority of affected patients have recovered and been released from the hospital. The Ministry of Health set up a task force, lead by the vice-minister of health (also vice-president/secretary general of VNRC), who from the beginning of the outbreak has worked in a close collaboration with the WHO and international specialists. Continued surveillance, monitoring and preventive actions are being taken to contain the epidemic.

The SARS outbreak has of course affected international travel, business and tourism. Red Cross Red Crescent activities such as the South East Asia partnership meeting in Hanoi (scheduled for mid-May) have been postponed, as many countries have introduced restrictions in travel to affected areas. In the capacity of vice-minister of health, the VNRC secretary general has been fully occupied by the important task of leading the Vietnam Task Force to combat SARS, which has naturally not given much room for Red Cross work during the quarter. Therefore, concrete action to follow-up on the organisational development (OD) evaluation carried out recently did not materialise; plans are still underway, however, for a leadership seminar in May.

Despite SARS, several visiting delegations have come to Vietnam during the period, including the American, Australian, Japanese, Netherlands and Swiss Red Cross Societies as well as visitors from the regional delegation in Bangkok. A Norwegian research team also visited Vietnam as part of the Federation's International Disaster Relief Law project.

During the quarter, three additional Red Cross societies established offices in Vietnam, bringing the total number of bilateral Red Cross partners to nine (American, Australian, Belgium, Danish, French, Netherlands, Norwegian, Spanish and Swiss). More than 35 international and national staff are now employed by partners to support VNRC programmes.

In recent years, the national society's significant and rapid expansion geographically, programme-wise and in the number of partnerships, has increased opportunities to assist many more vulnerable people. At the same time it has challenged VNRCs human resources and management capacity, which at this moment is stretched to the limit. The need to consolidate and strengthen coordination and management capacity becomes increasingly critical in order to maintain and build further on achieved results, as well as to avoid delays and interruptions in initiated programmes and partnership relations.

The delegation has invested substantial time revising plans and budgets to match available funding, and in investigating Red Cross Red Crescent members intentions to support the Appeal 2003. Within the Red Cross Red Crescent family, the Japanese, Swedish, British and Australian Red Cross societies have confirmed their continued support of VNRC disaster management and social welfare activities. The OPEC Fund covers HIV/AIDS activities while the British Department for International Development (DFID) and local INGOs continue to support certain disaster management initiatives. While programmes are fairly well funded at this stage through the Federation or bilateral arrangements, the Federation delegation's service and support functions are still under-funded. In the first quarter, DFID as well as the Japanese and Swedish Red Cross earmarked voluntary contributions for the delegation's coordination and field management services. For the delegation to be able to better support VNRC and its partners in Vietnam further contributions are essential, and especially welcome from bilateral Red Cross societies already based in the country.

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Health and care

With support from several partners, VNRC has continued to expand its health and care programmes. In addition to ongoing support of Red Cross partners from Denmark (primary health care), Australia (HIV/AIDS), Sweden (social welfare), USA (disability) and France (dispensary boats), during the quarter Belgium Red Cross initiated its support of primary health care for three northern provinces. Final preparations also took place for an expansion in the field of HIV/AIDS through the OPEC Fund, with overall management and technical support provided by Australia Red Cross. Health components, such as first aid and social work training, have also been integrated as part of branch development programmes supported by the Spanish and Norwegian Red Cross Societies. Furthermore, the VNRC health department continued preparations for a national road safety programme, meeting with the Global Road Safety Partnership to further discuss the national society's potential role.

While Swedish Red Cross has confirmed continued support for the VNRC social work programme in 2003, it has also indicated support will be phased out this year. On the other hand, management of the disability programme has been fully handed over to the American Red Cross, now in bilateral partnership with VNRC.

With the presence and commitment of bilateral partners, there is no longer a need for Federation direct involvement in the HIV/AIDS and disability programmes. The delegation will, however, continue to provide guidance and assistance on overall and capacity building issues as needed by VNRC and partners in Vietnam.

