

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

CENTRAL AMERICA

13 December 2004

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In Brief

Appeal No. 01.53/2004; Programme Update no. 2, Period covered: 1 May to 30 October, 2004; Appeal coverage: 76.4%; Outstanding needs: CHF 893,849 (USD 783,375 or EUR 588,235).
(click here to go directly to the attached Contributions List (also available on the website).

Appeal target: CHF 3,783,014 (USD 3,315,279 or EUR 2,489,047); this appeal budget was revised from CHF 5,167,641 on 30 June 2004

Related Emergency or Annual Appeals: Pan American Disaster Response Unit (Appeal 01.51/2004)

Programme summary: Regional Planning meetings were held in Panama in January and May with Federation staff from throughout Central America and the Caribbean to define the goals and strategies for the coming year, monitor and evaluate projects and adjust operational plans and budgets. A Presidents and Directors General meeting was held in Panama in July with the National Societies of Central America, Mexico, Cuba and the Dominican Republic. This meeting provided an opportunity for National Societies to share their national development plans and priorities for 2005 and beyond with Federation, ICRC and PNS staff working in the region. The programme manager from the Lima Regional Delegation also gave a presentation on the monitoring process for the Plan of Action of the Inter-American Conference. The Centre of Reference for community education in disaster management was officially launched in Costa Rica. The first four community based disaster preparedness modules have been finalized, including School Based Disaster Management, Family Based Disaster Management, Education, Organization and Community Preparedness for Disaster Risk Reduction and Community First Aid. Four more modules are scheduled to be completed before the end of 2004. All National Societies have received a complete set of display banners promoting preparedness response, mitigation and recovery for the different type of disasters endemic in the region.

The reporting period has seen continued development of programme networks. National Societies are managing the communication and youth networks, as well as the newly-formed Central American health network (REDCAMP-SALUD), the disaster management network and the OD practitioners' network. The Salvadorean Red Cross Society coordinates the health and youth networks and the Honduran Red Cross coordinates the OD network. The disaster management network held its first meeting during which the terms of reference were defined. Due to lack of funding, a second meeting is still pending for the selection of the coordinating national society.

Given a funding shortage in the region, the funding target for the Central America Annual Appeal 2004 was reduced. This is accompanied by the reduction of projects and activities in organizational development, health, humanitarian values and coordination, cooperation and strategic partnerships. In addition, the Federation's offices in El Salvador, Honduras and Nicaragua will be closed by the end of 2004.

The three donors in the region, the British, Norwegian and Swedish Red Cross Societies, are continuing to provide the majority of the core and programme funding for the Regional Delegation while expressing their desire for other donor National Societies to provide support. The Regional Delegation is implementing the Federation's change process which is resulting in a reduction of programme funding for the Regional Delegation.

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This Programme Update reflects activities to be implemented over a one-year period. This forms part of, and is based on, longer-term, multi-year planning (refer below to access the detailed logframe documents). 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](#) in delivering assistance to the most vulnerable. For support to or for further information concerning Federation programmes or operations in this or other countries, or for a full description of the national society profile, please access the Federation's website at <http://www.ifrc.org>

Operational developments

The 2004 hurricane season has been particularly active, with 13 named storms, nine of which were hurricanes. Six hurricanes were category 3 storms, four of which made landfall in the Caribbean region, causing serious damage and loss of life. Throughout the season, the Regional Delegation has supported the Pan American Disaster Response Unit's (PADRU) relief and response efforts. While Central America was spared the brunt of these hurricanes, the rainy season took a toll on several countries in the region.

In Costa Rica, a yellow alert was declared in May after heavy rains caused flooding in the northern region of the country. According to the Costa Rican Red Cross's operations coordination centre, the rains forced 2,056 persons out of their homes and into 24 shelters located in Limón, Guácimo, Matina, Siquirres and Sarapiquí de Heredia. The heavy rains and flooding caused two deaths: one in Puerto Viejo de Sarapiquí (Heredia) and the other in Batán (Limón).

In Nicaragua, a series of tropical waves in June, July and August caused flooding and mudslides in several areas of the country. A total of 5,751 people were affected by mudslides and flooding, including 21 killed and 7 missing. In the department of Matagalpa, the municipality of Río Blanco was particularly badly hit, with the heavy rains saturating the land and causing severe mudslides in the Cerro Musun, a mountainous area of natural reserve located northeast of Managua. The mudslides hit 6 communities, affected 2,414 people, cut off communications and resulted in the collapse and contamination of water systems. A decision was made to re-house the population of the Cerro Musun as the location is highly vulnerable to further and more serious mudslides. The Federation, with support from the Italian government, is working in the affected area to provide emergency relief to beneficiaries and help rebuild homes in safer areas.

In Panama, a state of emergency was declared on 18 September following torrential rains that triggered mudslides and flooding. The Eastern area of Panama City was hardest hit, especially poor residential areas close to river banks. The floods killed 16 people and caused millions of dollars worth of damage. Some 1,405 houses were damaged and 281 were totally destroyed. Heavy rains struck the country again in late October, affecting 3,400 people and damaging more than 650 houses in the same part of the capital city that was hit in September. The Red Cross Society of Panama mobilized volunteers, ambulances, and relief items to the affected areas. The Federation's Regional Delegation and the Pan American Disaster Response Unit (PADRU) responded immediately to the disaster, providing support to the Red Cross Society of Panama. A response vehicle was provided by the Regional Delegation, and PADRU sent blankets, hygiene kits and jerry cans to be distributed amongst the affected population.

The Federation's structure in Central America includes the Regional Delegation, the Regional Finance Unit and the Regional Reporting Unit in Panama, as well as Federation offices in Guatemala, Honduras, El Salvador and Nicaragua. The offices in Honduras, El Salvador and Nicaragua will be closed as of December 2004. Programmes in Cuba, the Dominican Republic and Haiti are being run from the Panama Regional Delegation. Haiti is now a fully-fledged country delegation, managing the Social Unrest Emergency Appeal (Appeal 07/2004), the Floods Appeal focusing on Mapou (Appeal 13/2004) and the Hurricane Jeanne Response (22/2004).

Health and care

Goal: Efficient, responsive, and focused programmes that contribute to reducing vulnerability are implemented by the National Societies in the region.

Programme Objective: The National Societies of the region are contributing to a significant improvement of health conditions and are empowering vulnerable groups and communities to reduce vulnerability to ill health and disease.

Objective 1: The capacity of the National Society health departments has been strengthened and effective partnerships secured in line with the Santiago de Chile Commitment.

Progress/Achievements (activities implemented within this objective)

The third meeting of the regional health network for Central America, referred to as REDCAMP-SALUD, was attended by representatives from six National Societies: El Salvador, Costa Rica, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua and Panama. The REDCAMP-SALUD network is currently coordinated by the Salvadorean Red Cross Society (SRC). This meeting focused on "consensus for implementation of the 2003 – 2007 Plan of Action of the Inter American Conference" and was held in Guatemala between 11 and 13 October 2004. The meeting reviewed National Societies' activities in the area of health in view of the Plan of Action and its indicators as regards progress and impact. Overall, the meeting demonstrated that the National Societies are working to align their health programmes in accordance with the Plan of Action of the Inter American Conference. Discussions brought to light the fact that each National Society is producing guidelines and manuals which is resulting in a duplication of efforts. It was agreed that regional material should be developed in order to highlight best practices and to promote greater knowledge-sharing. A web page has been developed for REDCAMP-SALUD in order to provide a forum for National Societies in the region to share experience and information. This web page will be linked to both the www.cruzroja.org web page and the CARAN web site. The Panama Regional Delegation plans to recruit a web master for a six month period in order to work on this web page. The Salvadorean Red Cross Society is taking the lead in drawing up community health manuals, the Costa Rican Red Cross in the development of manuals relating to psychosocial health and the Guatemalan Red Cross (GRC) in the drawing up of manuals on issues of stigma and discrimination, particularly in relation to HIV/AIDS. These manuals will be distributed and shared on a regional basis.

Between 12 and 16 July 2004, a workshop was held with the Nicaraguan Red Cross (NRC) with an external consultant, the regional health delegate, the regional organizational development delegate and some 30 representatives of the NRC. The workshop focused on brainstorming with a view to restructuring the National Society health department. As a result, an organigram of the department was designed and objectives and indicators for the health programme put in place. A six month transition plan has been established to facilitate the strengthening of the department. In the Red Cross Society of Panama a similar process was initiated and the two National Societies will work together to share experiences.

Assistance has been provided by the Federation to the Salvadorean Red Cross Society towards strengthening of the community health office through technical advice, joint field visits, production of material and assistance with strategic alliances with external partners.

A further REDCAMP-SALUD workshop on the theme of voluntary, non-remunerated blood donation is planned for 8 to 10 December 2004.

Constraints:

The Santiago de Chile Commitment needs further dissemination at grassroots level within the Red Cross branches.

Objective 2: The response of the National Societies in Central America to the HIV/AIDS epidemic has been refined and scaled up in the areas of prevention, care and the fight against stigma and discrimination.

