

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

CHINA

Date: 17 December 2003

Appeal no. 1.66/2003; Appeal target: CHF 3,564,329 (USD 2,442,454 or EUR 2,422,114)

Programme Update No. 2

Period covered: June - November 2003

The Federation's mission is to improve the lives of vulnerable people by mobilising the power of humanity. It is the world's largest humanitarian organisation and its millions of volunteers are active in over 180 countries.

For more information: www.ifrc.org

In Brief

Appeal coverage: 69 %.

Outstanding needs: CHF 1,143,409

Related Emergency or Annual Appeals: China Floods: Emergency Appeal (18/2003); Asia: Severe acute respiratory syndrome (SARS) prevention and control (focus on China); East Asia annual appeal.

Programme Summary: The second half of the year has been a period of considerable activity for the Red Cross Society of China (RCSC) and the Federation's regional delegation. A good deal of time has inevitably been taken up by the major flood relief operation with the flooding continuing on until the end of October in certain provinces. However in spite of this, good progress has been made in the programmes covered by the annual appeal for China. Of particular note has been the community water and sanitation programme in Guangxi and Hunan provinces which has come to be regarded as a successful model for RCSC rural health programming which could be further adapted to incorporate community disaster preparedness and disaster mitigation components. HIV/AIDS activities have continued with a new programme starting in two northern provinces supported by the Netherlands Red Cross. Lastly, RCSC has carried out a number of training seminars and workshops for the leadership and staff of its branches that are helping strengthen its overall capacity to plan and manage programmes that can address some of the key vulnerabilities facing China's population.

Operational developments

China remains highly prone to disasters. Sudden and/or slow onset disasters of small, medium or large scale are annual phenomena claiming thousands of lives, affecting at different degrees, hundreds of million people and causing economic losses and damages worth billions of US dollars each year. The most common of these is flood disasters. Floods between 1996 and 2003 affected a total of some 660 million people. While the number of deaths associated with floods in China is relatively low, the economic impact is staggering. During the second half of 2003, China experienced severe flooding in the period between June and October (see China floods operation updates for full details), four serious earthquakes, as well as typhoons and drought.

The Red Cross Society of China (RCSC) played a prominent role in addressing the SARS epidemic that struck China in mid year. It was one of only four organisations authorised by the government to receive funds for this purpose, and by July 2003 had raised over CHF 114 million in cash and kind donations from domestic and international sources. The Federation provided support to the national society not only through its international appeal but also by advising on public health information issues and fostering linkages with WHO and donor country embassies. There is definitely a good potential for RCSC to build on its SARS response to analyse and define what its role in the public health field should be in the years to come.

In the area of development cooperation, there are a growing number of participating national societies that are working with RCSC in health, disaster preparedness and more general capacity building programmes. After the end of the travel restrictions caused by SARS, RCSC carried out a number of workshops for its provincial staff and worked with PNS staff or delegates from Australia, Netherlands, Canada and Norway to review and make further plans for their respective programmes covering ten provinces. In addition, the Federation's regional delegation provided support to RCSC for its national leadership and financial management training programmes.

Health and care

Goal: The RCSC will contribute to the reduction of the transmission of HIV/AIDS in China and help to improve care and support for people living with HIV/AIDS and their families.

Objective: The abilities of the RCSC both at the headquarters and in provincial branches to design, implement, manage, and fund effective and sustainable HIV intervention has improved leading to the increased capacity of the youth in key provinces to protect themselves from HIV/AIDS infection.

Progress/achievements against expected results:

According to the latest statistics, the Ministry of Health estimates that there are one million people infected with HIV or living with AIDS in China. According to the UNAIDS, 45.3 per cent of HIV/AIDS cases are due to sharing needles among intravenous drug users (IDU), 26.9 per cent are former plasma donors, 13.8 per cent are attributed to sexual transmission, and 13.9 per cent remain unclassified. Almost half of reported HIV/AIDS infections are among young people under 29 years of age.

