

# 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

## EAST ASIA REGION

17 December 2003

Appeal no. 01.69/2003; Appeal target: CHF 762,888 (USD 524,000 or EUR 517,000)

Programme Update No. 2

Period covered: June to 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](http://www.ifrc.org)*

### In Brief

Appeal coverage: 77%

Outstanding needs: CHF 175, 646

Related Emergency or Annual Appeals: SARS appeal (11/2003); Emergency Appeal 18/2003 China Floods

**Programme Summary:** Good progress has been achieved in the second half of the year in taking forward most of the planned objectives in this regional appeal. In particular, a good climate of cooperation has been built up during this reporting period, both between the regional delegation and the societies of the region and also with the participating national societies working in East Asia. The overall response to the appeal target has not been as good as hoped for and this has principally affected the humanitarian values/information programme.

### Operational developments

East Asia was affected by several natural disasters between the months of June to November, reflecting yet again that it is one of the most disaster prone regions in the world. The Republic of Korea was struck by typhoon Maemi. Maemi's exceptionally powerful winds, which reached speeds as high as 216 kilometres per hour, left a wake of destruction that set back the country's economy and left 87 people dead and 28 missing. Japan has experienced several large earthquakes over the reporting period with the largest in Hokkaido reaching 8.0 on the Richter scale. China was hit by a series of large earthquakes with the most recent ones being in Gansu province. The country also has been subject to exceptional flooding which has affected 27 provinces in total. The flooding which continued into October left millions homeless.

In each of these cases local branches of the national societies in cooperation with their respective headquarters responded quickly providing relief items within 24 hours of the disaster. The Federation's East Asia regional delegation maintains close contact with the national societies and where needed, such as in the case of the earthquake in Gansu province, is ready to deploy regional delegates to support the national society with assessments, planning or provide support with publicising the societies' activities on the Federation's website and in the international media.

At a November leadership meeting facilitated by the Federation and hosted by the Red Cross Society of China (RCSC) in Beijing, senior management representatives from national societies in China, Japan, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK), the Republic of Korea and Mongolia met to report on the progress thus far in implementing the three key tasks set forth in the Manila Action Plan adopted at the Asia Pacific regional conference in November 2002. Participants also reviewed the topics that would be discussed at the forthcoming International Conference and other statutory meetings to be held in Geneva at the end of the year (see Coordination section for further details).

A major event in the past year has been the outbreak of severe acute respiratory syndrome (SARS) affecting primarily China, but also other countries in East and South East Asia. Whilst at the time of writing the crisis has waned in the region, the strong advice from WHO is to maintain a high degree of caution. There were a total of 8,098 reported cases of severe acute respiratory syndrome (SARS), in 29 countries and special administrative regions, during the period 1 November, 2002 to 31 July, 2003. The majority of the cases occurred in China where there were a reported 5,327 cases and 349 deaths; with 1,002 of cases among health care workers. Although the majority of the reported cases were concentrated in Asia, a significant number of cases were reported in Canada (151) and the United States (14).

On 5 July 2003, the World Health Organization (WHO) declared that outbreaks of SARS were contained worldwide. On 8 September, one new case was diagnosed in Singapore. The route of transmission has been attributed to accidental laboratory contamination and the WHO considers this to be a single isolated case, with no public health implications.

## **Disaster Management**

**Goal: National societies are better prepared for disasters and are improving the ability of communities at risk to cope with disasters.**

**Objective: The disaster preparedness and response capacity at national and regional level is improved through an integrated regional disaster management (DM) approach.**

### **Progress/Achievements (activities implemented within this objective)**

The Federation's East Asia regional delegation's disaster management programming seeks to provide a solid foundation for country level capacity building activities and emergency response. In China new and innovative ways of working have been introduced through the Community Vulnerability Reduction project, which presents a new approach towards addressing vulnerabilities in China. This project will be evaluated in December and is intended to serve as a model for similar interventions in other provinces in China, as well as in other countries in the region. It is the objective of the regional disaster management programme to further develop and explore possibilities of addressing vulnerabilities in new ways that will meet the needs of the beneficiaries and attract longer-term donors. At the same time the Federation's regional disaster preparedness delegate with support from the regional information delegate has played a key role in initiating, publicising, and monitoring disaster response activities in East Asia in coordination with the respective national societies and Federation delegations.