Progress/Achievements (activities implemented within this objective).

In July, a regional peer education training of trainers' workshop was held in Panama and a national facilitator from the Dominican Red Cross was amongst those trained in peer education techniques in the field of HIV/AIDS awareness. Between 24 and 26 September, a workshop with 17 young people was held in Panama to train them in view of the implementation of a pilot project in peer education using the "Together we Can" methodology in the "Angel Rubio" secondary school. The project seeks to replicate knowledge through each facilitator who will reach ten persons with information concerning HIV/AIDS. As a result, it is expected that the project will reach a total of at least 1,500 school students. In order to ensure that valid base-line information is available and to facilitate monitoring and evaluation of the project, a consultant has been recruited from Guatemala who is working on the design of a "tool box" which will facilitate both quantitative and qualitative measurement of the impact of this and similar projects. The tool box methodologies are currently in the process of being validated; this exercise took place in Panama between 25 and 29 October with the participation of representatives of the National Societies of Belize, Jamaica and the Federation's Sub Regional Office in Trinidad. Amongst other components of the validation process, the results of the training of the 17 youths who will work in the Angel Rubio School was evaluated and modifications made to the methodologies, as appropriate. In early December, the tool-kit will also be field-



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tested in Belize.

The National Societies of Costa Rica, Guatemala, Honduras and Nicaragua have also shown interest in further developing peer education projects and a workshop is planned between 14 and 17 November in Honduras to train facilitators in the "Together we Can" methodology. In Guatemala, a consultant will assist in the design of an HIV/AIDS pilot project. The Nicaraguan Red Cross is currently working on the "Together we Can" manuals, adapting them to the particular language and culture of Nicaragua.

The Salvadorean Red Cross Society currently implements HIV/AIDS projects through Red Cross youth; however, an agreement has now been reached that these projects should be incorporated into the National Society's health programme; support was provided to the National Society with regard to the drawing up of a strategic plan in HIV/AIDS.

Alliances with other groups, and particularly groups of people living with HIV/AIDS, continue to be reinforced. The Secretary of REDCA+ made a presentation on the network at the Presidents and Directors General meeting held in Panama in July. A joint mass media/social marketing campaign with REDCA+ is being prepared for launch in 2005. A strong relationship with UNICEF has been established in the Caribbean in relation to HIV/AIDS programming, and a dialogue with UNICEF has been initiated in Central America.

Constraints:

Conservatism in some National Societies is still causing some difficulties in moving forward HIV/AIDS projects, and also complicates the formalizing of agreements with organizations of people living with HIV/AIDS (PLWA). A change in the leadership of REDCA+ is anticipated which is slowing the process of alliance-building with the network.

Objective 3: The National Societies' capacity to recruit, manage and maintain a pool of volunteer blood donors, contributing to a safe and adequate national blood supply, has been enhanced.

Progress/Achievements (activities implemented within this objective)

International Blood Donor day was celebrated on 14 June throughout the region with all National Societies promoting increased voluntary, non-remunerated blood donation (VNRBD) in collaboration with Ministries of Health. On 11 September, World First Aid Day was also celebrated, taking advantage of the opportunity to reinforce key messages regarding voluntary, non-remunerated blood donation.

In Panama in September, a fruitful meeting was held with the international advertising company, McCann Erikson in which the company offered to promote a regional campaign in the area of voluntary non-remunerated blood donation. The electricity company ELEKTRA Noreste is providing volunteers who are working with the Red Cross Society of Panama in order to implement a VNRBD project. As a result, an answering machine is being purchased which will receive all calls from potential blood donors and a data base of donors will be set up. In conjunction with McCann Erikson, a series of posters promoting blood donation were produced for the Red Cross Society of Panama and were published in national newspapers. The posters also received four national awards, boosting the image and profile of the Red Cross Society of Panama. These posters are now being adapted for use by other National Societies in the region, with the support of McCann Erikson.

Constraints:

There is a total lack of interest on the part of traditional donors to support this project and there is therefore a need to search for external partners in order to find funding to support VNRBD initiatives.

Objective 4: Integrated health interventions using IMCI as a basis, in partnership with PAHO, the Ministry of Health (MoH) and other partners (including vulnerable communities) are being implemented by National Societies.

Progress/Achievements (activities implemented within this objective)

In Guatemala, a total of 116 community health promoters from the Retalhuleu, Coatepeque, Tecún Umán and El Palmar branches were trained in the community-based IMCI (IMCI-AINM-C) promotion and prevention strategy, focusing on the 16 key community practices promoted by the strategy. As a result, 208 families received information and training in subjects such as basic sanitation, respiratory infections, diarrhoea and nutrition. The project includes an "early warning" system in order to identify malnourished children who need to be referred for treatment.

In El Salvador, the Federation is assisting with the production of key manuals in community health approaches which will be made available as regional resources: "Let's design our community projects," "Getting to know our communities," and "First Aid manual." The Salvadorean Red Cross Society is participating in the National Commission for Integral Care and is carrying out projects using the community IMCI strategy, in coordination with the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO) and the Ministry of Public Health and Social Assistance in three areas where vulnerable populations are found. Similarly, other projects being carried out with PNS in the country are also using the strategy's community focus.

The American, Canadian, Italian, Netherlands, Spanish and Swiss Red Cross Societies continue to carry out bilateral community health projects in El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras and Nicaragua. The Federation continues to promote community health projects, with a particular focus on mother and child health, among all National Societies and PNSs working in the region. Through the regional health network, REDCAMP-SALUD and through liaison with PNSs and PAHO, the Federation continues to promote the standardization of community health manuals and materials used in the region.

In Central America, there are several variations of the IMCI strategy, including AINM-C, which is being used in Guatemala, and a greater effort must be made to ensure that the IMCI strategy is in line with the strategies being

used by the Ministries of Health in Guatemala, Honduras and Nicaragua, and to encourage the use of the strategy among other agencies, partners and donors. In order to achieve this, it is important to strengthen the capacities of the National Societies' health departments, reduce the administrative steps in order to make projects more efficient, and provide appropriate technical assistance. It is also important to design and promote a system for information, monitoring and evaluation that addresses local and national needs, provides information about the projects being developed and allows for better decision making.

The Federation is also encouraging integrated water and sanitation projects as part of community health projects. A regional water and sanitation delegate based in the Panama Regional Delegation was recruited in September to further promote work in this area. In line with this focus on water and sanitation, the Participatory Hygiene and Sanitation Transformation (PHAST) manuals have been revised and adapted to the Central American context.

Constraints:

The various methodologies being used by some PNSs in the region is causing confusion for some of the National Societies and it is important that all actors agree on a common methodological base. It is also important that the Federation reinforces contacts with the World Health Organization/Pan American Health Organization to work towards scaling up community health initiatives in the region.

Objective 5: The capacity of the Guatemalan Red Cross health department has been strengthened in line with Strategy 2010 and the Santiago de Chile Commitment.

Progress/Achievements (activities implemented within this objective)

In the area of HIV/AIDS, over 11,200 students from 70 schools in Izabal, Retalhuleu, Coatepeque, Tecún Umán and Mazatenango received peer education in HIV/AIDS prevention and anti-stigma and anti-discrimination with the use of GRC manuals. It is planned to launch a pilot project using the "Together we Can" methodology which includes monitoring and evaluation tools in order to compare methodologies and impact. The branch which has been identified to implement the pilot project is Jalapa.

Three radio spots containing messages on HIV/AIDS prevention, anti-stigma and anti-discrimination have been disseminated since early this year in Izabal, particularly in Puerto Barrios and El Estor. The spots are under revision for future use in other regions of the country. The spots are in both Spanish and Q'ueqchi. In May 2004, a television spot was designed and produced with the support of the PLWA organization - REDLA+. As a result of design and script revisions, it is hoped that this will be launched in early 2005. In September, the Guatemalan Red Cross finalized a manual on awareness in relation to HIV/AIDS related stigma which will be used to train facilitators who will work in schools to reach school children with key messages. A further guide regarding HIV/AIDS prevention is being developed and is expected to be field-tested in November.

Strategic partnerships with the Ministry of Health and organizations such as HOPE, Project Concern International, World Vision, the World Food Programme (WFP), UNAIDS and REDLA+ have been strengthened through continued cooperation during the reporting period. Thus, the GRC is taking a lead role in consortia working in the areas of nutrition and HIV/AIDS, promoting visibility.

The Guatemalan Red Cross is revising five modules of water and sanitation manuals which focus on the legal, technical and social aspects of water and sanitation projects. The National Society recruited a Water and Sanitation Coordinator in October, boosting activities in this area.

Constraints:

The late arrival of funding complicated project implementation in the initial months of the year. There are problems of stability of staff members in the Guatemalan Red Cross both at headquarters and branch level, resulting in the constant need to train new personnel. In addition, certain branches are reticent to include HIV/AIDS projects in activities managed at local level. A major constraint is that, to date, the Guatemalan Red Cross has no Health Director to facilitate coordination and overall planning; furthermore, there is no functioning health commission at the level of the National Board.

