

# 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

## BANGLADESH

31 May 2004

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### In Brief

**Appeal No. 01.56/2004; Programme Update No. 1; Period covered: 1 January to 31 March 2004; Appeal coverage: 56.2%; Outstanding needs: CHF 1,494,278 (USD 1,123,351 or EUR 957,870).**

**Appeal target: CHF 2,175,802 (USD 1,631,852 or EUR 1,392,513)**

**Related Emergency or Annual Appeals: [Annual Appeal 01.56/2004](#)**

**Programme Summary:** With only 31 per cent of the 2004 Appeal covered by the end of the first quarter, further financial support is needed over the coming months in order to implement the planned activities for 2004. The only significant funding received in the 1<sup>st</sup> quarter was from DIPEHCO to support the cyclone and earthquake preparedness programme. The poor response in the opening three months of the year meant that programmes had to be adjusted and activities scaled down in the disaster management, humanitarian values and health sectors. The funding situation has since improved to 56.2 per cent, thanks mainly to funding for the organisational development programme of CHF 488,650. This will be reflected in the next programme update.

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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 political situation has become tenser with the major opposition party organising several day-long hartals (general strikes), pressing the government to accept various demands and protesting the deteriorating law and order situation and price hikes of essential commodities. The crime rate has continued to soar; this has impacted on the public's confidence relating to safety and security.

In early January, the Bangladesh Red Crescent Society (BDRCS) responded rapidly to an emergency situation created by a severe cold spell in northern Bangladesh, distributing 8,000 blankets in 30 districts and 1,100 sweaters among the most vulnerable using emergency buffer stocks.

The new members of the BDRCS managing board began their three-year tenure on 1 January 2004 following their election at the previous AGM held on 30 December 2003.

The BDRCS secretary general participated in the South Asia Regional Partnership Meeting in Kathmandu in March. He presented the national society's four-year vision to the various partner national societies (PNS) present. Norway, Spain, Japan and the USA were among those who reaffirmed their interest in supporting BDRCS in the future after some had withdrawn from Bangladesh during the mid-1990s. The response of the PNS towards BDRCS was encouraging.

The next quarter is expected to be a critical period for Bangladesh as April/May usually sees the countryside hit by various natural disasters such as tropical storms, tornados and flash floods, followed by the start of monsoon season. The disaster management department is coordinating relief, health, transport, logistics and finance in preparation.

## Health and Care

The health department commenced its four-year strategic planning process for all of its various components - institutions, the maternal and child health (MCH) programme, the blood programme and HIV/AIDS - with the help of an external facilitator. The health department plan will later be incorporated into the national society's four-year plan (2005-2008) which will also provide input for the production of the new Federation four-year plan.

**Overall Goal: The health status and life expectancy of vulnerable people in Bangladesh are improved.**

**Programme Objective: To improve the health of mothers and children and reduce the spread of HIV/AIDS throughout Bangladesh by strengthening the existing BDRCS network of 60 MCH centres.**

*Mother and Child Health project objective:* To improve the capacity of the BDRCS' MCH to reduce maternal and infant morbidity and mortality.

### Expected Results

- Essential services package, with emphasis on mother and child healthcare, is implemented in 8 MCH centres;
- 8 MCH centres are renovated and equipped for improved MCH delivery; and
- MCH centres have progressed towards self-sustainability.

### Progress/Achievements

The BDRCS has a nationwide network of 60 MCH centres. Forty-four of these have been externally supported by several national societies (Japanese, American and German Red Cross Societies). Although funding for the 22 MCH centres supported by the Japanese Red Cross Society ceased at the beginning of 2002, 12 of these centres became self-sustainable and are providing primary healthcare through active community participation. The German Red Cross Society is supporting 13 MCH centres under the south-eastern community health project. One of the German supported MCH centres was handed over to the community once it had achieved self-sustainability and the remaining 12 centres are planned to be gradually handed over by the end of 2004.



*MCH centres are increasingly seen by communities as a primary source of mother and child healthcare*

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The German Red Cross Society also partially supports 10 MCH centres that were previously funded by the Japanese Red Cross Society. These centres are planned to transfer to community management during the coming year.

Nine MCH centres in the Dhaka division supported by the American Red Cross Society through the Federation are now functional and providing antenatal, delivery and post-natal services as well as curative services for patients. The German Red Cross Society has secured further funds for a one-year extension to support MCH centres in the



*Bangladesh Red Crescent Society health workers play a vital role in health education.*

Dhaka division previously supported by the American Red Cross Society. These centres will continue their activities with special emphasis on community management, resource mobilisation and expansion of linkages with government health institutions in order to achieve sustainability before finally being handed over to community management.