The Federation continues to follow up on three evaluations of relief operations implemented by national societies in co-operation with the Federation in: 1) Mongolia, 2) China and, 3) DPRK by working with each of the three national societies to build upon the evaluation reports' recommendations by developing the most relevant points and incorporating them into the plans of action for relief operations and the framework for future national society/Federation cooperation. The reviews in Mongolia, China and DPRK have created the foundation for strategic and procedural changes, improving the way the societies prepare for, and respond to natural disasters.

**China:** In March, an independent review of the China Floods Operation 2002 was carried out to evaluate: firstly the timeliness, efficiency and relevance of the 2002 China Flood operation; secondly, the extent to which the RCSC/International Federation had been successful in terms of incorporating the findings and recommendations provided by the 1999 and 2000 flood evaluations; and, thirdly to develop recommendations for the future scope of RCSC/Federation co-operation in the area of disaster response based on these findings and recent developments related to the *Strategy for Change*.

The review highlighted a number of areas requiring improvement that have already resulted in changes in both organizations. Recommendations from the review were used to create a draft appeal for the RCSC in the event of floods, which was then used for the 2003 flood relief operation (Appeal 18/2003) when large scale floods that has affected 27 provinces hit China beginning in May. At the same time the review's recommendations are being incorporated into a joint plan of action for disaster management which is being developed by the RCSC and the Federation to address short and long term disaster management strategy and procedures.

**DPRK:** The regional DP/DR programme had made a significant contribution to the capacity of the DPRK-Red Cross to respond to disasters. The programme has been successful in defining a clear role for DPRK Red Cross in disaster preparedness and response, which is both acknowledged and appreciated by the government and the main

international humanitarian actors in the country. The DPRK Red Cross is considered to be the leading agency in this field, concentrating on clearly defined competencies, including search and rescue, first aid and non-food aid assistance, all of which complement the role of government authorities during times of emergency.

**Mongolia:** At the start of 2003, the Mongolia Red Cross Society (MRCS) did not possess a strong logistics capacity, and had no staff trained in Federation logistics procedures and standards. The review conducted in Mongolia identified a need for the Federation to provide support for MRCS in this area. Accordingly a logistics/disaster management workshop was held in June for MRCS staff at both selected provincial (aimag) and headquarters levels. The workshop was initially intended to be a regional workshop, but due to travel restrictions imposed because of SARS, this workshop was solely for MRCS staff. One of the key priorities for the MRCS in 2004 will be to improve the society's logistics system.

**Impact:** All three of the national societies involved with the review process are starting to take steps to meet the significant challenge of improving the abilities of communities at risk to cope with disasters. In each country, however, there are very differing challenges one of the key objectives of the Federation's regional disaster management programming is to introduce innovative approaches to disaster management to each of the national societies which will help them to overcome these challenges while establishing a comprehensive disaster management strategy and approach for the region.

**Constraints:** The Federation has launched four major relief operations in East Asia over the past two years. Major challenges to improving the efficiency of these operations have been twofold. Firstly, the Federation's and the national societies' disaster management procedures and strategies, as they stand, do not fully support fast and timely interventions. Secondly, the donor response has been unpredictable, and in some cases too slow to meet the urgent needs of the beneficiaries.

## **Humanitarian Values**

**Goal: The Movement's Fundamental Principles and humanitarian values have been better understood by internal and external stakeholders in East Asia.**

**Objective: The degree of visibility, co-operation and support for the Red Cross / Red Crescent in East Asia, through communications and advocacy have increased.**

### **Progress/Achievements (activities implemented within this objective)**

As part of efforts to reinforce communications within national societies in Asia Pacific (AP), the Federation commissioned in August/September 2003 a review of its overall performance in information and publicity as a follow up to the communications strategy for the region developed in mid-2001. Following an extensive dialogue with National Societies, a report was produced entitled "To Create a Culture of Communications". The report's recommendations clearly indicated a need to refine the current information activities and approach as one key component of the support being provided to the region's national societies and their partners.

The findings of this report were discussed at a meeting of regional information specialists held in Kuala Lumpur in September 2003, a revised regional communication strategy was developed and subsequently adopted. Under this latest version of the communications strategy, the focus of the Red Cross/Red Crescent is on improving visibility. The strategy recognises that in many cases the national societies are regarded as effective and competitive players in the field of humanitarian issues and disaster management, but that more needs to be done to help the national societies to use this reputation in order to position themselves as a primary credible source of information. Improved visibility of the public advocacy role of the national societies will depend on the emphasis placed on issues-based and country-specific actions.