RCSC has nearly ten year's experience with HIV/AIDS prevention, through the collaboration between the Australian Red Cross and the Society's Yunnan and Xinjiang branches. Among the remaining 29 branches there is widely differing interest in adapting the Yunnan/Xinjiang model of youth peer education. Some branches accept that HIV/AIDS prevention and care is an integral part of the national society's mandate while others consider the HIV response to be the responsibility of the Health Department. In order to encourage all branches to collaborate in the local response, RCSC and Federation conceived a series of four day workshop to introduce basic information about HIV/AIDS and to raise awareness of Red Cross responsibility regarding HIV/AIDS prevention and care. One workshop was held (seven provinces attended) in March 2003 and a second (for eight provinces) will be held in December 2003.

Several PNS support RCSC in their HIV/AIDS response. During 2003, the Federation delegation provided training of facilitators for the Canadian Red Cross, assisted RCSC, Netherlands, and Swedish Red Cross to develop a proposal for European Union funding, participated in an exploratory mission to Kashgar (Xinjiang) with the Australian Red Cross, and assisted the Netherlands Red Cross to design and implement their project in Jilin and Liaoning provinces.

The RCSC and the Federation are both active members of the UNAIDS Expanded Theme Group, UN Theme Group on Health, and China's Country Coordinating Mechanism for the Global Fund on HIV/AIDS, Tuberculosis, and Malaria. Federation participated in the series of workshops, organized by Harvard University's Kennedy School of Government and Business School, entitled HIV/AIDS and Business in Africa and Asia.

SARS provided an opportunity for RCSC and the Federation to collaborate on public health education: with financial support from the Federations SARS emergency appeal, the RCSC in cooperation with the Federation produced a video on health and hygiene and distributed household hygiene kits.

RCSC remains committed to scaling up HIV/AIDS prevention and care (youth peer education and peer education by and for PLWHA and ensuring a safe blood supply) to all provinces in China. Training on recruiting and retaining voluntary non-remunerated blood donors is necessary for all provinces. Given the capacity of headquarters and provincial branches, however, the scaling up of Youth Peer Education will have to be incremental. Identifying priority provinces involves assessing both the HIV/AIDS incidence/prevalence and the

interest and capacity of the branch to implement HIV/AIDS projects. Next year's goal is to implement youth peer education in two provinces, which will be identified during workshops to be held in December 2003.

While the RCSC focus is on skills building and in-depth knowledge of HIV/AIDS, raising the public's awareness is a necessary adjunct to help ensure acceptance of HIV prevention messages. RCSC headquarters and branches typically participate in World AIDS Day events around China and often add an HIV educational component to World Red Cross Day events. The RCSC is currently planning events, in Beijing, Shanghai, Qinghai, Hainan, and Jiangxi provinces, to mark World AIDS Day.

Impact:

The most significant development during this reporting period has been the start-up of the new HIV/AIDS programme in Liaoning and Jilin provinces. Whilst the impact of the programme cannot yet be assessed as it is still in its very early stages, it definitely represents a significant extension of the national coverage of RCSC's HIV/AIDS work and builds on the experience gained in the successful Yunnan and Xinjiang programmes. Furthermore, it serves as an example of how the Federation can provide its technical and programming expertise to help a PNS, in this case Netherlands Red Cross, initiate a programmatic partnership with RCSC.

The Federation's own support to RCSC, which is funded mainly by Swedish and British Red Cross, has helped identify which provinces have the most potential to develop their own HIV/AIDS activities and also some of the challenges that the society faces. It has also helped RCSC forge linkages with UNAIDS and other international organisations working on HIV/AIDS programmes in the country.

Constraints:

The unexpected appearance of severe acute respiratory syndrome (SARS) in April 2003 had serious consequences for the RCSC's and the Federation's HIV/AIDS programmes as all meetings and travel were banned and RCSC devoted their time and resources to China's SARS response. Despite the cessation of all HIV-related activities from April through July, however, progress was made toward the objectives of the 2003-2004 Appeal. In addition, collaboration was fostered between the Federation Delegation and PNS that support RCSC as well as with external organisations.

Disaster Management

Goal: The impact of natural disasters on vulnerable populations in China will be minimised by developing the disaster preparedness and disaster response capacity of the national society.

Objective: To develop a clearer definition of the role and identity of the RCSC in emergency situations and in disaster preparedness, and to further develop the national society's DP/DR structures and systems.

The RCSC's Federation supported disaster management programme consists of two separate components which are reported on separately below. The first consists of measures to help RCSC strengthen its speed and effectiveness in disaster operations. The second relates to the implementation of pioneering water and sanitation programme intended to serve as a model for community level disaster preparedness and mitigation activities.