Goal: VNRC health and care related programmes and activities are focused, effective and relevant to the prevailing needs of vulnerable people in Vietnam

Objective: Service delivery to the target groups in the three VNRC projects specified for Federation support is maintained and enhanced

Expected Results

1. Community Based Social Work: The VNRC has increased ability to respond to social welfare needs of the most vulnerable groups in Vietnam
2. HIV/AIDS Prevention and Care: The urgent needs of communities seeking to prevent the spread of HIV/AIDS are met and care provided for people infected and/or affected by HIV/AIDS
3. Disability: VNRC has strengthened its capacity at all levels to provide sustainable and effective services to poor people with disabilities and their families

Progress/Achievements

1. Community Based Social Work (CBSW)

Specific results for the CBSW programme include skills building, social care and support at the local level, expansion of community development activities, and strengthening of headquarters capacity to better support the local level. The programme continues to develop in a positive direction. Emphasis on the first quarter has been to finalise preparations and implement activities initially scheduled for 2002. The VNRC social work team has also continued to invest time and effort to analyse past achievements and constraints and plan for the future, by formulating a plan and budget for 2003.

Skills building

Staff and volunteers have continued to upgrade skills and working methods to provide better services and social support to the community. Thirty staff members in two northern provinces, Ha Tay and Hoa Binh, participated in a 'training of trainers' (ToT) session organised by the social welfare department. This

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training activity was funded by the Spanish Red Cross as one component of their bilateral branch development support to three northern provinces. Participants are expected to have gained relevant skills to provide support and train the local level to respond to community needs. This type of training - for the grassroots level - has during the period continued to be carried out by other provinces, funded by Swedish Red Cross and through locally mobilised resources.

Local level activities and projects

A number of small-scale projects have progressed well, providing income generation for the very poor, and social care and support for disadvantaged children, lonely elderly and vulnerable people. National society headquarters has monitored and visited a number of ongoing projects; income generation for poor in Xom Cang commune, Hoa Binh province, has progressed well. The monitoring visit showed a high level of involvement and commitment from village members, both beneficiaries as well as supporting members. Saving and credit groups were set up and running, and cooperation mechanisms between other local organisations (such as Women Union and Farmer's Association) are well established to ensure training and support to the village. As this is a pilot project, the provincial Red Cross chapter has been involved actively, both to support and learn. In Binh Minh commune, Hung Yen province, the VNRC project provides social care and support to orphans and disadvantaged children. During this quarter, the project has upgraded two classrooms in two schools and provided some recreation and sport equipment, organised a festival for the children, and provided basic social work training for Red Cross volunteers. The VNRC social welfare department is collecting information and experiences from the above and other community projects. These will be compiled as examples of 'best practices and models' to be shared more widely within VNRC and to help provinces provide sustainable support at the community level.

The final evaluation of the 'Care and Support Project for Elderly' was carried out in Hai Phong. Preliminary findings indicated the project has had a positive impact on the elderly population targeted. Through a number of activities, such as social clubs, physical exercise sessions, health education, and income generation, the well being, health and self-esteem of elderly people has increased. In turn, the image and capacity of the Red Cross has improved and community awareness and involvement increased. Follow up of the evaluation will take place in the next quarter. The project will also form the basis for developing a sustainable model, which can be replicated in other provinces.



Care and support project for the lonely elderly in Thuy Nguyen commune, Hai Phong province. VNRC evaluator visits beneficiaries, some of who take part in regular physical exercise sessions organised by the national society.

Resources

A social work leaflet has been produced to give local chapters easy-to-read information on VNRC social welfare activities. The leaflet also serves as a fundraising tool to promote the work of the national society.

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Progress on the social work manual has continued, and gone through what is expected to be a final revision with minor adjustments.

Preparations were also made for a workshop to follow up on the 2002 mid-term evaluation, to develop initial steps for a VNRC social welfare strategy.

Impact

Training, using the more participatory approach when working with vulnerable people, has seen an increase in the skills and awareness of VNRC staff and volunteers, demonstrated by a greater confidence and commitment and deeper understanding of social needs and vulnerability. Through the small-scale projects and local initiatives from previous years', a large number of beneficiaries have been provided opportunities to improve their living situation and future prospects.

Coordination

The Federation has encouraged continued contact with bilateral Red Cross and external partners. Already links have been established between VNRCs branch development, disaster preparedness/mangrove, and social work programmes, all which include an integrated social work training component. The Australian Embassy and the Hanoi International Women Club, respectively, support two small-scale projects - community based social care for poor children, Haiphong, and community based social care for children with disabilities, Vinh Phuc. There is potential to expand on the relationships within the international community for local level project support.