One of the recommendations adopted during the meeting in Kuala Lumpur was the schedule of monthly teleconference meeting with all AP communication's specialist and Geneva media aimed at discussing pressing issues and sharing of information. During the first two meetings the AP communicators discussed the implementation of the new strategy, the 2004 HIV AIDS Conference in Bangkok, the sharing of information within AP including the replacement of the *Focus* publication.

The regional information delegate presented the new communications strategy to the RCSC and DPRK Red Cross management and communications department. The new strategy was well received. In order to build the capacity of

the national societies' communications departments, the regional information delegate has developed a half-day training course on how to develop and write stories in the field. Mentoring is done to encourage the NS's communicators to write stories about the recent floods and other issues as well as to take pictures and video.

In 2003, the East Asia region was exposed to a wide range of disasters, and the Federation launched three emergency appeals during the course of the year. Two were launched respectively in January and July to support the dzud and flood affected populations in Mongolia and China. In May, the Federation launched a regional appeal to support RCSC, DPRK and Mongolia Red Cross, as well as several Southeast Asia societies with their response to severe acute respiratory syndrome (SARS). In addition, there was considerable publicity generated for RCSC relief operations in response to earthquakes in Xinjiang, Yunnan and Gangsu provinces for which no international appeals were launched.

Numerous interviews were given to international media on these operations, in addition to stories written for the Federation website. Video material was also produced and distributed to all international media. Additional communications initiatives have included: the provision of information material and special briefings to governments, diplomatic missions, media and international organisations, and contributions to the Federation's website on the International Water Conference and Harm Reduction Conference.

A strategy was developed to publicise and raise funds to expand the water sanitation and health education project in rural China. It included a brochure in English and Chinese, a technical newsletter, and an article in the November/December issue of the Red Cross Red Crescent magazine.

During a visit to DPRK early this year, it was agreed to develop advocacy material as well as to continue to strengthen the communications department. Due to the SARS outbreak the development of advocacy material has been postponed until 2004. During a communications working discussion which took place early November in DPRK, it was agreed to organise, with the financial and technical support of the Danish Red Cross, a communications workshop in April 2004.

As part as an OD workshop organised by the Norwegian Red Cross, the regional information delegate will travelled to Sichuan Province in China in early December to give several presentations on the Movement with special emphasis on the Federation's work in East Asia as well as the introduction of the new communication's strategy.

### **Impact**

Visibility is seen as central to improving the effectiveness of programmes and facilitates both the development of national societies and sustained media coverage and public advocacy.

### **Constraints**

The recurrence of disasters and the fact that there is only one Federation staff member working full-time on communications issues has precluded the production of more diversified news stories for the Federation's web.

## **Federation Coordination**

**Goal: An effective, non-competitive and harmonised cooperation between all stakeholders has been achieved in the best interests of beneficiaries and national societies**

**Objective: Cooperation agreement strategies in China, Mongolia and DPRK contribute to increased cooperation, thus strengthening the national societies' capacity to implement at least one of its priority programmes.**

### **Progress/Achievements (activities implemented within this objective)**

Plans to organise a partnership meeting in the region had to be cancelled due to the SARS outbreak. Instead a PNS meeting was organised at the end of June in Geneva and was attended by 10 partner national societies (PNS) desk officers, the new head of the regional delegation and the head of the DPRK country delegation as well as the Geneva Asia Pacific department team. The current status of programmes and plans for the rest of the year in each of the three operating countries were discussed. Particular attention was given to DPRK given the high level of funding for operations in this country and the active involvement of several PNS in mobilising government support and helping manage ECHO contracts. An outline strategy for working in the region was also presented. This involves a three pronged approach consisting of external support to societies' programme in the region (multilateral and bilateral); promoting closer cooperation between the East Asia societies; and encouraging a more active engagement by societies of the region in the international work of the Federation.

In the period between August and November the head of regional delegation carried out familiarisation visits to DPRK (twice), Japan, the Republic of Korea and Mongolia. Discussions were held on current programmes and patterns of cooperation, as well as on identifying key areas to focus on in the future. In the case of Japan, for example, it was agreed that the regional delegation could help the society develop its capacity in HIV/AIDS programming, as well as assist in its annual fundraising campaign at the end of the year. For Mongolia, one of the priorities is to develop a new MOU that sets out how the country delegation will support the society in its development efforts after the ending of the large relief operation.