1. Measures to Help RCSC strengthen its speed and effectiveness in disaster operations.

Progress/achievements against expected results:

Millions of people lost their homes following severe flooding which commenced in Hunan and Guangxi in May, and extended to the country's central and eastern provinces in June. The flooding has been highly unusual and extended beyond the normal end date into October. In July, the RCSC in cooperation with the Federation launched an Emergency Appeal (18/2003) to assist 110,000 families affected by the flooding. Flood relief activities are being regarded as much as an opportunity to develop the RCSC's DM capacity as to provide critical relief supplies to flood affected families and individuals.

The operation proposed in the Appeal incorporated many of the recommendations which came out of the 2002 review. The RCSC is working with the East Asia regional delegation and the team of Federation relief delegates to improve the Society's financial, narrative reporting and logistics procedures. Both RCSC headquarters and provincial branches in Guangxi and Hunan reported quicker response times in 2003 due to lessons learned during the 2002 operation. Improved disaster response by provincial branches in Guangxi and Hunan was also facilitated by the improved capacity of the branches which has been developed through the ECHO supported sanitation projects which commenced following floods in 2001.

Recommendations made during the 2002 Flood Operation Review are being implemented. Three Federation delegates who have been brought in especially for the flood relief operation have been placed in RCSC headquarters in Beijing to work on logistics, coordination, planning and reporting. Bi-weekly task force meetings, chaired by the Federation's relief coordinator, facilitate information sharing and coordination among Federation delegates - relief, external liaison, finance, information and logistics. Training has been a significant part of the operation since its inception where a coordination meeting was conducted by the Federation's disaster management delegate in July for RCSC headquarters and provincial branch staff. With the arrival of a reporting delegate trainings on reporting have been conducted at headquarters and with the Shaanxi Provincial branch.

Following the earthquake in Gansu province at the end of August, the International Federation, in response to the confirmation of the needs made by a joint RCSC/Federation assessment team, released CHF 100,000 from its disaster relief emergency fund (DREF) on 30 October for the purchase of 11,000 quilts to be distributed to those people who were affected by the earthquake.

2. Community-based water/sanitation/health education disaster preparedness project in Guangxi and Hunan Provinces. (These activities are at present fully funded by ECHO, but additional components are being developed)

Objective: to build 13,500 dry hygienic toilets in the two provinces and to develop community based health promotion activities in the villages supported through the program.

Progress/achievements against expected results:

The RCSC in cooperation with the Federation and with support from ECHO is providing 12 rural communities in Guangxi province and 23 rural communities in Hunan province with a "package" to develop or improve selected water supplies to villages, install dry hygienic toilet facilities and conduct health education activities. Both provinces are subject to regular serious flooding of villages and toilets which lead to the contamination of surface and ground water reserves. The typical open toilet located in the animal compound provides a ready contaminant when flood waters inundate the region and as a consequence pose a serious threat to the health of the general population. Flooding in the region is a regular phenomenon. The toilets designed for this project are made of bricks and concrete making them resistant to floods of a moderate nature. The base of the toilet is often more than one meter high depending on the present structure of the house into which it will be fitted avoiding contamination as long as the water does not rise above this level.

In order to improve the general health of the rural population a "package" of water, sanitation and health education is required. The health education component has been introduced by the branches with the support of a Federation delegate through a participatory approach to health education. The advantage of this type of approach is it develops community spirit and co-operation and allows the community to identify what they perceive are areas of concern and find realistic solutions. These activities assist communities by reducing disaster-related morbidity; improving health status and living condition; facilitating behaviour-change; and improving the environment.

In June 2003, Guangxi experienced flooding that the Government and Red Cross figures state affected at least 3.69 million people, with 76 people losing their lives. In July 2003, Hunan also experienced significant flooding and landslides. Government and Red Cross authorities report that the floods and landslides that affected the north west of the province were the worst on record. In both provinces there was severe infrastructure damage, including power lines, telecommunication lines, river banks/levees, irrigation facilities, fish ponds, water and sewerage supplies.