Objective 6: The capacity of the Salvadorean Red Cross Society's health department has been strengthened in line with Strategy 2010 and the Santiago de Chile Commitment.

Progress/Achievements (activities implemented within this objective)

The Salvadorean Red Cross Society has continued making advances in the process of strengthening the community health office (CHO). Currently, a technical team of health professionals is working together with volunteers from the SRC branches and community volunteers from vulnerable populations to carry out health interventions in line with the community health model. Currently, all of the SRC health projects are being channelled through the CHO, bringing coherence to these projects. The SRC has also created tools that facilitate operational work and the validation of the community health model, such as guides and manuals.

The SRC, through Red Cross Youth and the community health office, continues to carry out projects to prevent HIV/AIDS, working primarily with youth groups. An institutional participative process has been started to design an HIV/AIDS strategic plan for the SRC. In cooperation with the Universidad Centroamericana José Simeón Cañas (UCA) and with the participation of high risk groups, a national HIV/AIDS prevention campaign is being designed; this process is being analyzed and financed by the Global Fund.

The Salvadorean Red Cross Society has taken a lead role in drawing up proposals to access financial resources available in the country from sources such as the European Union and the Global Fund, thereby lessening the SRC dependency on traditional funding sources, such as PNSs. Coordination is also ongoing with the Pan American Health Organization, German Technical Cooperation (GTZ), Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), the European Union, NGOs such as World Vision and other actors present in the areas where the SRC is carrying out health projects. Also of great importance are alliances that are being formed with local governments, the educational sector and the private sector. In addition, a partnership is being consolidated with the Universidad Centroamericana José Simeón Cañas. The SRC has negotiated and designed a diploma programme in administration of community health projects as part of a proposal for human resource development.

The Salvadorean Red Cross Society has reached an agreement with the Ministry of Health to develop a community health information system, and information about the Red Cross strategies, programmes and projects were sent to the health minister. The SRC is also carrying out work to promote Strategy 2010 and the 2003-2007 Plan of Action of the Inter-American Conference, particularly as it relates to agreements made in the area of health in line with the Millennium Development Goals.

During the reporting period, a meeting with PAHO to analyze the dengue epidemic was carried out between the SRC and PAHO. According to the Pan American Health Organizations, there have been more than 4,000 reported cases of dengue in 2004. Both parties agreed to develop a coordinated contingency plan and the SRC participated in campaigns for the prevention and control of epidemics of both pneumonia and dengue.

Constraints:

It is important that the SRC and the Federation health team follow up on the newly established relationships with local authorities and international organizations.

Disaster Management

Goal: Efficient, responsive, and focused programmes that contribute to reducing vulnerability are implemented by the National Societies in the region.

Programme Objective: The National Societies in the region are implementing effective disaster management (DM) programmes which contribute to the reduction of the vulnerability and increased capacity of populations in high risk areas.

Objective 1: The disaster management capacities of the region's National Societies have been strengthened and effective partnerships secured in line with the Santiago de Chile Commitment.

Progress/Achievements (activities implemented within this objective)

During the first four months of the year, the Pan American disaster management strategy outlined in the Santiago de Chile Commitment was operationalized and a regional disaster management strategy is under development. A baseline assessment of disaster management capacities and activities and their relation with the Plan of Action of the Inter American Conference was developed and analyzed by each National Society relief director and community based disaster management (CBDM) officer. As part of the process of developing a regional disaster management strategy, the assessment was shared during the PNS meeting held in July and a rapid assessment was carried out regarding the Movement's interest in supporting disaster management activities. A strategy has now been drafted and sent to all National Societies and Partner National Societies working in the region. The strategy looks at risk reduction and includes elements of prevention, community preparedness, response preparedness, disaster response and integrated community based programmes. In coordination with the Pan American Disaster Response Unit, the process of developing this strategy is on-going.

The first meeting of the disaster management network was held in Costa Rica on 10 and 11 July and was attended by National Society relief directors and CBDM officers. As a result of the meeting a regional action plan for July through December was developed. The plan also includes activities for 2005 designed to continue strengthening the disaster management network. The head of PADRU also attended the meeting in order to discuss PADRU's plans for the remainder of the year, both in terms of disaster response and in terms of the provision of specialized training in international disaster preparedness and response mechanisms. PADRU will continue to support regional coordination within the Red Cross system. The National Societies analyzed the role which disaster management departments should play and identified potential actions for the future. The meeting also provided National Societies with the opportunity to share their views regarding the support they expect from the Secretariat in the region.

Constraints

There continues to be a lack of funds to develop these activities in the region. Although there is a high level of commitment from National Society relief directors, there is a clear need for greater financial support in this area.

Objective 2: National Societies have been empowered in the area of disaster management and their capacities have been increased.

Progress/Achievements (activities implemented within this objective)

A monthly monitoring system has been implemented in the National Societies of El Salvador, Costa Rica and Guatemala to follow up activities related to the disaster management strategic plans linked to the National Society's Strategic and Development Plans. Each National Society has a plan of action for disaster management and reports to the Regional Delegation on the activities carried out and progress made in relation to the plan of action. The Federation is then able to provide feedback to the National Societies in order to help them to continue improving their capacities. It is anticipated that the National Societies of Honduras, Nicaragua and Panama could shortly begin implementation of this system.

An analysis of the transition phase from relief to rehabilitation/reconstruction took place in the Dominican Republic following the floods that occurred in May, in full coordination with PADRU. The assessment started with a coordination meeting with the Dominican Red Cross (DRC) and a field visit and was concluded in mid August. Based on this assessment a plan of action was drawn up for the rehabilitation/reconstruction phase which focuses on branch development in nine branches of the DRC. Of these branches, seven are located in the vulnerable region on the border between the Dominican Republic and Haiti, and two are the regional branches that provide support to these branches. As part of branch development, the Federation has provided the branches involved with training and educational materials, such as books and whiteboards. In October, Vulnerability and Capacity Assessment (VCA) training workshops were carried out in four of the border branches, facilitated by members of the Argentine, Costa Rican, Guatemalan and Venezuelan Red Cross Societies. These facilitators remained in the Dominican Republic for 15 days to conduct the workshops and to carry out community assessments. In addition, a financial workshop was carried out during the reporting period in the National Society headquarters in Santo Domingo. The workshop was attended by 20 members of the DRC from both the National Society headquarters and branches and was facilitated by the finance officer from the Federation's office in Santo Domingo.

There has been a high level of coordination and communication with regional and international partners throughout the reporting period. Memoranda of Understanding (MoU)s were drawn up with the Coordination Centre for the Prevention of Natural Disasters in Central America (CEPRENAC) and the Caribbean Disaster Emergency Response Agency (CDERA) in order to enhance coordination, knowledge and the exchange of technical support. In addition, the regional disaster management team is exploring the possibility of implementing joint initiatives with UNDP and JICA. The initiative with UNDP is the implementation of university training programmes related to disaster management and with JICA is focused on building local capacities within municipalities in the region.

Following up on the plan of action developed by relief directors and CBDM officers for the remainder of 2004, the Regional Delegation and the Red Cross Society of Panama have started the revision of the Mutual Support Agreement between Red Cross Societies in the region. The draft document for the National Societies was sent in October for final inputs. The document, which is designed to facilitate coordination and cooperation among National Societies during times of disaster, will be presented at the Presidents and Technical Seminars meeting to be held in 2005 in Mexico.

The Salvadorean Red Cross Society continues to strengthen National Intervention Teams (NITs) as part of the regional strategy to develop a model for Central America. In July, the third NITs meeting was held, with a special emphasis on evaluating the process to date. In addition, activities are ongoing to review the National Society's "Serie 3000" disaster preparedness and response procedural manual which the Federation is supporting. Thus far, the National Society disaster management framework has been finalized, as have the protocols for disaster response. In December, an evaluation meeting will be held with the National Society to examine how this pilot project can be replicated in other National Societies.

The Guatemala Red Cross held a meeting in August for disaster management branch coordinators from regional branches of the GRC to prepare for the flood season and to define disaster response mechanisms for the future. At this meeting, the GRC's contingency plans for floods were reviewed and updated. The Red Cross Society of Panama also developed a floods contingency plan, based upon the Guatemalan Red Cross contingency plan model. The plan was successfully test in October when the Red Cross Society of Panama responded to serious flooding in the capital city and several other regions of the country. The National Society also began developing a disaster response plan, which includes standard operation procedures for disasters and this is expected to be ready by the end of December.

Constraints

A lack of funds throughout the region is hampered the ability of the Regional Delegation and the National Societies to develop activities in this area.

Objective 3: An integrated community based disaster management (CBDM) model, complete with tools and guidelines has been developed and implemented by National Societies.