BDRCS is seeking funding for 8 MCH centres for 2004 out of the remaining 15 MCH centres. As at the end of the 1<sup>st</sup> quarter, no funding had been received. Nine of these MCH centres are functioning at a very minimal level, drawing upon BDRCS resources. A total of six centres are not functioning.

### Impact

Communities with access to the centres are more aware of maternal, child health and reproductive healthcare and preventive measures for common ailments. These facilities have improved the opportunity to receive quality healthcare.

Community participation in the management of MCH centre activities has increased which, in the long-term, will assist in their sustainability.

### Constraints

Not all planned activities were fully implemented due to financial constraints and lack of donor support for the eight MCH centres mentioned in the progress/achievement section.

*HIV/AIDS project objective:* To increase the capacity of BDRCS to develop awareness among healthcare providers and beneficiaries about HIV/AIDS and sexually transmitted diseases.

### Expected Results

- BDRCS capacity to manage HIV/AIDS and STD programmes has improved;
- Increased awareness with appropriate knowledge, behaviour and practices among target beneficiaries on HIV/AIDS and STDs in the target areas; and
- Linkages with the government of Bangladesh sister societies and NGOs strengthened.

### Progress/Achievements

BDRCS is taking a more proactive role in addressing issues relating to HIV/AIDS. The national society has started providing a confidential counselling telephone service on HIV/AIDS related issues in order to provide free and friendly advice to the community. In the 1<sup>st</sup> quarter, 35 patients received treatment for sexually transmitted infections while 12 were provided with personal counselling.

The national society is coordinating with all other national societies in the region through the South Asia Red Cross/Red Crescent Network on HIV/AIDS (SARNHA).

BDRCS vice-chairman, along with two staff - the HIV/AIDS focal person and the German Red Cross Society health delegate - participated in the HIV/AIDS regional stakeholders consultative meeting and the 4<sup>th</sup> SARNHA meeting in Kathmandu in March. The main aim of the meeting was to develop a national society platform for designing a regional HIV/AIDS proposal by the South Asia Regional Delegation (SARD). The focal person also had several meetings with government and NGOs including Family Health International, the Centre for Health and

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Population Research, and Confidential Approach to AIDS Prevention to improve networking and coordination at the national level. The national society has also distributed information, education and communication (IEC) materials developed by the BDRCS to the NGOs mentioned above. The national society also contributed an article to the latest SARNHA newsletter.

### Impact

There has been increased awareness about HIV/AIDS among youth volunteers, service providers and policy makers. BDRCS is building up its capacity better position itself to deal with HIV/AIDS through information sharing nationally and internationally.

### Constraints

Not all planned activities were fully implemented due to financial constraints.

## Disaster Management

**Overall Goal: Vulnerability to the impact of disasters and community dependence on external support is reduced.**

**Programme Objective: To increase the capacity of BDRCS to provide support to individuals and communities seeking to withstand the impact of disasters and become more self –reliant.**

*Long-term humanitarian assistance operations project objective:* Maintain the distribution of food rations and essential non-food relief items to refugee families from Myanmar for one year.

### Expected Results

- Nutritional sufficiency for 20,000 Myanmar refugees;
- Practical experience of operating in cross-cultural, multinational and multi-agency environment acquired by BDRCS staff and volunteers; and
- Appropriate exit strategy identified and agreed with UNHCR, WFP and the government.

### Progress/Achievements

BDRCS continued to distribute a daily food ration provided by WFP, equivalent to 2,100 calories per person, and non-food items among 20,000 Myanmar refugees stationed in two camps. In addition, 14,191 cans of fish were distributed during the Eid-ul-Azha festival in February.

A combination of slow repatriation and a high birth rate has meant the refugee population has remained at around 20,000. In the 1<sup>st</sup> quarter, just 151 refugees (36 families) were repatriated to Myanmar.

The national society is currently receiving funds for this project via the UNHCR and WFP and, in this regard, signed a memorandum of understanding in January.

The secretary of the Ministry of Disaster Management and Relief and a UNHCR representative visited the two camps in March. This was followed by a coordination meeting attended by all concerned agencies working in the camps. The Myanmar Prime Minister reiterated during a visit to Bangladesh in February that his government will work closely with its Bangladesh counterpart in order to expedite the repatriation process. The process is ongoing.

### Impact

Distribution of food rations has helped maintain nutritional balance among the refugees.

### Constraints

The slow repatriation process of refugees and the indefinite nature of the end of programme are resulting in a lower donor response.