This period has also seen visits to the region by national society representatives from Australia, Britain, Canada, Denmark and Norway linked to these societies current or planned future cooperation with one or more of the societies in the region. In each case these provided good opportunities for an open dialogue on how each side could best work together and what sort of support the regional delegation could most usefully provide. Attention was also paid to briefing visiting delegations on the work of other PNS as the first step in developing a more holistic approach to the external assistance being provided in the region and laying the basis for a CAS (cooperation agreement strategy) process.

Work is now underway to analyse information on PNS past programmes and future plans. This data was collected as part of the 2004 annual appeal preparation, and it is intended that the results of this analysis should help guide future strategy for all partners working in East Asia. Furthermore the delegation now has the capacity and experience to be able to offer advice and guidance to PNS that want to develop programmes with NS in areas such as HIV/AIDS, disaster management and information/communications. The regional delegates have also established good contacts and working relations with a number of international and national organisations as well as with donor country embassies based in Beijing, which further enhances the opportunities for mobilising well planned and coordinated assistance to national society programmes in the region.

This increased collaboration with PNS is most evident in China, where there is a mix of societies that have been collaborating directly and actively with RCSC for several years being joined by some PNS that are re-launching or expanding previous cooperation activities, as well as the ICRC which supports a three-year dissemination programme. RCSC itself is keen to expand its cooperation with sister societies and has signalled this year that it would appreciate the Federation paying an active coordination role in view of the large number of PNS that are now working in the country.

Elsewhere in the region, the Federation has commissioned several comprehensive programmatic reviews over the past two years in Mongolia and DPRK which have been shared and discussed with interested PNS in an approach designed to ensure that a common understanding is built up around the key issues, opportunities and challenges.

This is helping build the basis for working in a more strategic and collaborative way to support the programmes and organisational development needs of the societies in question.

Another important aspect of this coordination programme is to foster regional cooperation amongst the societies of the region and to increase the engagement and profile of the region in the international activities of the Federation. To this end the regional delegation organised a meeting of East Asia national society leaders on 5 November which brought together leaders from all five societies to share current experience and explore ideas for the future. The meeting, which was chaired by the Federation's Head of Regional Delegation, was an opportunity for the societies to exchange ideas about and clarify what they expect from the Federation over the coming years so that they can make the most of such international meetings.

Reports on progress on the Manila Action Plan revealed the East Asia's national societies are playing a prominent role in HIV/AIDS awareness and prevention activities in the region. Although the pandemic has yet to reach the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, and incidences of the disease in the Republic of Korea, Mongolia and Japan are relatively small, the high frequency of HIV/AIDS in China, South Asia and South East Asia indicates the potential threat the disease poses to the region. All five national societies are appreciated as important auxiliaries to the government in the fight against and treatment of HIV/AIDS. The societies also reported improved capacity in disaster management activities. One area that remains to be further developed is the approach to and implementation of activities surrounding population movement. Although the countries where the national societies reside are not subject to the movement of refugees, countries such as China and Mongolia experience widespread internal population movement for economic reasons. Activities such as health services for migrant workers in the republic of Korea and vocational training for displaced herders offered by the Mongolian Red Cross Society (MRCS) are some of the non traditional ways in which the societies are seeking to fulfil this task.

Contacts with the ICRC have also been promoted during this reporting period. The head of the ICRC regional delegation in Bangkok, which also covers East Asia, completed his mission in November. Together with his successor, he paid a round of farewell visits to all the societies of East Asia and also to the Federation delegations. In each case, briefings and information on current and future plans were exchanged. In addition, the Federation's regional delegation helped arrange the participation of a representative of the ICRC regional delegation in two RCSC provincial leaders' workshops sponsored by Norwegian Red Cross.

Although regional health activities were not directly specified in the 2003 Annual Appeal, the Federation has expanded its work in this area during the course of the year and has started building a regional health programme which reflects the general regional strategy. The national societies of China, DPRK, and Mongolia have well established health activities, and the Federation's regional health delegate-HIV/AIDS coordinator has initiated a number of activities to augment these. The regional programme aims to complement the ongoing country-based work by supporting HIV/AIDS programmes in DPRK and Mongolia, including cross border initiatives; by promoting knowledge and sharing experience in health education campaigns about epidemic disease prevention, blood donor recruitment, etc.; and by advocating for and making Red Cross health programmes better known to international organisations and other agencies.