Progress/Achievements (activities implemented within this objective)

A board game addressing risk reduction was developed in 2003 by UNICEF. The game, called "Riesgolandia" or "Riskland," has now been adapted and translated into Mayan languages for use in indigenous communities by the Guatemalan Red Cross. The new version of the game has been validated and as a result, a project proposal has been developed to work with 20 in schools in Mayan communities in Guatemala. The board game will be used as one of the tools for the school disaster management project in 2005. Currently, there is a plan of action for the continued use of this tool, but no additional activities have been carried out because of a lack of funding. The Regional Delegation has been in discussions with several organizations to support further expansion of the project.

A joint mission to Guatemala was carried out by the British Red Cross and the Federation disaster preparedness delegate to analyze potential CBDM activities at branch level. The objectives of the mission were to discuss projects with members of the Guatemalan Red Cross, assess the National Society headquarters' and branches' commitment and interest in CBDM activities, to analyze the capacity of the branches and identify specific risks, and finally to map out the steps of implementing a project. Four specific areas were addressed for potential activities: improvement of the first aid capacity of the National Society, implementation of projects to address violence in urban communities, implementation of CBDM in urban communities and promotion of Humanitarian Principles and

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values in urban communities. The Regional Delegation has been in contact with the BRC to develop a vulnerability and capacity assessment in four urban communities that will be selected by the Guatemala City branch of the GRC. Based on the results of the VCA, new projects will be developed.

The Centre of Reference for CBDM in Costa Rica continues to increase its capacities. A VCA workshop was successfully organized by the Centre of Reference staff in July and was attended by members of the National Societies of Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua and Panama. A continental VCA training of trainers was organized by the Regional Delegation and carried out in Antigua Guatemala in August. Participants from South American, Central American and the Spanish-speaking Caribbean National Societies participated in the training. There are now 22 facilitators who have been trained in the methodology and will take part in the process of training others. Each country that participated in the VCA training of trainers also developed a national plan of action to expand the training and methodology. In October, both the Guatemalan and Salvadorean Red Cross Societies ran VCA workshops to ensure that the methodology is in place in these countries. In an example of regional sharing of resources, a member of the Costa Rican Red Cross supported the VCA training in Guatemala, and a member of the Guatemalan Red Cross supported the VCA training in El Salvador. It is expected that by the end of December at least 90 percent of the National Societies in the region will have carried out additional training in their respective countries and will have run community based rapid appraisals.

Updated versions of the four manuals of the “Es Mejor Prevenir” series have been validated through the Centre of Reference in Costa Rica. Copies of the manuals are currently in the hands of a working group of National Societies from the region, made up of members of the Salvadorean, Guatemalan and Honduran Red Cross Societies, to revise the document and provide their final inputs. In the case of “Community First Aid” and “School Based Disaster Management”, the training modules were also sent to Lima Regional Delegation for inputs. These manuals are in line with an approach under development in the Caribbean as part of bringing coherence to related material in the entire region.



During International Day for Natural Disaster Reduction in October, students from various schools in Costa Rica participated in a disaster simulation carried out by the Costa Rican Red Cross that involved rescuing a patient from a 60 metre precipice.

The ProVention proposal was developed by the Regional Delegation to enhance the disaster preparedness capacities of four National Societies in the region: Belize, Costa Rica Honduras and Guatemala, in the area of vulnerability and capacity assessments. The ProVention Consortium seeks to support developing countries to reduce the risk and social, economic and environmental impacts of disasters. A major partner in the consortium, the Organization of American States, was also involved in the development of the proposal. The Costa Rican Red Cross has created a pool of experts from government and non government institutions with expertise in geological, hydrological and environmental issues as part of the initial steps of the ProVention project. This core group will participate in training sessions on the Red Cross vulnerability and capacity assessment methodologies; once they are familiar with the methodologies, this scientific expertise will be combined with Red Cross community skills to create key messages related to risk mitigation and disaster preparedness which are easily accessible to vulnerable communities.

A joint DIPECHO IV proposal for Central America was presented by UNDP and CEPREDENAC with the collaboration of the Federation. The main focus of this proposal is to involve communities to a greater extent in

disaster preparedness and risk management policies. Though discussions with the two entities started late, the Panama Regional Delegation was able to share views in terms of the orientation of the proposal. This also helped to ensure that the proposal was in line with those developed by Partner National Societies working in Central America. In total, seven proposals were submitted in July and responses are expected in November.

Humanitarian Values

Goal: Efficient, responsive, and focused programmes that contribute to reducing vulnerability are implemented by the National Societies in the region.

Programme Objective: Humanitarian values and principles are integrated into and form the foundation of all core areas and the programming of National Societies within the region.

Objective 1: A regional strategy for the promotion of humanitarian principles and values is under implementation in Central America.

Progress/Achievements (activities implemented within this objective)

A three-day volunteer conference was held in Costa Rica between 24 and 26 September. The conference was attended by thirty participants from nine National Societies from Mexico, Central America, Cuba and the Dominican Republic, as well as a member of the Lima Regional Delegation and representatives of other international organizations that work with volunteers. (See objective 3 of the Organizational Development Programme). During the meeting guidelines for best practices in volunteer management were drawn up and much emphasis was placed on the component of Humanitarian Principles and Values. The model for volunteer management designed during the meeting is currently being applied in the National Societies of El Salvador, Guatemala and Nicaragua.

In July, 15 youth volunteers were trained in Humanitarian Principles and Values during the workshops carried out in the context of the regional youth encounter which took place in El Salvador.

Two workshops facilitated by the ICRC and the Federation, focusing on Humanitarian Principles and values were held in Guatemala between 28 and 30 September and in Nicaragua between 29 and 31 October with the attendance of 15 and 40 persons respectively. The workshops aimed to further familiarize volunteer programme coordinators with the need to integrate Humanitarian Principles and Values into programme content. A third meeting is planned to take place in Honduras at the end of November. At the close of these meetings, it is expected to validate a manual on the theme of Humanitarian Principles and Values.

Together with the members of the communications network a manual on advocacy is being prepared, based on a text published by the Centre for Development and Population Activities (CEDPA). The Federation was granted use of the manual and is adapting it for the training of Red Cross leaders and communities in the area of advocacy. It is expected that the manual will be ready for publication in 2005.

The head of the Principles and Values Department from the Secretariat visited the region between 17 and 27 October and presented information and details regarding the pledge made at the XXVIII International Conference regarding respect for diversity and non-discrimination. She also reviewed pilot projects under implementation in Central America with a view to possible replication and the design of case studies.

Objective 2: At least three National Societies in the region: El Salvador, Guatemala and Honduras have developed and are implementing projects to reduce youth violence by 2007.

The Federation is providing assistance to the Spanish Red Cross in the design of a strategy focusing on reducing domestic violence, gender-based violence and violence amongst young people. It is expected that preparatory work will be completed for presentation at the Presidents and Technical Seminars meeting scheduled for March 2005.

The Italian and Netherlands Red Cross Societies continue to work in the under-privileged community of San Francisco in the capital of Honduras. The project aims to reduce violence through working with schools, both teachers and students, together with their parents; the project includes cultural activities and sport. A video is

currently being prepared which illustrates the positive results obtained to date; the project has been implemented over approximately one year.

On 30 October, the Salvadorean Red Cross Society took part in the first fair for the prevention of violence and delinquency organized by the Council of Public Security. This took place with the participation of several Salvadorean institutions which work with young people in the prevention of violence. The fair gathered together 4,000 young people from the municipalities of San Salvador, Sonsonate and La Libertad.

The youth network is working on the design of a regional project relating to the reduction of violence in the region.

Objective 3: Stigma and discrimination of those living with HIV/AIDS in Central America has been reduced.

In the area of health, the Guatemalan Red Cross has designed a manual focusing on anti-stigma, together with a television feature which is currently being revised (see objective 5 of the health programme). Throughout the year, the Costa Rican Red Cross has been disseminating a campaign referred to as “0 per cent” through national television channels with five 15 second clips highlighting short messages on the theme of anti-stigma and non-discrimination. The National Societies of the region are working to adapt these clips to the individual culture of their countries for launch in 2005. Several National Societies have requested that persons featuring in the “Breaking the Silence” video agree to present their stories on television which is currently being followed up.

Information regarding the humanitarian principles and values campaigns in anti-stigma and non-discrimination has been published on the regional webpage (www.cruzroja.org).

Objective 4: A regional strategy advocating for indigenous populations in the region is under implementation.

There has been a lack of funding for implementation of this project. However, two workshops are planned in November and December in order to undertake an institutional analysis of the Guatemalan Red Cross with a view to identifying activities which could be carried out to assist vulnerable migrants and indigenous people. The Guatemalan Red Cross aims to include more indigenous members of communities in its volunteer bodies and facilitate work with indigenous people through continued translation of material into Mayan languages.

The region participated in the campaign launched on 8 May “Act, Reject Discrimination” in support of the Federation’s global campaign. Banners, radio spots and drawings were designed to promote the campaign.

Constraints:

There is a lack of humanitarian values-specific resources in the region that can be used to support new initiatives of the National Societies of the region. This is slowing the implementation of new projects.

Objective 5: The capacity of the National Societies in the area of communications and advocacy is strengthened in accordance with Strategy 2010 and the Red Cross image is enhanced.