2. HIV/AIDS - Prevention and Care

Specific results for the programme include increased VNRC capacity, training of youth, home-based care for people living with HIV/AIDS, and support to infected/affected children.

Following confirmation of support from the OPEC Fund towards the Federation's global HIV/AIDS programmes, a planning meeting was held between VNRC, Australian Red Cross (ARC) country and regional offices and the Federation regional and country delegations. Subsequently, an agreement was signed between the Federation and ARC on the overall management mechanisms of the programme; country level management and implementation are likely to be finalised in April.

The national society has selected three new provinces based on HIV prevalence and National AIDS Standing Board information and conducted a district needs assessment. Meetings have been held to discuss the criteria for district selection and, to date, those selected for programme implementation have been decided but not approved. Based on guidelines from VNRC headquarters, provinces have also developed district action plans, with commitments made from the People Committee of each province.

Increased VNRC capacity to combat HIV/AIDS

Skills mapping of all VNRC staff involved in the programme is being completed to identify strengths and opportunities for ongoing training. The national society has been involved with other government and INGOs working within the field of HIV/AIDS - to facilitate coordination, cooperation and to reduce duplication in the provinces where the programme operates.

Training of youth

Vulnerable people, and in particular youth, have been targeted as participants in HIV/AIDS awareness workshops. Appropriate youth facilitators were identified during these workshops and recruited as outreach workers. During the quarter, a workshop was conducted for youth facilitators, and core members of support groups provided information about outreach and how to work within the community.

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Home based care for PLWHA

Care and support activities are new to the programme. Work, therefore, has been integrated with the HIV/AIDS programme, where core support group members - vulnerable youth/young adults - have been trained in outreach and issues surrounding confidentiality and disclosure.

Impact

The project is still in the planning stages, though close to the start of implementation.

Constraints

The long process to determine overall management mechanisms for the OPEC Fund has caused some confusion and contributed to delays in finalising management and programme implementation mechanisms at the country level. In addition, the Vietnam 'Social Evils' policy and the stigma around HIV/AIDS make it difficult to access targeted people.

Coordination

Discussions are ongoing between the Federation and the Australian Red Cross. No specific meetings with other organisations have taken place during the first quarter.

3. Disability

The programme, which was initially developed with support of the Federation, has over the years progressed successfully in several provinces. Since the first phase was finalised and evaluated at the end of 2002, preparations have been made for continuation of the programme. The American Red Cross has confirmed its long-term commitment and substantial support for the next phase as a bilateral partner. However, to ensure a smooth transition, an agreement was reached to continue be part of the Federation delegation structure in the first quarter, during which final preparations for establishment of a bilateral project office were made.

Since programme needs are well covered through bilateral assistance, there is presently no need for further Federation support. This section will therefore not be reported in future programme updates.

Impact

Preliminary findings of the review of the first phase have indicated significant impact on beneficiaries.

Disaster Management

Goal: The impact of disasters on the most vulnerable people in Vietnam is reduced

Objective: The VNRC fulfils its designated strategic and implementation role in the context of Vietnam's disaster management network

Expected Results

The capacity of the VNRC is strengthened to assist the most vulnerable people in Vietnam

Components of the programme include: strengthening of VNRC disaster management capacity, skills building and provision of material resources, risk reduction activities, training for schools, mass organisations and local authorities, and local, national and regional networking.

Progress/Achievements

Risk Reduction

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Hazards and vulnerability capacity assessments (HCVA) were conducted in ten communes in three Mekong Delta provinces. As a result 14 small-scale projects proposals for risk reduction were developed by the three provincial chapters and submitted to VNRC headquarters for appraisal. Six of the proposals were selected and will be funded by the British Red Cross as part of their support to the disaster preparedness programme.

Thirty representatives from Red Cross and other agencies participated in a workshop organised by VNRC in January to assess the impact of the programme supported by Japanese Red Cross and to draft a recommendation to the government ensuring support and sustainability of the programme. Two follow-up workshops to discuss sustainability and protection issues, and agree on appropriate solutions were organised by Ha Tinh and Ninh Binh provincial chapters, in cooperation with the respective provincial People Committee.