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*Building disaster response capacity of the national society project objective:* Increase and sustain the response capacity of BDRCS and branches for efficient and effective management of crises with a functional contingency plan.

### Expected Results

- Efficient and effective disaster response is undertaken with coordinated initiative at national headquarters and branch level; and
- Extended and regular BDRCS networking with national and regional agencies engaged with disaster management.

### Progress/Achievements

No funding was received for this component of the disaster management (DM) programme. Activities will be implemented in the next quarter pending donor support. However the national society has maintained buffer stocks of relief items including family kits, blankets, high protein biscuits and warm clothes for rapid emergency response. Blankets and warm clothing were distributed during January's cold spell in the northern part of the country. BDRCS responded rapidly to assist victims of a major slum fire in Mirpur, Dhaka, distributing relief items.

The national society and the Federation have maintained regular contact with national and international agencies engaged in DM for effective coordination and networking, as well as also participating in the disaster emergency response group coordination meetings jointly chaired by WFP and the government.

### Impact

The national society continued to promote its image as an effective actor in disaster response through emergency activities.

Regular contact and networking with national and international agencies engaged in DM is resulting in better coordination and cooperation for the national society.

### Constraints

Insufficient funding and lack of donor support hampered the implementation of planned activities, reducing services to a bare minimum.

*Early warning and disaster information systems project objective:* Improve the capacity of BDRCS to effectively prepare for and respond to natural disasters and, through its volunteer network, enhance the capacity and capability of communities to cope with and reduce the impact of natural disasters.

### Expected Results

- Increased public preparedness among coastal communities with regard to threats of cyclone and earthquake related disasters;
- Reinforced local DM with community involvement through conducting various training for the volunteers at community level; and
- Strengthened early warning systems ensuring effective action and response in the event of disaster.

### Progress/Achievements

The DIPECHO earthquake preparedness project contract was approved and signed by both ECHO Brussels and IFRC Geneva in February following six months of negotiation. Specific job descriptions were developed for the recruitment of DIPECHO project staff (field coordinators). Five field coordinators (four in the field, one at national headquarters) were selected based on their experience. Their appointment was officially approved by the secretary general.

Once staffing was organised, steps were taken to initiate the implementation of the project through carefully planned operational phases in accordance with the original plan of action, taking into consideration the delay related to the approval of the contract and initially planned start-up date which had to be moved back.

The project manager, with the participation of all field coordinators, the head of delegation, the secretary general and other stakeholders, held an inaugural DIPECHO coordination meeting at the BDRCS national headquarters on 3 March. Field coordinators were briefed on the project background and discussed implementation modalities and delegate responsibilities with respect to the implementation of the project. It was agreed coordination meetings should be held on at least a quarterly basis at national headquarters in order to improve communication between field offices and headquarters and, more importantly, to have access to field experiences on a regular basis to increase the impact of the project at the grassroots level.

During March, several activities have taken place including the development of tendering documentation, specifications, publishing of 'call for quotations' in national newspapers, and designing of visibility items such as t-shirts, caps and banners. There has also been development work on an earthquake preparedness leaflet which would be the first such publication by the national society.

The selection of potential suppliers was completed at the end of the 1<sup>st</sup> quarter. Due to the high number of potential suppliers who have responded to the 'call for quotations' the prices obtained were very favourable, resulting in significant savings. Following discussions with field coordinators and the cyclone preparedness programme (CPP) department at national headquarters, recommendations with detailed suggestions on how to utilise savings will be presented to ECHO for approval. The implementation of DIPECHO earthquake and cyclone preparedness activities (i.e. training, rallies etc.) are scheduled to commence in May.

During the first quarter, the DIPECHO project manager and the head of delegation maintained frequent contact with ECHO Dhaka and New Delhi representatives. In addition, several meetings involving all DIPECHO partners in Bangladesh were held, including the official 'kick-off' on 1 April.

In addition to the earthquake preparedness project activities, the CPP is also implementing its regular activities. As preparation for the upcoming cyclone season, meetings of volunteers in 30 upazillas (sub-districts) under CPP command have been held, attended by 17,751 volunteers. Respective upazilla and zonal officers presided over the meetings and suggestions and new strategies on preparedness and short trainings were conducted. The community trainers and local officers undertook short training with volunteers attending the regular unit/union committee meetings.

Volunteers from 30 upazillas organised a cyclone awareness campaign rally on their own initiative. Over 120,000 people witnessed the rally, which stressed taking appropriate preparedness measures for the upcoming cyclone season. A cyclone field demonstration was also organised by volunteers at Sitakunda in March in front of a crowd of approximately 4,500. CARE and other NGOs funded the event.