Federation delegates based in both Guangxi and Hunan and representatives from the RCSC's Hunan and Guangxi Red Cross branches have carried out a number of assessments of flood affected communities during the reporting period. The assessments confirmed that following flooding untreated effluent is the greatest contaminant of surface and groundwater reserves, it is estimated that sanitation related diseases such as dysentery, typhoid fever and diarrhoeal diseases account for more than 70 per cent of the infectious diseases in Guangxi/ Hunan Provinces. Project participants were selected applying the following criteria :

- People residing in flooded areas.
- The poor in Guangxi or better-off farmers.
- Ethnic minorities in Guangxi.
- Enthusiastic farmers who are willing to be involved.
- Supportive local authorities.
- Involvement of local Red Cross, Government, and farmers.

The project has successfully adopted an integrated approach, involving activities such as educating facilitators at county level to train and supervise a group of RCSC volunteers in all the targeted villages. The role of both the volunteers and facilitators has been to develop a sense of cooperation and community spirit. This allows the local people to conduct their own assessments and to develop realistic solutions towards changing behaviour and attitudes in their communities. In a recent assessment, almost all the beneficiary households surveyed felt their living conditions had improved and that they had an increased awareness of health prevention measures.

A great deal of support has also been received from the local governments which carry out complementary activities to improve the living conditions of the beneficiaries. In all areas where the Eco-San toilets are installed, the RCSC concludes an agreement with the local authorities to upgrade the roads and drains or supplies materials such as sand and cement, and the villagers make a large input in terms of materials and labour to this work. The project has been supported by three Federation delegates (a programme coordinator, a wat/san delegate and a health delegate). They have worked closely with provincial branches, helping them implement the project and improving the branches' capacity for financial reporting and project management.

In August, a two day planning meeting was organised by the Federation and RCSC headquarters to review the lessons being learnt in implementing these projects and to map out a strategy for a more comprehensive approach. The meeting brought together RCSC senior management and staff, representatives from the Guangxi and Hunan provincial branches, Federation project delegates, as well as Federation disaster preparedness and watsan experts from Geneva and the Bangkok regional delegation. In particular, the meeting aimed to explore how far these projects could serve as a spring board for developing RCSC community based disaster preparedness (CBDP) activities.

Impact:

Many villagers in remote areas of China have limited access to both basic medical and educational resources. In the current ECHO programme participatory community based health education has been developed to support community based decision making from the "ground up." The advantage of this type of health education is programme sustainability and the fostering of community spirit and co-operation. Another significant advantage to this type of health education program in China is that the RCSC has members at all levels of the community therefore ensuring programme support and success.

Both the branches and key representatives of RCSC's senior management in Beijing identified improving rural health through integrated programming as one of the Society's top priorities. It was recognised that one of the main successes of the projects in Guangxi and Hunan has been to build RCSC's confidence in carrying out community based work. Village level volunteer groups have been formed to promote health awareness. With suitable support and guidance these same or similar groups of people can be mobilised for community disaster preparedness. There is also a growing recognition of the importance and possibilities of promoting risk reduction at the community level. For example, following floods in Guangxi villagers are being encouraged by local government and the Red Cross to re-build houses on higher ground and of bricks rather than mud.

Constraints: Constraints to the project have been the late arrival of funds; hygiene education was under-funded, no funds available for planned water component; some beneficiaries lack knowledge about proper-use of dry toilet; target villages are scattered; and local Red Cross branches are understaffed.

Organisational Development

Goal: The RCSC will build its capacity to make a positive difference to the lives of vulnerable people through more relevant programmes and services.

Objective: The staff members and volunteers of the RCSC have improved skills and knowledge contributing to a better functioning of the National Society.

Progress/achievements against expected results:

Although organisational development (OD) work was considerably delayed in the middle part of the year by the SARS outbreak, the latter part of the year saw a number of new initiatives which underline the RCSC's commitment to taking forward its organizational strengthening. These included the organisation of a national leadership and a national finance management training course, both held in October. The RCSC then organised a seminar for information officers from twelve of its branches in November. The Federation also arranged for the RCSC's participation at a large international fund-raising seminar in Holland, and sponsored one of the society's participants.