The national society started working with the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development to integrate mangroves planted by the Red Cross into the Vietnamese government's five million hectare reforestation programme. During the quarter, volunteers and community members replanted 500 additional bamboo seedlings in Hai Phong province. As the programme provides a small contribution for labour, the risk reduction activity has contributed to 118 poor households gaining additional income.



Children and community members participating in HVCA at the grassroots level

Water and sanitation

During the quarter VNRC implemented a water and sanitation project in five provinces, with assistance of the Federation regional and country delegations, and funded by the Australian Red Cross. Some 3,000 household water filters were procured and distributed to selected beneficiaries in An Giang, Dong Thap, Long An, Kien Giang, and Tien Giang provinces. The distribution exercise involved training volunteers – to in turn instruct recipients - on the optimal use and care of filters. Follow-up by the local Red Cross ensured families did not sell the water filters, and were operating the systems correctly and according to their needs.

A model latrine has also been completed and approved by local authorities for use in the five provinces. The latrine and its sub-structure will be provided to families, with construction of the superstructure (above ground) the responsibility of each family. In each province, training of 20 volunteers in community education (hygiene and sanitation) as well as the correct use of latrines has started. Training in community hygiene, and the construction of latrines, is expected to wrap up during the next quarter.

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Enhancing skills of school children

Fifty children in Quang Ninh province took part in a competition in which their skills in disaster preparedness and mangrove plantation were tested. More than 800 people attended the event, aimed to raise awareness on disaster preparedness.

VNRC playing an active role on a local, national and regional level

The national society has been active in disseminating information about its disaster preparedness activities through media, including television and radio. In January, a video entitled 'Climate Change and Disaster Preparedness' was shot in Vietnam, with support from VNRC and the Federation. The video was shown at the Third World Water Forum in Kyoto, in March.

During the quarter, the newly recruited disaster preparedness officer from Myanmar Red Cross visited VNRC to learn from its local experiences, particularly in the field of training.

Impact

National society staff have enhanced their advocacy and negotiation skills through meetings and discussion about the protection and sustainability of mangrove plantations, with central and local authorities as well as ministry officials.

Through events and workshops organised during the period school children, local authorities and the general public have an increased understanding of disaster preparedness. The national society's image and work in disaster management has further strengthened through broadcasting on radio and television.

Coordination

A meeting with VNRC, bilateral Red Cross partners and Federation country and regional delegations was held in March, primarily to exchange information, and enhance cooperation and coordination in support of VNRC disaster response and preparedness activities.

The Federation delegation is actively supporting Netherlands Red Cross and VNRC with the European Humanitarian Commission Office (ECHO) funded Household and Livelihood Assistance project.

Coordination and liaison with authorities, ministries, relevant agencies and organisations on risk reduction activities were held to discuss possible cooperation in disaster management. Regular dialogue and meetings were also held with various organisations as well as with Red Cross partner societies involved in disaster preparedness and response activities.

Humanitarian Values

Goal: The mandate and role of VNRC, the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement's fundamental principles and humanitarian values are well understood and supported by public services and the wider population in Vietnam

Objective: The awareness of humanitarian values in Vietnam is increased

Expected Result

The VNRC has increased its capacity and effectiveness in communication and promotion of Red Cross Red Crescent fundamental principles and humanitarian values throughout the country

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Progress/Achievements

With the support of ICRC, the national society carried out a ‘training of trainers’ course in international humanitarian law (IHL).

The dissemination, youth and training department has endeavoured to follow up on the communications workshop held last year and to draft ideas for a future communications strategy. However, in the absence of a national strategy development process, efforts made by various departments to develop sector strategies were hampered. There is also a need to link improvements in communications with the strengthening of VNRCs overall management performance and mechanisms.

Constraints

Marginal support has been provided to VNRC in this area during the first quarter and, as such, progress has been limited.

Organisational Development

The leadership of VNRC has confirmed its commitment to analyse and follow-up on the organisational development (OD) evaluation and to give highest priority for a change and development process within the national society. The secretary general has confirmed that as of this year he will lead programme efforts and has identified a new OD Steering Committee in support of the process.