Progress/Achievements (activities implemented within this objective)

The *VIII Communications Forum* was held in Antigua Guatemala, in June. A total of 16 National Societies from the Americas, as well as the Spanish Red Cross participated in the event. The Federation participated as an observer. The Forum provided an opportunity National Societies to share experiences and lessons learned. In addition, the *America’s Communication Plan*, which was developed in line with the Plan of Action of the Inter American Conference, was approved. Each National Society is now responsible for adapting the regional plan to its national work plan. The use of the Red Cross emblem was also analyzed and it was decided that National Societies would follow existing rules. Forum participants also discussed issues related to communications during emergencies, including the use of materials produced by the ICRC’s *Safer Access* programme. It was decided that the coordination of the next Forum will be responsibility of the Ecuadorian Red Cross, with support of the Salvadorean Red Cross Society.

The regional electronic newsletter *News from the Americas*, which covers stories from South and Central American National Societies and is produced jointly by the Lima and Panama Regional Delegations was a priority over the reporting period. Three issues were produced, reaching approximately 1,000 readers (past issues may be found on the [regional website](#)). Articles included in the newsletter covered a wide range of activities ongoing in Central America, such as the regional youth meeting, the “Together We Can” workshop hosted by the Red Cross Society of Panama, and the Red Cross’ involvement in International Day for Natural Disaster Reduction and World Blood Donation Day. Articles were also published on the Federation’s website (www.ifrc.org) and the regional website (www.cruzroja.org).

Organizational Development

Goal: Efficient, responsive, and focused programmes that contribute to reducing vulnerability are implemented by the National Societies in the region.

Programme Objective: Vulnerability-focused programmes and organizational development and change, led and managed by the region’s National Societies, has resulted in constantly improved service delivery to and with vulnerable people.

Objective 1: The separate roles of governance and management are well defined and in practice by National Societies in the region.

Progress/Achievements (activities implemented within this objective)

The first joint Directors General and Presidents meeting was held in Panama between 15 and 17 July, which provided an opportunity for National Societies in the region to share experiences and lessons learned. A needs assessment questionnaire was handed out during the meeting which gave the National Societies an opportunity to outline their organizational development priorities. The responses to this questionnaire and the feedback coming out of the meeting were also discussed during the volunteer conference in Costa Rica in September and the OD network meeting in October, and the findings are being used to tailor OD programmes to the specific needs of each National Society.

Based upon the Salvadorean Red Cross Society’s response to the needs assessment questionnaire and discussions during the Directors General and Presidents meeting, an MoU was signed with the Salvadorean Red Cross Society to cover the needs of the National Society from July through December 2004. The MoU includes drawing up the National Society’s Strategic Plan and National Development Plan. These plans have been completed and are now pending approval by the National Board. The plans will be disseminated through workshops held in December. Within the MoU, the Regional Delegation is also working with the National Society on the development of a database of companies interested in working with the Salvadorean Red Cross Society and the development of the National Society’s Statutes. Work on these two projects is ongoing.

With the support of the Regional Delegation, both the Red Cross Society of Panama and the Dominican Red Cross completed the process of revising their Statutes and regulations. Clearer Statutes and an improved definition of the distinction between governance and management are leading to increased effectiveness within the two National Societies, which in turn benefits all of the National Societies’ projects and activities. The National Society’s Statutes are of crucial importance since they define not only the internal structure and procedures, but also relations with other actors in society, such as the government and the other components of the Movement. Inadequate regulation of these internal and external factors may easily compromise the integrity of a National Society. The Nicaraguan Red Cross Statutes were approved by the board of directors on 22 August and will be disseminated within the National Society. In addition, both the Honduran Red Cross and the Red Cross Society of Panama have begun the process of revising their National Development Plans. The Red Cross Society of Panama has also outlined the revision of its National Development Plan as a priority for 2005.

The Guatemalan Red Cross has taken the lead in developing its cooperation agreement strategy (CAS) in coordination with the Federation, the ICRC and Partner National Societies active in the country. As a follow up to the donors’ meeting held last April, in October the National Society, with the full cooperation of Movement partners, began work on developing a National Development Plan, including a cooperation framework. It was

decided that a member of the Honduran Red Cross with expertise in organizational development would provide assistance to the Guatemalan Red Cross in this process.

Constraints:

Because of a serious lack of funding, particularly during the first half of the year, many activities were rescheduled or scaled back and the efforts of the Regional Delegation's organizational development team were focused on other aspects of the OD programme. There has been limited response from the National Societies to the needs assessment questionnaire, which is vital in determining the organizational development needs of each National Society. Thus far, only the National Societies of El Salvador and Mexico have responded. In addition, there is a feeling among some Presidents that board members do not need additional training in the roles and responsibilities of the National Society governance and management.

Objective 2: A regional network of Red Cross OD practitioners is established and well functioning.

Progress/Achievements (activities implemented within this objective)

A regional organizational development network for Central America, Mexico, Cuba and the Dominican Republic was established and now includes nine members, one from each National Society involved in the network. The goal of the network is to train OD practitioners in OD issues, such as volunteer management, resource development, strategic planning, monitoring and evaluation and governance and management. Network members will have basic skills in these areas and will be available as regional OD resources. These members will be able to support their own National Societies and will also be able to exchange experiences and lessons learned in order to support other National Societies. The Honduran Red Cross OD coordinator was selected as the network coordinator. A series of workshops for the OD network are scheduled to be carried out, the first of which was held in Guatemala from 13 to 15 October. The workshop focused on OD, Branch Development and Volunteer Management; during the meeting, the network committed to assisting the Guatemalan Red Cross in the formulation of its National Development Plan.

Constraints:

The majority of the funding for the OD Programme was made available in June, which meant that many of the activities for the OD network were rescheduled or cancelled. For example, the first OD network workshop was originally scheduled for earlier in the year, but was delayed because of lack of funds. In addition, there is some concern that, as certain persons selected to represent the National Societies in the regional OD network do not hold leadership positions within their National Society, some of their proposals and initiatives may not be well received.

Objective 3: National Societies have enhanced their capacity to recruit, manage, train, motivate, support and reward volunteers.

Progress/Achievements (activities implemented within this objective)

A three-day volunteer conference was held in Costa Rica on 24 to 26 September. The conference was attended by thirty participants from nine National Societies (Mexico, Central America, Cuba and Dominican Republic), as well as a member of the Lima Regional Delegation and representatives of other international organizations that work with volunteers. Prior to the conference, a questionnaire was prepared and distributed within the region asking National Societies to provide details about their volunteer programme management. The responses to the questionnaire were used to create a database and prepare a presentation on volunteering in the region. As almost all of the National Societies in the region responded to the questionnaire, the results provided an overall view of volunteering in the National Societies. In addition, the regional OD team gathered best practices, policies and other volunteer management-related material from various sources, including the Secretariat, Federation delegations in other parts of the world, donor National Societies and non-Red Cross organizations. This information was categorized and translated into Spanish when necessary, and then was summarized into working documents. The findings of the questionnaire and the working documents were analyzed and discussed at the volunteer conference. As a result, a standard model for volunteer management was agreed upon by the National Societies of Costa Rica, Cuba, the Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua and Panama during the conference. A volunteering plan of action was also drawn up to be implemented in El Salvador, Guatemala and Nicaragua in 2005.

120 youth leaders from the National Societies in the region attended the VII Regional Red Cross Youth Meeting in El Salvador in July. The meeting, the theme of which was "Building the leadership of America to protect human

dignity,” was attended by youth directors, coordinators, facilitators and volunteers from the National Societies of Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua and Panama. The youth coordinator from the Federation Secretariat in Geneva, the national youth director from the Spanish Red Cross and the youth director from the Madrid branch of the Spanish Red Cross also attended the meeting, along with representatives of UNICEF, the Special Olympics, the Food and Agriculture Organization, PAHO and the Scouts. The meeting participants received training in health, HIV/AIDS, Humanitarian Principles and Values, risk management, organizational development and the strengthening and establishing of strategic alliances. Following the conclusion of the meeting, participants returned to their National Societies to provide training in these areas.

As a result of the process of the revision of Statutes carried out by the National Societies of the Dominican Republic, Nicaragua and Panama, a new category of social volunteer has been established in these National Societies and benefits for volunteers identified. It was also agreed that a youth representative should participate in the board of directors of these National Societies.

Constraints

One National Society has not yet completed the questionnaire on volunteer management. Responses from each National Society are critical to ensure that the needs are being adequately addressed.

Objective 4: National Societies have enhanced their capacity to sustain their programmes and infrastructure through a strategic marketing approach.

Progress/Achievements (activities implemented within this objective)

This project has been cancelled due to the lack of funding and resources to carry out the scheduled activities and objectives.

Objective 5: A process of planned change—owned, directed and carried out by the Nicaraguan Red Cross headquarters and branches—is institutionalized.