### **Impact**

The DIPECHO earthquake and cyclone preparedness project has just been commissioned so impact has yet to become evident. Implementation of planned activities was scheduled to commence in May and will be reported on in subsequent programme updates.

CPP volunteers have exhibited that they are well organised and prepared and the early warning system has been strengthened and well maintained. The vulnerability of coastal community people has been reduced.

Local communities are being integrated into the capacity building and self-preparedness activities. This is enhancing the capability of communities to cope with cyclonic situations.

### **Constraints**

Due to funding constraints, basic, refresher and first aid training as per the plan of action were not implemented.

Some warning equipment such as megaphones, transistor radios, hand sirens, torchlights etc. used by volunteers are becoming inoperative due to wear and tear and length of use. This is diminishing the capacity for timely warnings to local communities.

*Community-based disaster preparedness (CBDP) project objective:* Increase the capacity of local volunteers to prevent and mitigate disasters in vulnerable communities.

### **Expected Results**

- Developed and consolidated organisational capacity for effective disaster preparedness (DP) and disaster response (DR) among 3,400 volunteers, 34 BDRCS branches and 102 associated vulnerable communities;
- The range and scope of local coping mechanisms available to communities vulnerable to disaster is increased;
- Locally managed, well maintained safe refuges (cyclone shelters) for 40,000 vulnerable families in 143 communities located within ten coastal districts (including the German Red Cross Society phased-out district);
- Implementation of CBDP programme activities are completed and phased out in an organised manner from 34 branches and 143 coastal communities; and
- Integrate the comprehensive CBDP programme into the BDRCS four-year development plan.

### **Progress/Achievements**

The programme has put much emphasis on the enrolment of new life members at both unit and community levels. A total of 368 life members have been enrolled in the 1<sup>st</sup> quarter. This brings the total number of life members to 26,189 (10.5 per cent of life members are women).

The reforming of volunteer squads and Red Crescent youth (RCY) was completed in six units. Reforming of squads in five other operational units is underway. Reforming/reactivating these volunteer squads and RCY troops is part of the effort in CBDP to maintain regular activities at community level.

Unit level squad volunteers and RCY open troops hold monthly meetings. Programme related issues such as implementation of activities at unit and community level and squad roles and responsibilities are discussed.

The Patuakhali unit collected its targeted amount of Taka 50,000 (approximately CHF 1,100) for the disaster emergency fund (DEF) during the 1<sup>st</sup> quarter and a matching grant will be made under the programme. A total of Taka 2,634,145 (approximately CHF 58,000) is held by the DEF under 34 CBDP units (phase-out and operational).

A four-day flood risk management training was held in the Rangpur unit and was then followed by a one-day programme sharing workshop in January, with a total of 26 participants. A field visit was made by the director general and the Bangladesh desk officer of the British Red Cross Society, who observed the simulation exercise, dry run rehearsal and community level training.

Six units have been targeted to revise/develop an integrated DR/DR contingency plan based on simulation exercises.

A programme sharing workshop in January with 21 participants provided a briefing about the plan of action and activities to be carried out in 2004.

Some CBDP units observed national Disaster Preparedness Day on 31 March in cooperation with local district administrations. The day was marked by rallies, seminars, etc. and local branches gained good exposure.

The CBDP department assisted the Feni district unit with an income generating activity. The department approved a grant of Taka 25,000 to help the unit purchase a computer which it is using for the provision of computer training and a word processing service for the general public for a fee. The hardware is also utilised by the unit for its own requirements.

Open field drama is considered to be an entertaining and effective tool for raising awareness regarding preparedness measures. Seven communities under three units have witnessed field dramas during the 1<sup>st</sup> quarter with an average audience of 1,500 people.

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Monthly meetings of community volunteers in 68 communities at 11 operational units continued during this quarter. The meetings provide communities with an opportunity to assess the performance of volunteers, update DP subscriptions, and to draw up mutually agreed plans for preparing for emerging threats such as tornados and flooding.

Building up of the community disaster assistance fund (CDAF) is a crucial task for the CBDP. Community members are the main contributors and increasing the fund depends largely on motivational work in the community. Almost all CBDP communities have opened bank accounts and these funds hold a total of Taka 859,692, (approximately CHF 18,920) which is an average of Taka 10,000 in each community.