The national leadership workshop, following on from a similar exercise held last year, was a major event and brought together senior representatives (typically vice president or secretary general) from each of the RCSC 31 provincial branches. Many of the participants were relatively new and the RCSC gives a high priority to ensuring that its provincial leadership has a thorough knowledge of the Red Cross operating principles and procedures as well as modern management techniques. The one week course thus covered both sessions on Red Cross topics (including the RCSC organisation in today's China), and also presentations on modern management from Beijing's Tsinghua University and on organisational development and fund-raising from Pact, an American organisation specialised in capacity building programmes. Originally the Federation had budgeted to finance this workshop as it had done the previous year, but the Norwegian Red Cross offered to finance the costs of both this course and an international cooperation planning seminar to be held in mid-December.

The finance management course was targeted at the finance staff from all the society's provincial branches. It builds on the Federation finance management programme carried out in 2001 and 2002 with support from the Canadian Red Cross. The aim is to ensure that the society has the knowledge and skills at provincial branch level to use the systems and procedures developed in the 2001/02 programme to manage and report on the funds provided by international donors be they from Federation, bilateral PNS or other sources.

During this reporting period, the Federation also worked with Norwegian Red Cross (NRC) to support a branch leadership training workshop for Shaanxi province in August. NRC has been expanding its cooperation with RCSC and is now started working with this province in addition to Sichuan province, where it has been supporting a range of health and OD activities for the past three years. This branch leadership workshop brought together some 45 participants from the provincial and prefectural levels and consisted of OD, finance development and information training. One of the outputs was the production of a set of updated training materials in Chinese which can be used in similar events in the coming year.

Impact:

There is undoubtedly considerable OD value in the current branch training programmes being organised by RCSC HQ. At this stage of the society's development, it is facing a number of challenges and opportunities. In the first place it is continuing its process of separation from the Ministry of Health at the lower organisational levels. It is therefore important that its staff and leadership understand the Red Cross organisation, its principles and ways of operating. At the same time, the society is very open to international collaboration, and this past year has seen an increasing sense of cooperation amongst all the partners that are working with RCSC. This in turn is providing a good basis for building on the strengths that the RCSC has been developing in programme areas such as disaster preparedness, community water and sanitation, and HIV/AIDS.

Constraints:

The main constraint during the past half year has been the volume of activity that RCSC HQ has been engaged in. There has had to be a particular focus given to the flood operation and the relief response to other disasters that have occurred during this period. This combined with the effects of having to catch up on a range of organisational activities that were delayed due to SARS has meant that some OD activities could not be carried out in a planned or systematic way.

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All International Federation assistance seeks to adhere to the Code of Conduct and is committed to the Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Disaster Response (SPHERE Project) in delivering assistance to the most vulnerable.

For support to or for further information concerning Federation programmes or operations in this or other countries, please access the Federation website at <http://www.ifrc.org>

APPEAL No. 01.66/2003

PLEDGES RECEIVED

10/12/2003

DONOR	CATEGORY	QUANTITY	UNIT	VALUE CHF	DATE	COMMENT
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CASH

REQUESTED IN APPEAL CHF ----->				3,564,329	TOTAL COVERAGE 68.8%	
CASH CARRIED FORWARD				154,555		
BRITISH - RC		30,000	GBP	67,275	15/02/2003	HIV PROGRAMME
BRITISH - RC		5,000	GBP	11,143	02.12.03	HEALTH PROGRAMME
ECHO (03001)		1,280,000	EUR	1,878,080	30/01/2003	SANITATION ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT
NORWEGIAN - GOVT/RC				5,325	06.08.03	HIV/AIDS
SWEDISH - GOVT		500,000	SEK	80,250	31.03.03	PCN002
CAPACITY BUILDING FUND ALLOCATION				85,750	07/04/2003	
SUB/TOTAL RECEIVED IN CASH				2,282,378	CHF	64.0%

KIND AND SERVICES (INCLUDING PERSONNEL)

DONOR	CATEGORY	QUANTITY	UNIT	VALUE CHF	DATE	COMMENT
AUSTRALIA	DELEGATE(S)			58,316		
DENMARK	DELEGATE(S)			59,959		
NEW ZEALAND	DELEGATE(S)			50,267		
SUB/TOTAL RECEIVED IN KIND/SERVICES				168,542	CHF	4.7%

ADDITIONAL TO APPEAL BUDGET

DONOR	CATEGORY	QUANTITY	UNIT	VALUE CHF	DATE	COMMENT
SUB/TOTAL RECEIVED				0	CHF	