Progress/Achievements (activities implemented within this objective)

The Nicaraguan Red Cross now has a draft document defining its institutional priorities for 2005, on which the plan of action for 2005 can be built. The document, called “Líneas de Intervención de los Programas Nacionales para el 2005,” was produced by the National Society directors and shared through three workshops held in September with the participation of NRC branches. All but four branches attended the workshop, with participation from both members of the governance and the directors, together with some of the directors from the National Society’s headquarters. All directors from the branches, as well as from the headquarters, now have a copy of the National Development Plan.

As part of the OD plan, the Federation is supporting a project to improve the internal communications of the National Society, through re-cabling the entire National Society headquarters for the installation of a new telephone system and through the provision of the infrastructure for an intranet. The IT coordinator from the Panama Regional Delegation visited the NRC in July to conduct a full review of the plan and in August the tendering process was held and contracts were drawn up for the providers. The cabling work started at the beginning of October and it is anticipated that the system will be functioning in early November.

The National Society’s strategic plan was approved in 2002 and is now being disseminated to branches throughout the country. The objective of the strategic plan is to outline the National Society’s priorities and develop plans in specific areas to ensure that everyone in the National Society is working towards a common goal.

The project to strengthen the National Society’s health department is being developed with the support of the Federation’s health delegate in El Salvador and the OD delegate in Nicaragua. The health delegate and members of the National Society’s health department are putting together a work plan and developing analysis tools to measure the progress and impact of this project. The Canadian, Italian, Netherlands and Spanish National Societies are supporting the efforts of the Federation to integrate their programming and funding into a unified strategy for developing and strengthening the NRC health department.

In addition, an external audit was conducted within the National Society. The recommendations of this audit have been shared with the NRC National Board which plans to develop a response plan to the findings of this audit.

A new Director General was identified by the President in August 2004. This nomination was approved by the National Board in its meeting at the end of August. The regional OD plan will support the new Director's induction into the Federation and will also support a consultancy to facilitate the development of a new structural plan for the organization. In addition, as part of the work on the regional OD plan, a new work plan to cover the revision of a range of administrative and finance manuals has been drawn up.

Constraints:

Tension within the National Society's governance continues to contribute to an environment of low productivity and lack of ownership in the change process, both in the branches and at the NRC headquarters. These internal issues have delayed the process of revising the Statutes as well as a number of other processes.

Objective 6: The Guatemalan Red Cross has the characteristics of a well functioning National Society, in the areas governance and management both at national and branch levels.

Progress/Achievements (activities implemented within this objective)

As the time-frame of the Emergency and Institutional Plan of Action (PAERI) came to a close in April 2004, the Federation agreed to focus funding of the GRC in the areas of disaster management, health including HIV/AIDS, IMCI and water and sanitation, and organizational development including volunteering.

On 9 August, a meeting was held at the headquarters with the President and Director General of the Guatemalan Red Cross, members of the GRC management team, the Federation representative, and representatives of the ICRC, the Netherlands Red Cross and the Spanish Red Cross. The discussions focused on setting the framework for strategic planning within the National Society. There is now consensus that the national development plan is a priority in order to define the orientation of the National Society. A strategic planning committee has been set up and time-lines established for workshops to take place at branch level in order to involve all members of the National Society in the discussions on the NDP which is anticipated to be completed during the first half of 2005. Importantly, one of the components of the NDP relates to external cooperation to ensure that all cooperation activities carried out by Partner National Societies, regardless of the funding source, fall within the umbrella of the GRC strategic framework.

An external audit of the Guatemalan Red Cross carried out by a local company is on-going since early 2004; this focuses on financial procedures and management. As a result of recommendations from the audit, a new accounting software (SCAFI) has been installed in the GRC and training is taking place to ensure that finance staff are able to use the improved system efficiently.

The revised Statutes of the National Society continue to be disseminated at branch level. As of April 2004, the new regulations regarding the Statutes came into force; however, not all branches are complying with these. As a result, the National Board is evaluating each of the branches. To date, approximately 75% of branches have been reviewed and the branch of Tejutla in San Marcos has been closed as a result of financial irregularities. A commission made up of project staff continues to work in Tejutla in order to ensure that activities funded by the Spanish Red Cross are implemented.

A three-day volunteer conference was held in Costa Rica between 24 and 26 September. The conference was attended by thirty participants from nine National Societies including the Guatemalan Red Cross. The GRC National Volunteer Coordinator returned from the Conference with a model regarding volunteering and the National Society is working towards its implementation with technical assistance from the Panama Regional Delegation.

Constraints

The late arrival of funds complicated programme implementation in the first half of the year. Both the Guatemalan Red Cross and the Federation office have been obliged to make cuts in personnel, reducing capacity. In addition, as a result of the need to focus on issues of compliance with the new regulations, the GRC has been less in a position to deal with process such as those linked with strategic planning, resulting in delays in work in this area. A major

constraint remains the dysfunctional nature of the National Board which lacks a working planning and budgeting commission.

Objective 7: The Salvadorean Red Cross Society has the characteristics of a well functioning National Society in the areas of planning, organizational structure, volunteer management and resource mobilization.

Progress/Achievements (activities implemented within this objective)

Based upon the Salvadorean Red Cross Society's response to the needs assessment questionnaire and discussions during the Directors General and Presidents meeting, an MoU was signed with the Salvadorean Red Cross Society to cover the needs of the National Society from July through December 2004. The MoU includes drawing up the National Society's Strategic Plan and National Development Plan. The first drafts of these plans have been completed and are now pending approval by the National Board. The plans will be disseminated through workshops held in December. Within the MoU, the Regional Delegation is also working with the National Society on the development of a database of companies interested in working with the Salvadorean Red Cross Society and the development of the National Society's Statutes. Work on these two projects is ongoing.

An external audit was carried out within the National Society in July and a report was produced on the findings. This was a follow up to another audit that was carried out in 2003, which focused on the National Society's headquarters. The audit carried out in July focused on the branches of the Salvadorean Red Cross Society. It is expected that the findings of this audit will shortly be made available to the Regional Delegation.

Constraints

The first drafts of the National Development Plan and the Strategic Plan lack need to be revised. Work in these areas, as well as on the development of the National Society's Statutes, is scheduled to continue in 2005.

Objective 8: The capacities of the Nicaraguan Red Cross to formulate and develop its role in the civil society of its country are strengthened.

Progress/Achievements (activities implemented within this objective)

Activities for this project are being covered under the Nicaragua Change Process project. For more information, please see *Organizational Development*—objective 5.

Integrated Community-Based Programming

Goal: Efficient, responsive, and focused programmes that contribute to reducing vulnerability are implemented by the National Societies in the region.

Programme Objective: The National Societies in the region have improved their capacity to work in vulnerable communities through integrated programmes and projects, partnerships and branch networking which contribute to a reduction in community risks and promote empowerment.

Objective 1: A model integrated branch development approach is designed, tested and ready for adaptation throughout the Americas.

Progress/Achievements (activities implemented within this objective)

During 2004, several integrated branch development (IBD) projects have been successfully carried out, including one to benefit commercial sex workers in Chinandega, Nicaragua, and one to benefit a group of Embera Indians in El Real, Panama. The advantage of the integrated branch development methodology is that it creates a "multiplying" effect in that members of the Red Cross from communities where IBD projects have been successfully implemented can share their knowledge and experience with other communities. Using the tools and methodology learned in Chinandega, volunteers from the Chinandega branch assisted members of the Nicaragua Red Cross branch in Waspán in carrying out participatory project design and implementation workshops. As a result of these workshops, a strategy for the Waspán branch has been developed and will be presented to the Nicaraguan Red Cross headquarters. Following approval, a press conference is being planned to launch the project.

The British Red Cross has shown interest in supporting an Americas conference on branch development, drawing from experiences from the Golfo de Fonseca integrated branch development project, as well as the Amazonico and

Camalote projects carried out in South America. Further development of this conference is pending confirmation of funds.

The former Golfo de Fonseca project coordinator for Nicaragua was appointed as regional branch development coordinator. The coordinator is tasked with resolving any pending issues following the closure of the Golfo de Fonseca project and to follow up on related branch development projects in Guatemala, Nicaragua and Panama.

Constraints

It is still uncertain whether or not the Americas conference on branch development will take place by the end of 2004 since it requires coordination and participation of both Regional Delegations for the Americas and funding to support the initiative has not yet been secured. Federation support through the organizational development programme for integrated branch development projects is limited, and the funding shortage in the regional organizational development programme is affecting the scope of this project as some activities have had to be cut back. In addition, the Panama Regional Delegation is currently awaiting the production of integrated branch development manuals and tools from South America that will be used in regional programmes in the future.

Objective 2: The capacities of the Salvadorean Red Cross Society branches and local communities in health and disaster preparedness are strengthened.

Progress/Achievements (activities implemented within this objective)

Through the Golfo de Fonseca project in El Salvador, several branches participated in capacity building programmes in an effort to become financially self-sufficient. The SRC continued developing its human resources and encouraging volunteers to participate in community based activities. Volunteers were trained in Humanitarian Principles and Values, first aid, use of the emblem and the history of the Red Cross, which empowered volunteers to become more active at the community level. Other training course addressed governance members of branches or included Integrated Management of Childhood Illness.