Dry run rehearsals (DRR) are an interesting participatory event for community level DP awareness focussing on various DP and response measures (warning, first aid, evacuation and rescue). During the 1<sup>st</sup> quarter, a DRR was held at the Kachipara community under the Patuakhali unit, witnessed by approximately 2,500 people (which included a neighbouring village). Approximately 40 per cent of the audience were women. The main objective of these events is to reduce loss and suffering of the community during disaster and post-disaster periods.

A task left over from 2003 was completed with the construction of 900 sets of slab latrines. A total of 500 of these have been distributed to various communities with the remaining 400 awaiting distribution to three communities.

Six DP basic courses have been conducted for DP squad members of six cyclone shelters along with community-based first aid (CBFA) courses benefiting a total of 312 people. The main thrust of the training is to improve the knowledge and skills of volunteers on basic DP, focussing on local coping mechanisms and rendering first aid in their communities.

A reorganisation process was carried out in 112 cyclone shelters to constitute shelter management committees (SMCs). Some minor changes also took place in the village disaster preparedness committees (VDPC) at 31 cyclone shelters.

The CBDP has taken the initiative to form 26-member DP squads in each of 112 shelters. Each squad is made up of eight members for first aid, eight for rescue and evacuation, eight for signal and dissemination and two traditional birth attendants.

The Cox's Bazar unit initiated a convention of VDPC chairs and secretaries. Representatives from 14 VDPCs attended and the status of cyclone shelters and the committees were reviewed. The participants prepared a revised action plan for 2004.

Evacuation drills and video shows were held at 20 shelter sites. An average of 1,200 people participated/witnessed each drill while an average of 500 viewed the video shows.

The programme continued to provide support to four shelter-based child literacy education centres. These centres are located in remote coastal islands and service 1,285 students.

Twenty-five billboards carrying DP messages were renovated at important sites of Hatiya Island. The content of the message has been improved to make it easier to understand.

SMCs of 112 cyclone shelters conducted monthly meetings and discussed various issues relating to proper maintenance and management of shelters. VDPCs of 31 cyclone shelters located in Cox's Bazar also continued their monthly meetings. Meanwhile the CBDP department has provided support to 31 VDPCs in the Cox's Bazar region since January.

Of 142 shelters, a total of 136 have a shelter maintenance and disaster assistance fund. The disaster management department encourage SMCs to enhance these through community subscriptions. The present fund status is shown in the table to the right.

| Zone         | Shelters   | Funds      | Taka.            |
|--------------|------------|------------|------------------|
| Chittagong   | 14         | 10         | 4,600            |
| Noakhali     | 51         | 51         | 8,17,782         |
| Barguna      | 32         | 32         | 88,462           |
| Bhola        | 15         | 12         | 12,855           |
| Cox's Bazar  | 30 (+1)    | 31         | 15,58,857        |
| <b>TOTAL</b> | <b>142</b> | <b>136</b> | <b>24,82,256</b> |

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All 23 phased-out units re-grouped the existing pools of volunteers by reforming/reorganising squad and RCY troops. This was the first time in two years that this had occurred. A total of 13 of the phased-out units have completed the process to date. The CBDP department will provide refresher training for reconstituted groups.

The holding of regular meetings has been made a precondition for particular RCY open troops to undergo refresher training. This is to encourage them to focus more on activities and increase their organisational capacity. The performance of newly re-formed squads and troops is being closely monitored by the programme. New formats have been developed for recording and documenting activities undertaken. It is expected that the programme will be able to provide more detailed and informative statistical information as a result.

Monthly meetings of community volunteers occurred in all 11 operational units. Meetings are being encouraged in communities of phased-out units to try to ensure activities continue and are sustainable.

Regular planning meetings were held at BDRCS national headquarters, convened by the DM division. The meetings discussed preparatory work, progress and constraints faced by the concerned departments in the formulation of the DM strategy and the national society four-year vision. DM stakeholders at national headquarters level, Federation representatives, the DM delegate and consultant participated to share views and discuss changing trends in DM for designing a pragmatic DM strategy for the next four-year period.

Brainstorming exercises held as part of the process of preparing the 2005-2008 DM plan helped capitalise on previous experience and establish coherence amongst the DM division.

### Impact

The CBDP units were strengthened with more volunteers/members through re-forming RCY and squad volunteers and the enrolment of new life members. Regular unit coordination meetings enabled the sharing of ideas, increasing the capacity to respond to disasters more effectively.

Unit level officers are now capable of preparing more accurate disaster contingency plans thanks to receiving flood risk management training.

Health behaviour has improved in targeted communities through the increased use of sanitary slab latrines provided by BDRCS. This results in a reduction of waterborne diseases.

The cyclone shelters have dedicated volunteers through the re-forming of DP squads in various communities. This will enable communities to respond to cyclones more effectively.