The final report of the OD evaluation, carried out end 2002, was completed in the first quarter. The report clearly indicates the steady progress and development of VNRC in recent years. It also identifies some weaker areas, which need to be considered for further strengthening of the society. The main recommendation was for VNRC to develop a clear and comprehensive national strategy, to which organisational development and other sectors are integrated. The report also called for efforts to build a common understanding within VNRC for its capacity building and OD process, improve cooperation and communication mechanisms, and introduce modern management methodology. The evaluation team recommended Swedish Red Cross and other partners support the OD process, but only as part of a VNRC national strategy and plan. The Federation (country and regional delegations) was recommended to continue supporting VNRC and OD strategy development, and promote involvement/assistance from partner societies. The evaluation team also recommended the Federation promote a further understanding of capacity building/OD among VNRC leaders/managers and support the society’s coordination efforts with the growing number of bilateral partners (eventually leading to a Cooperation Agreement Strategy – CAS).

Goal: VNRC is a strong, relevant and well-functioning national society

Objective: VNRC has increased capacities to provide relevant and effective services to vulnerable people in Vietnam

Expected Results:

1. A comprehensive VNRC national strategy is in place, including strategies and plans for each core area and a framework for cooperation with partners
2. VNRC leadership capacity is further strengthened
3. VNRC has increased capacity to design and implement programmes and services in an effective and professional manner, including improved performance in finance management, planning and reporting
4. VNRC has increased ability to generate financial resources for its core and programme costs

Progress/Achievements:

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Strategy Development

The Federation and VNRC have discussed the urgent need for the society to embark on a strategic planning process. At the moment each department has a different strategic planning initiative, supported by different donors. Although all may contribute to clearer focus and priorities in each area, there is a need for a more systematic and guided approach towards strategic thinking and planning within the national society. As a first step, an internal seminar for VNRC leaders and managers to follow up on the findings and recommendations of the OD evaluation will be held. The seminar also aims to raise awareness and increase the understanding of OD and change management and build a platform for a more comprehensive strategic planning in the national society.

Leadership capacity

The leadership of VNRC visited Malaysia Red Crescent, and the Singapore and Thai Red Cross Societies to prepare for an exchange programme. The trip proved successful and an agreement was made with the three national societies on further planning for an exchange programme aimed at strengthening the capacity of provincial leadership.

Programme and finance management capacity

As part of its finance development support, the Federation has established close working relations VNRCs finance department, to assess and analyse present procedures and systems and provide on-the job training. The Federation has regular contacts with bilateral partners in Vietnam to share information and to provide advice. Mapping of the different requirements by PNS and other donors for financial reporting has also been made, to better understand its impact on VNRC. The Federation will, in the next quarter, step up its consultancy support to help increase VNRCs capacity and performance in finance management.

The national society conducted two 'gender' courses for 57 VNRC managers and key staff from province and central levels. Training helped raised awareness on gender issues and provided basic understanding on how to better integrate gender in the Red Cross activities at all levels. Ninety five per cent of participants had never participated in gender training, and participants unanimously agreed that it was useful and appropriate. Participants requested similar training for programme staff and also asked for an action plan to further integrate a gender perspective into Red Cross actions.

Preparations have been made to conduct two project planning process (PPP) courses in Vietnam in the next quarter. The PPP training courses targets VNRC managers and key programme staff. It is also open to the delegation and bilateral partners - to further enhance cooperation and coordination in terms of planning and project management.

Impact

Gender training and finance management coaching have raised awareness and increased understanding of these issues. The acting head of delegation has also continued closer working relations with VNRC, with an open dialogue on a number of OD related matters. This included the approach required by VNRC for strategic and long-term planning as well as for strengthening leadership and management mechanisms. It has resulted in some further planning for OD interventions in the next quarter.

Constraints

The secretary general of VNRC, in his capacity as vice-minister of health, led the Vietnam government task force to combat SARS. With this important task requiring the secretary general's full attention, the development and change process in VNRC has continued to be slow. However, in the longer-term perspective, this may not be a constraint, as national society development can only move with full commitment and involvement of leaders and at a pace set by VNRC itself. Although it may appear slow, it is moving ahead.