Many communities in El Salvador benefited from micro projects that ranged from building or reconstructing wells and latrines to installing water systems or tanks. All of these projects were developed with the help of the community, both in terms of labour and raising funds to purchase the materials, with the coordination of community health committees. In addition, emergency radios were installed in branches and communities that, due to their geographic positions, are vulnerable to natural phenomena. Volunteers and community members were trained in how to operate the radios and in good use and care of the equipment. These radios facilitate communication between communities in times of emergency.

The Golfo de Fonseca project came to an end in June and any remaining activities are now being covered under the regional branch development project (see objective 1). After collecting information and lessons learned from a representative sample of communities that participated in the project through surveys and direct interviews, the final report and evaluation of the project was put together and distributed to stakeholders. Some of the key findings of the final report are:

- An emergency plan was formulated for each of the 11 communities involved in the project, with the support of the Salvadorean Red Cross Society's national relief department.
- Follow-up work is being carried out by community volunteers with support from Red Cross's health promotion teams in each region.
- A commission was formed to be in charge of fundraising.
- Cooperation agreements were formed between the community and local service providers.
- The SRC branches and the Ministry of Health signed an agreement regarding direct support, as well as roles and responsibilities.
- The Salvadorean Red Cross is supporting and taking a more active role in the evaluation of other organizations and projects.

Constraints

Information from the baseline survey made in 2002 to compare with current results was not available.

Objective 3: The capacities of the Nicaraguan Red Cross branches and local communities in health and disaster preparedness are strengthened.

Progress/Achievements (activities implemented within this objective)

The primary focus of the Golfo de Fonseca project in Nicaragua has been on integrated branch development in the Chinandega branch of the NRC (please see above). However, IMCI courses were developed in the form of short, educational talks, a water and sanitation proposal was drawn up for the reconstruction of latrines, wells and sanitation units, and a community education and reforestation project was developed. Training sessions were also carried out for volunteers focusing on disaster preparedness and the National Development Plan. Community water and sanitation micro projects were carried out through the Golfo de Fonseca project, which included the construction of wells and pumps to provide local communities with potable water. In addition, Red Cross volunteers received training in Humanitarian Principles and Values, use of the Red Cross emblem, history of the Red Cross and first aid. Community volunteers also completed information management training, which was organized jointly with the Ministry of Health. Community volunteers have now been officially recognized by the Ministry of Health and municipal authorities and have joined national health prevention campaigns.

Of particular importance is the fact that the National Society headquarters has begun applying and replicating the lessons learned from the project. This has proven successful in the community of Waspán, where the Golfo de Fonseca team helped facilitate a needs assessment. Using the tools and methodology learned from the Golfo de Fonseca project, volunteers from the Chinandega branch also assisted members of the Nicaragua Red Cross branch in Waspán in carrying out participatory project design and implementation workshops. As a result of these workshops, a strategy for the Waspán branch has been developed and will be presented to the Nicaraguan Red Cross headquarters.

The Golfo de Fonseca project came to an end in June and any remaining activities are now being covered under the regional branch development project (see objective 1). After collecting information and lessons learned from a representative sample of communities that participated in the project through surveys and direct interviews, the final report and evaluation of the project was put together and distributed to stakeholders. Some of the key findings of the final report are:

- Communities now have volunteer structures focused on disease prevention with direct links to the Ministry of Health and organizations interested in community development in the area.
- Village committees and local governments coordinated activities focused on solutions to community problems and organization of the population.
- The Chinandega branch of the NRC has a strengthened structure that allows it to design community-focused initiatives, not just for rural communities but also for mobile communities.
- The Chinandega branch, influenced by the Golfo de Fonseca Project, is initiating organizational changes to become more aligned with the characteristics of a well-functioning National Society.
- Through the Golfo de Fonseca Project, the branch is implementing methodologies focused on communities, defining its priorities according to the needs of vulnerable groups.
- Project initiatives to strengthen the Chinandega branch in an integrated manner resulted in the selection by the branch of non-traditional vulnerable groups it will support over the next few years, and the restructuring of the branch to establish departmental programmes in health, Humanitarian Principles and Values, and disaster management, to be supported by branch volunteer structures to provide more focused services.
- With the practical application of the Participatory Learning and Action methodology, the Chinandega branch demonstrated its capacity to work with vulnerable groups in coordination with different societal actors.
- In a specific case, a multi-sectoral team was organized made up of Red Cross staff and volunteers, the Ministry of Health, the Communal Movement, the National Police and the AIDS Action Group, demonstrating that the branch has the capacity to coordinate with other organizations to benefit vulnerable groups.
- The Chinandega branch has open lines of communication and collaboration with vulnerable communities, local health authorities, the mayor's office and local NGOs, coordinating joint action plans to benefit vulnerable communities.

Coordination, Cooperation and Strategic Partnerships

Goal: Efficient, responsive, and focused programmes that contribute to reducing vulnerability are implemented by the National Societies in the region.

Programme Objective: All National Societies will receive support leading to better coordinated service delivery backed by cooperation agreements with PNSs, further integration of Red Cross partners and increased presence from the corporate sector towards more sustainable programmes.

Objective 1: Cooperation Agreement Strategies based on National Society development plans are in place and respected by all members of the Movement and are the coordination mechanisms for disaster response.

Progress/Achievements (activities implemented within this objective)

The Federation coordinated the cooperation agreement strategy meeting in Guatemala where the CAS was drawn up and approved by the Federation, the ICRC and the American, British, Netherlands, Norwegian, Spanish and Swedish Red Cross Societies. This process was completed in the month of May. The process will be reviewed in 2005.

A regional PNS and ICRC coordination meeting was conducted in July. A complete diagnosis of programme priorities for 2005 was gathered on a country by country basis and compared with the strategies of the Partner National Societies. The model for regional cooperation based on the Guatemala CAS has been shared with the National Societies in the region, with the full participation of the Partner National Societies and the ICRC.

A software programme for the management of projects (SISPRO) developed by the planning department of the Nicaraguan Red Cross is being enriched through coordinated efforts led by the Panama Regional Delegation, with support from ECHO, USAID and the Spanish Red Cross. This software will contain a directory of government cooperation agencies, donors, international organizations, foundations, corporate donors and private funding sources. SISPRO will be shared with the National Societies in the region to be distributed during the forthcoming Presidents and Technical Seminars meeting to be held in Mexico City in March 2005.

Projects carried out in coordination with the ICRC continue to be a priority for the implementation of the harmonization process, which has thus far proven to be an effective means of maximizing the Movement's resources in the region. Joint missions between the Federation and the ICRC have been effective in assisting National Societies in the region to prepare contingency plans for the presidential elections within their countries. These missions also helped National Societies to advance their level of compliance for the revision of Statutes and national development plans.

A meeting with PNSs was held in the Dominican Republic to agree on and implement a transition plan from relief to development after the May 2004 floods that affected the Dominican Republic and Haiti. The major donors and international organizations operating in Hispaniola participated in the meeting and made pledges towards the advancement of this transition plan.

A technical meeting was held in Panama with the inclusion of the Haitian Foreign Service Minister and the chargé d'affaires in Panama for information sharing and recognition of challenges facing the humanitarian operations under implementation in Haiti by several international organizations based in Panama. The meeting was organized and led by the Panama Regional Delegation, the City of Knowledge and the Haitian Embassy.

Constraints

Financial resources are needed in order to complete the revision of the CAS for Guatemala and El Salvador, and to finalize the CAS document for Honduras. The closure of the Federation offices in El Salvador, Honduras and Nicaragua will increase the costs for follow up of the CAS process. In addition, PNSs present in the region continue to expect a support level which cannot be guaranteed nor sustained by the Federation's current regional structure.

All the regional networks have incorporated Partner National Societies in their deliberations, plans and programmes with very little or no financial support from them. The follow up for regional commitments and initiatives continues to fall on the Secretariat, in a time of reduced budgets.

Objective 2: Organizational analysis will be promoted in order to define the areas of need, validated by the National Development Plans, to serve as the basis for the search for funds to support programmes and projects by the end of 2004.

Progress/Achievements (activities implemented within this objective)

The Regional Delegation is creating a database containing country profiles and environmental analyses of each National Society. In addition, the monitoring tool for the implementation of the Inter American Conference Plan of Action is being promoted by all regional delegates. These tools are important for ensuring that accurate and up-to-date information is available about the country and programmes in the region.

The Dev Info software and database, developed and managed by UNICEF on behalf of all UN agencies, has been offered to the Federation and will be linked to the database currently being developed as a means of organizing all projects and proposals by the Movement in the region. A one-week training of Federation staff by UNICEF is planned.

Constraints

Courses for National Societies in the participatory planning process (PPP) have all but stopped due to lack of funding. As a result, the need to develop and implement projects and proposals continues to be a weak area within the National Societies in the region.