Almost 24,000 people from various communities witnessed evacuation drills and videos, raising awareness of mitigating the impact of cyclone disasters.

### Constraints

Some activities were delayed while units were reorganised and officers were deployed.

Not so much a constraint but certainly a challenge is that many of the unit level officers under the new deployment strategy will have the extra pressure of work to implement activities under the 4<sup>th</sup> expected result listed above in the phased out units.

*Disaster mitigation/reduction project objective:* Increase the resilience of communities vulnerable to disaster in remote villages of the Chittagong Hill Tracts region.

### Expected Results

- Wider understanding of humanitarian values within targeted communities, local authorities, sustaining social harmony between members of formerly hostile ethnic groups;
- Targeted communities organised and mobilised to prepare for (and respond effectively to) local disasters, and linkages developed with local government institutions and NGOs;

- CBFA services and basic primary healthcare support, including traditional birth attendants (TBAs), (particularly for women and children), established in six targeted sub-districts, and enhancement of nutritional status of indigenous vulnerable communities;
- Increased access to safe drinking water and improved sanitation facilities in targeted communities; and
- Community management and marketing skills facilitating locally sustainable livelihoods based on improved and extended indigenous traditional skills, agro-based and farming systems.

### **Progress/Achievements**

#### *Health awareness activities*

A total of 157 trained TBA volunteers were operating in all the programme areas under the three Chittagong Hill Tract units. They continue to enhance their reputation within communities. In the 1<sup>st</sup> quarter they carried out:

- 3,199 home visits;
- provided 3,109 patients with medicine and health advice;
- provided 564 mothers with ante and post-natal care;
- delivered 387 babies (with 22 children dying during delivery – 5.7 per cent); and
- provided first aid to 191 patients.

There is now a greater propensity within communities to seek out the services of BDRCS TBAs to provide basic health and midwifery services.

#### *Red Cross/Red Crescent principles & humanitarian values*

A team of dissemination workers distributed information on the Movement's principles and humanitarian values to staff and volunteers.

#### *Home-based income generation activities*

Revolving funds disbursed earlier by BDRCS as microcredit among beneficiaries in three district units have been used for investment in small businesses. This has resulted in modest income generation for beneficiaries.

#### *Water and sanitation activities*

Water and sanitation activities have been carried out according to plan. The Rangamati unit installed eight ring wells, two deep set pumps and three tube wells in the Barkol and Kawkhali upazillas. It also distributed 150 latrines to beneficiaries in the Kawkhali upazilla.

The Bandarban unit provided six ring wells, three deep set pumps, two tube wells and distributed 100 latrines to beneficiaries in the Sadar and Thanchi upazillas.

All water sources in the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> upazillas remained in operation. Water and sanitation activities were undertaken with the financial assistance of the New Zealand Red Cross Society.

### **Impact**

Development activities in the field of health, water & sanitation, income generation and the formation of village development committees is having an overall positive impact in the community, reducing their vulnerability.

People in the post-conflict region are now more aware about Red Cross/Red Crescent principles and values.

The health of mothers and children in particular is being enhanced by the activities of TBA volunteers. These volunteers are held in high regard in the community and are being more readily approached to provide basic health services.

### **Constraints**

Lack of donor support impeded the overall Chittagong Hill Tract programme. This had led to delays in implementation of the planned activities.

## Humanitarian Values

**Overall Goal: Countrywide knowledge, awareness and understanding of humanitarian values, international law and significance of the Movement's emblem, thereby encouraging the population to act more humanely and compassionately with increased respect for the dignity of human life.**

**Programme Objective: To increase awareness, understanding and acknowledgement of the humanitarian values that guide the Movement and respect for BDRCS as an independent, principled and impartial humanitarian organisation.**

### Expected Results

- Increased awareness and motivation of the BDRCS staff and volunteers reflected in their respective fields of activities;
- Increased awareness and knowledge among BDRCS potential stakeholders, including media, of the Movement, principles and ideals through campaigns and motivational drives; and
- Enhanced communication and advocacy skills and networking with external organisations and programme stakeholders.

### Progress/Achievements

While this programme received no donor support in the 1<sup>st</sup> quarter, humanitarian values were promoted through all programmes where possible. BDRCS has three priority areas for the promotion of humanitarian values and principles:

- Developing better understanding internally by advocating humanitarian values and principles to volunteers and board members;
- Raising awareness of public authorities and private institutions through
  - a) a workshop to reduce emblem misuse;
  - b) advocacy with government and other international NGO's on behalf of malnourished Myanmar refugee children;
- Influencing behaviour in the community through
  - a) emergency relief distribution among victims of disaster and ethnic conflict;
  - b) promoting and advocating wider usage of the better programming initiative (BPI) in the Chittagong Hill Tract conflict area.