Activities carried out during the reporting period include providing technical assistance to the MRCS HIV/AIDS programme. In addition to peer education, and in collaboration with the railway authorities, MRCS has implemented three HIV prevention campaigns on trains running from Ulaan Baatar to the border with China. The train campaign's aim to educate passengers, and the residents of the town along the rail line, about HIV/AIDS prevention.

In DPRK, the society's Federation supported health promotion activities include community-based first aid and health promotion relating to the prevention of malaria, rational drug use, waterborne diseases, acute respiratory infections and breast feeding /safe delivery. Following the visit of a Federation sponsored review team in the earlier part of the year; workshops for HIV/AIDS awareness and prevention of other communicable diseases were recommended and are now planned for 2004.

## **Impact**

Although it is not easy to assess or measure, there are increasing indications that both the societies of the region and the PNS working in East Asia are responding positively to the greater emphasis now being placed by the regional delegation on actively promoting cooperation. Societies have been very willing not only to share

information on their current and planned activities, but have also expressed a clear desire for the Federation to encourage a dialogue between them on how best to work together.

### **Constraints**

There have been no significant constraints impeding furthering cooperation within the region.

## **International Representation**

**Goal: International stakeholders are increasingly supporting Red Cross/Red Crescent global and regional initiatives for the benefit of the targeted vulnerable groups**

**Objective: Regional vulnerabilities and national societies' priorities have been better understood by stakeholders especially by the international media and embassies based in Beijing**

### **Progress/Achievements (activities implemented within this objective)**

In terms of international representation, the regional delegation has continued to participate as an active member of the regular UN coordination meetings held in Beijing. These cover disaster management and health, especially HIV/AIDS, themes. Although they focus mainly on China-related issues, they serve as a useful forum to highlight the Federation's work in other countries of the region. In the course of the coming year it is planned to build on initial contacts that have been established in the region with organisations such as UNICEF, WHO, UNDP, the UN University in Tokyo and the Asian Disaster Reduction Centre in Kobe.

Visits have also been paid in the third quarter of the year to all the major donor country embassies in Beijing in connection with fundraising for the China flood operation. Although the response to the appeal launched at the end of July has been slow, the overall response rate by mid-November had exceeded 70 per cent. The regional delegation also participated in the launch in Beijing of the 2004 UN consolidated appeal for DPRK at the end of November. This helped underline the close collaboration and coordination that exists between the Federation and all the main UN agencies operating in DPRK.

Finally, the delegation aims to be responsive to opportunities for profiling issues of importance and concern to the Federation and its member societies that arise through relevant regional or international meetings that are organized in the region. Where possible, societies from the region will be encouraged to participate, such as the example of ROK Red Cross that represented the Federation at a meeting on migration and people trafficking in Seoul in September 2003.

### **Impact**

While again it is too early to assess the longer-term impact of this work, there can be little doubt that activities such as those described above have a positive effect on raising the profile of the Red Cross Red Crescent in the region, and have an impact on creating a favourable climate in which national societies can advance their work.

### **Constraints**

Nothing significant to report.

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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>*

# East Asia regional

ANNEX 1

APPEAL No. 01.69/2003

## PLEDGES RECEIVED

10/12/2003

DONOR	CATEGORY	QUANTITY	UNIT	VALUE CHF	DATE	COMMENT
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### CASH

DONOR	CATEGORY	QUANTITY	UNIT	VALUE CHF	DATE	COMMENT
REQUESTED IN APPEAL CHF ----->				<b>762,888</b>		<b>TOTAL COVERAGE 77.0%</b>
CASH CARRIED FORWARD				143,909		
BRITISH - RC		10,000	GBP	22,285	02.12.03	REGIONAL INFORMATION PROG.
CHINESE - GOVT		180,000	USD	239,670	15.10.03	
JAPANESE - RC		41,590	USD	56,188	18.06.03	DISASTER MANAGEMENT
SINGAPORE - RC		6,870	SGD	5,272	01.05.03	
SUB/TOTAL RECEIVED IN CASH				467,324	CHF	61.3%

### KIND AND SERVICES (INCLUDING PERSONNEL)

DONOR	CATEGORY	QUANTITY	UNIT	VALUE CHF	DATE	COMMENT
CANADA	DELEGATE(S)			59,959		
DENMARK	DELEGATE(S)			59,959		
SUB/TOTAL RECEIVED IN KIND/SERVICES				119,918	CHF	15.7%

### ADDITIONAL TO APPEAL BUDGET

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