PNSs have do not systematically come forward to share information with the Federation so that this could be made available to all Movement members as part of the Secretariat's knowledge sharing mandate.

The Federation has signed MoUs with the World Food Programme and UNICEF, and has made a verbal agreement with UNDP to participate in joint missions to the priority countries in the region and to share the knowledge and information gathered from these missions. Unfortunately, this has not been possible due to the lack of financial resources.

Objective 3: A lead National Society is designated for a particular programme area to manage a regional network for all National Societies by the end of 2004.

Progress/Achievements (activities implemented within this objective)

The Costa Rican Red Cross and the Federation signed an agreement in early December 2003 to set up the Centre of Reference for community education in disaster management, as part of the concept of "centres of competence". This centre is intended to serve as a reference point for all National Societies in the Americas on the subject of community disaster education.

Networks in youth, health, communication and information are currently being coordinated by the Honduran and Salvadorean Red Cross Societies. A member of the Honduran Red Cross has also been appointed coordinator of the regional organizational development network. Work is ongoing to recruit a manager for the regional Humanitarian Principles and Values network.

The ProVention Consortium proposal is under implementation in four National Societies: Belize, Costa Rica, Guatemala and Honduras. Vulnerability and capacity assessment (VCA) is an integral part of this proposal. There have been more than 15 training sessions in Central America and the Caribbean with the intent that the Centre of Reference in Costa Rica will complement these trainings with the use of CBDM tools.

Constraints

The concept of centres of competence is becoming better known and accepted within the Movement, although no financial support is being offered by Partner National Societies. The sustainability of the centres of reference will depend largely on the promotion of their added value by the National Societies participating in the regional networks.

Representation, Management, and Implementation

Several National Societies have generated their own funding proposals. The Salvadorean Red Cross Society has signed a EUR 500,000 contractual agreement with PRRAC, a European Union regional fund for the reconstruction of Central America following Hurricane Mitch, for the construction of latrines, sanitation, health education and disaster preparedness activities at the community level. The Federation also provided the Salvadorean Red Cross Society with technical assistance, and guidance in proposal writing and budgets, which helped the National Society receive over EUR 200,000 from the Global Fund.

The programme funding available to PNSs working in the region has remained steady, and in some instances has increased; the Federation continues to coordinate with European PNSs in order to submit proposals for funding to ECHO and the European Union. This year, the Spanish Red Cross received funding from ECHO to work on a project on the Atlantic coast of Nicaragua, together with the Italian and Netherlands Red Cross Societies. The other successful proposal was submitted by the Netherlands Red Cross in Guatemala to strengthen the government's emergency management response system with some minor support to the National Society.

Several PNSs are active in the region. While the Spanish Red Cross continues to be an indirect supporter of the Federation, its focus continues to be on managing its current portfolio of projects, aimed at strengthening National Society programming in the different areas of Strategy 2010. Conversations are currently underway with the Spanish Red Cross to review the software programme developed in Nicaragua to archive proposals and projects as well as to generate new proposals using its existing database. The Spanish Red Cross uses a similar database. The American Red Cross has now closed all of its offices in the region. The Canadian Red Cross continues to manage the funding secured through the Canadian International Development Agency for work in health in El Salvador, Honduras and Nicaragua.

Coordination between the Regional Delegation and the various PNSs working in the region continues to be complex, in particular as the Federation now has less of an operational presence in many countries in the region. Through the end of 2004, the only presence in the region, in addition to the Panama Regional Delegation will be a Federation office in Guatemala, a health delegate in El Salvador and an organizational development delegate in Nicaragua.

Participation in regional and continental forums has provided the Federation with a platform for presenting points of view on balancing gender and including vulnerable populations, such as indigenous persons and people living with HIV/AIDS within National Societies and civil society. These forums have also been an effective mechanism to meet and coordinate with members of international organizations and large donor groups like the European Union.

Membership of the Regional Risk and Disaster Management Group (GR-GRD) was ensured. This group includes all the major UN and international organizations that work in the Americas. In addition, membership has been secured in the regional thematic meetings held by the UN programmes. The UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), PAHO, UNICEF, the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (ISDR), UNDP, and the Coordination Centre for the Prevention of Natural Disasters in Central America are among the international and regional organizations with which the Federation participates in joint task forces in different thematic groups.

The Centre of Reference for CBDM proposed a formal agreement which was signed between the Costa Rican Red Cross and the Ministry of Education to include disaster preparedness materials in the school curriculum. A similar approach is being promoted with all National Societies in the region. Products developed by ISDR and UNICEF are widely used in the CBDM materials and have been translated into Mayan languages for use in Guatemala.

The Presidents and Directors General meetings, which included the participation of the ICRC and several PNSs, helped to prepare National Societies for participation in international conferences, and also to develop a regional cooperation protocol. The regional strategies for 2005 were derived from the priorities as presented in this meeting.

[Contributions list below; click here to return to the title page and contact information.](#)

Central America Regional Programmes

ANNEX 1

APPEAL No. 01.53/2004

PLEDGES RECEIVED

07/12/2004

| DONOR | CATEGORY | QUANTITY | UNIT | VALUE CHF | DATE | COMMENT |
|-------|----------|----------|------|-----------|------|---------|
|-------|----------|----------|------|-----------|------|---------|

CASH

| REQUESTED IN APPEAL CHF -----> | | | | 3,783,014 | TOTAL COVERAGE 76.4% | |
|--------------------------------|--|-----------|-----|-----------|-------------------------|--|
| CASH CARRIED FORWARD | | | | 1,054,065 | | |
| BRITISH - GOVT/DFID GRANT | | | | 38,500 | 29.01.04 | DISASTER MANAGEMENT |
| BRITISH - GOVT/DFID GRANT | | | | 38,500 | 29.01.04 | ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT |
| BRITISH - GOVT/DFID GRANT | | | | 71,500 | 29.01.04 | NICARAGUA ORGANISATIONAL DEV. |
| BRITISH - GOVT/DFID GRANT | | | | 26,000 | 29.01.04 | HONDURAS HEALTH |
| BRITISH - GOVT/DFID GRANT | | | | 27,000 | 29.01.04 | HEALTH |
| BRITISH - GOVT/DFID GRANT | | | | 35,000 | 29.01.04 | INTERNATIONAL REPRESENTATION |
| BRITISH - GOVT/DFID GRANT | | | | 35,000 | 29.01.04 | PV |
| BRITISH - RC | | 50,000 | GBP | 115,400 | 19.05.04 | DP DELEGATE |
| BRITISH - RC | | | | 41,424 | 08.07.04 | ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT DELEGATE |
| CAPACITY BUILDING FUND | | | | 55,940 | 10.08.04 | COSTA RICA |
| ICRC | | 3,178 | USD | 4,019 | 05.07.04 | NS PRESIDENTS & DIRECTORS MEETING |
| IRISH - RC | | 115,241 | EUR | 178,912 | 04.10.04 | EARTHQUAKE VICTIMS & VULNERABLE COMMUNITIES |
| NORWEGIAN - GOVT/RC | | 2,200,000 | NOK | 413,600 | 27.04.04 | ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT, HEALTH |
| NORWEGIAN - GOVT/RC | | 1,600,000 | NOK | 300,800 | 30.03.04 | GUATEMALA, ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT, HEALTH, HUMANITARIAN VALUES |
| NORWEGIAN - GOVT/RC | | 310,000 | NOK | 57,505 | 14.10.04 | HIV/AIDS, COMMUNITY HEALTH |
| SWEDISH - RC | | 400,000 | SEK | 67,000 | 26.07.04 | GUATEMALA RC HEALTH |
| SWEDISH - GOVT | | 900,000 | SEK | 152,100 | 21.04.04 | HEALTH & CARE, HIV/AIDS, DELEGATE |
| SWEDISH - GOVT | | 500,000 | SEK | 84,500 | 21.04.04 | ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT, VOLUNTEER MANAGEMENT, DELEGATE |
| SUB/TOTAL RECEIVED IN CASH | | | | 2,796,765 | CHF | 73.9% |

KIND AND SERVICES (INCLUDING PERSONNEL)

| DONOR | CATEGORY | QUANTITY | UNIT | VALUE CHF | DATE | COMMENT |
|---------------|-----------|----------|------|-----------|------|---------|
| GREAT BRITAIN | DELEGATES | | | 67,000 | | |
| NORWAY | DELEGATES | | | 400 | | |
| SPAIN | DELEGATES | | | 25,000 | | |

Central America Regional Programmes

ANNEX 1

APPEAL No. 01.53/2004

PLEDGES RECEIVED

07/12/2004

| DONOR | CATEGORY | QUANTITY | UNIT | VALUE CHF | DATE | COMMENT |
|---|----------|----------|------|-----------|------|---------|
| Note: due to systems upgrades in process, contributions in kind and services may be incomplete. | | | | | | |
| SUB/TOTAL RECEIVED IN KIND/SERVICES | | | | 92,400 | CHF | 2.4% |

ADDITIONAL TO APPEAL BUDGET

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