The national society plans to further focus its humanitarian values and principles interventions through actively applying the cross-cutting issues of anti-discrimination and tolerance into its programmes. Potential areas for intervention would be in HIV/AIDS, gender, acid victims and ethnic conflict.

BDRCS carried out the following activities for the dissemination of Movement principles and humanitarian values with the support of the ICRC:

- A national seminar was held on emblem issues with the participation of representatives from the Chemist & Druggist Association, the Bangladesh Medical Association, private hospitals and the media. The Bangladesh Medical Association secretary general acknowledged that the misuse of the Red Crescent emblem is a problem and that public awareness needed to be raised. He gave the assurance that all Bangladesh Medical Association publications would disseminate the proper use of the Red Crescent logo. The association will take the initiative to motivate the medical and pharmaceutical professionals to use their own respective symbols.
- A press conference was held on the prevention of misuse of the emblem at the National Press Club in Dhaka. The BDRCS chairman and the regional head of the ICRC delegation were the main speakers and addressed 65 journalists and photographers.
- A first aid/safer access training was held in the national society headquarters with RCY members from six district branches attending. The training focussed on the provision of first aid and safe access measures to victims during and after conflict situations.

**Impact**

The dissemination seminar and press conference received a positive response from those attending. It is hoped that by raising the awareness of health professionals and media about emblem misuse a real impact will occur.

The undertaking of the head of the Bangladesh Medical Association secretary general about protection of the emblem and promotion of alternative emblems in medicine was highly encouraging.

BDRCS officers and volunteers have a clearer concept of the Movement's Fundamental Principles and ideals.

**Constraints**

Lack of funding.

**Organisational Development**

**Overall Goal: A principled, skilled and efficient national society supportively linked to communities within which vulnerability is being progressively reduced.**

**Programme Objective: To move BDRCS closer towards becoming a well functioning national society, with a national network of active branches and volunteers carrying out activities in accordance with its mandate and principles and motivated to improve the lives of vulnerable people.**

*Programme management skills development project objective:* Increase BDRCS management skills at headquarters and branch level to enable them to run more effective and efficient programmes to better meet the needs of the vulnerable.

**Expected Result**

- Senior staff possess significantly improved and expanded professional skills.

**Progress/Achievements**

A human resource development committee was formed, comprising managing board members, the secretary general and the head of the personnel department. The committee, after reviewing the existing rules and procedures, will formulate guidelines on recruitment, promotion and performance appraisal and other related issues for staff.

BDRCS, with the support of the Federation delegation, has been preparing a four-year development plan. This process is involving internal and external facilitators. The health department benefited in the development of its plan from the professional support of an external facilitator. The Federation's new four-year plan (2005-2008) will be prepared on completion of the national society's development plan.

BDRCS finalised its draft gender policy in line with the International Federation gender policy. It has been submitted to the managing board for approval. Once approval is given, the department will prepare guidelines for implementation of the policy.

The national society observed *International Women's Day* on 8 March and held a workshop with the participation of 25 female officials. The workshop promoted awareness on women rights.

The training department conducted basic first aid training courses for three external organisations. This generated income of Taka 104,500 (CHF 2,320) which is progress towards the department's goal of self-sustainability. It also coordinated a basic first aid/safer access training course organised by the information and public relations department with the support of ICRC.

The planning and development department organised an orientation on earthquake preparedness. Participants included officers and volunteers from national headquarters and branch level.

**Impact**

The overall capacity of officers is increasing and activities are being implemented more efficiently. The overall management capability of the concerned departments is gradually increasing.

Quality of training attracted external organisations and income is being generated through the sale of training courses.

Officers and volunteers were oriented on earthquake preparedness and mitigation measures and many of those participants are now capable of conducting such orientation individually.

**Constraints**

Due to staff shortages, some planned activities have been delayed.

*Leadership training project objective:* Better understanding by the leadership of BDRCS, at headquarters and branch level, of the history, principles and mandate of the Red Cross/Red Crescent Movement, and motivation to lead the national society towards providing better services to the vulnerable.

**Expected Results**

- Well functioning, locally representative, inclusive and efficient branches effectively demonstrating the practical and social value of voluntary service;
- Organisational capacity as well as functional facilities of various departments of the society increased;
- The Movement's fundamental principles and values inform and reinforce all decisions of the BDRCS managing board and branch executive committees; and
- Volunteer members of the society's governing bodies at all levels are well informed and highly motivated.