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Federation Coordination

Initiatives and support to help strengthen management, coordination and cooperation mechanisms are all linked with the organisational development and change process within VNRC. An effective cooperation agreement strategy (CAS) process will depend on VNRC's full commitment to embark on developing a more comprehensive global strategy, identified as critical for the further development of the national society. Since advice and technical support to VNRC leadership in strategic planning is a priority for this year's organisational development support, it will be covered under the organisational development section for future reports.

While the rapid expansion of bilateral partnerships has presented many opportunities for VNRC and had a positive impact on the assistance to vulnerable people, it is also a challenging process, which requires a coordination and management capacity not yet fully in place. The national society has also experienced difficulties identifying qualified staff to manage the various programmes as well as providing an adequate number of people to work with its partners. Bilateral partners currently employ more than 30 international and national programme staff (drivers and cleaning staff excluded), a figure which is difficult to match at VNRC central level. Staff capacity within VNRC is a concern raised both within the society and by partners, as it may jeopardise fulfilment of programme plans and commitments.

The VNRC has reconfirmed its request for continued Federation presence in Vietnam, primarily to assist with strengthening its management and strategic planning capacity and to help with facilitation and coordination of partnerships. The delegation's ability to support VNRC, and PNS involved in the country will depend on resources and capacity available.

With its much-reduced capacity, the arrival of more partners has placed extra pressure on the delegation to provide services, advice and guidance to VNRC. Although this is in line with the role and function of the Federation - and is considered important by the delegation - at present there are insufficient resources to sustain these services and functions.

Goal: VNRC's capacity is further enhanced, resulting in the increased impact of its programmes, through more efficient and effective use of the combined knowledge, experience and resources of the International Federation, the ICRC and other partners

Objective: VNRC has the sustained and coordinated support of Red Cross Red Crescent partners in developing a CAS

Expected Result

A CAS, for the period 2003-2006, is developed during 2003, accepted by VNRC and its partners and subsequently implemented

Progress/Achievements

Monthly information sharing meetings with bilateral partners and the delegation have continued in the quarter. The national society has acknowledged the need to attend, and eventually lead these meetings, but so far has not been able to attend nor assume a leadership role. Apart from scheduled meetings, there are more or less daily contacts and opportunities for discussions among partners on a more informal basis. The scheduled weekly meetings between the VNRC secretary general and the Federation acting head of delegation have not taken place on a regular basis due to the SARS outbreak, which has required the secretary general's full attention. However, regular contacts with the VNRC director of international relations and development department as well as with other managers have ensured constructive discussions and work progress.

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The national society has identified the urgent need to develop its own management and coordination mechanism, which will most likely require important and difficult internal measures and actions for change. Since this will take time, VNRC has requested the delegation to provide continued support in coordination and facilitation of partnership relations.

Constraints

Similar constraints have been experienced as those under the organisational development section.

Additionally, as CAS is considered a process rather than the production of a document, close cooperation among partners, the delegation and VNRC should be seen as an important step towards eventually reaching agreement on how to interact and make the best use of assistance from various partners/donors, so that it best serves the most vulnerable and helps build the capacity of VNRC. There is still a way to go to reach this aim, as the many programmes, partners and funding opportunities may even contribute to fragmentation rather than strengthening.

International Representation

Goal: The International Federation's profile is raised and its influence on policy making and programme delivery in Vietnam is increased substantially

Objective: Effective representation and advocacy of the International Federation and the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement in Vietnam, specifically with the Government of Vietnam and with the international community represented in Vietnam

Expected Results

The VNRC and its Red Cross Red Crescent partners are positioned to influence the humanitarian agenda in Vietnam and to mobilise resources

Progress/Achievements

The delegation has had meetings with the Government of Vietnam to further negotiate the Federation's legal status in Vietnam. While each meeting has presented a good opportunity for mutual understanding and has further promoted and raised awareness on the role and mandate of the Federation, no agreement has yet been reached.

A Norwegian Red Cross team, assigned by the Federation, visited Vietnam as part of the International Disaster Response Law project, with the aim to map and compile international legal documents related to disaster response in Vietnam. The research team met with several ministries and key agencies in Vietnam.

Due to heavy work pressure, in combination with a reduced capacity of the delegation, attendance at international events and meetings has had to be kept to a minimum. The national society's presence within the international community has also been minimal during this period.

Impact

With the programme in its early stages, any objective assessment in this area would be too soon.

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