**Progress/Achievements**

Implementation of planned activities did not occur in the 1<sup>st</sup> quarter. This was due to the organisational development department resources being taken up with leading the process of the national society's four-year development plan. It is planned that activities will commence in the next quarter.

**Impact**

N/a

**Constraints**

As outlined above.

*Volunteer management development project objective:* Increase the capacity of BDRCS to recruit and retain a diversified volunteer base reflecting its membership to enable vital services to the vulnerable (including new HIV/AIDS awareness campaign) to continue and improve.

**Expected Results**

- Well trained, highly motivated and actively organised volunteers;
- An increased volunteer base which is more diverse in cultural, social, gender and age;
- A greater sense of common purpose between staff and volunteers;
- A revitalised RCY with significantly increased membership of highly motivated and well organised youth volunteers;
- Increased BDRCS participation in public awareness campaigns related to vulnerability reduction;
- HIV/AIDS awareness and anti-stigma campaign launched and 120 volunteers from 30 units are well trained as trainers to disseminate the idea; and
- Solidarity networks formed with other youth organisations and linkages established with families of vulnerable communities.

### **Progress/Achievements**

This project has been supported by the Federation's capacity building fund for the past two years. BDRCS is developing its capacity to recruit, motivate and manage youth volunteers. The national society is improving the technical competence of more than 63,000 youth volunteers through the provision of appropriate and effective training.

The department is motivating people to become members by highlighting activities of BDRCS. It is also exploring new ideas on how to improve the quality and commitment of RCY members and volunteers.

The youth volunteers are becoming the focal group for conducting the various youth programmes in schools, colleges and other organisations. Regular communication on the RCY movement has been established with 68 branches.

A draft youth policy has been formulated and is awaiting managing board approval. Once approved it will be printed and distributed.

A leadership training camp for RCY leaders from 20 units and national headquarters, originally scheduled for December 2003, was held in March. It had been delayed due to logistical and weather issues. Of the 50 participants, 40 were from branches and the remainder were from headquarters.

In January, the youth and volunteers department conducted a winter warm clothing collection programme on its own initiative. RCY members collected hundreds of items of warm clothing in Dhaka. The clothing has been stored at the headquarters warehouse for distribution to poor and homeless people who are vulnerable to Bangladesh's cold winters.

The youth and volunteers department supported three district level RCY camps during March. The theme at two of the camps was 'trained youth during disasters' and at the other 'humanity through service'. A total of 862 RCY volunteers participated. These camps provide the opportunity to establish good communications and exchange of views among youth volunteers. Previous experience shows this helps in realising the potential of volunteers and keeping them in the Movement.

A three-day basic first aid training was conducted for national headquarters RCY members in March. RCY organised this training and participants provided their own funding. The department provided support, supplying trainers and other facilities.

### **Impact**

With the completion of the draft RCY policy, another step has been taken towards providing guidelines for youth volunteers to work in a better and more systematic way.

The leadership training has been beneficial. Trainees are now able to provide quality leadership which will help lead to improvement in their respective units.

### **Constraints**

There was a lack of monitoring of field level activities due to resources being directed towards the formulation of the youth policy and the department's four-year development plan.

*Communication and advocacy development project objective:* Continued growth in public knowledge and understanding of the Red Cross/Red Crescent Movement and an increase in the BDRCS mandate and programmes.

### **Expected Results**

- Increased capacity and competence for the timely preparation, publication and effective propagation of accurate and relevant information;
- BDRCS has an effective and operational computer networking and management system;
- Enhanced communication skills and more effective advocacy and networking with external organisations and programme stakeholders; and

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- A widely known, regularly updated and frequently accessed BDRCS website.

**Progress/Achievements**

The planning and development department has continued publishing a monthly newsletter which is circulated internally and externally.

The special branch development package, launched in May 2003, has created enthusiasm in all units. It is designed as a competitive programme between branches in order to initiate branch activities. An evaluation committee assesses the overall performance and the top ten branches receive awards. Unit level office bearers and volunteers are actively involved in implementing the defined activities in close cooperation with the different stakeholders of the units. The local administrations in most of the districts actively supported the package programme to make it a success.

Many of the branches have drawn up plans of action incorporating new and innovative ideas, especially in the field of membership drives and fundraising. On the basis of the results of the monitoring and reports obtained from 50 units, the third issue of the bi-monthly *Package Bulletin* was published and circulated. BDRCS still intends to redevelop its website during 2004; it is currently inactive.

**Impact**

The regular publication of the national society newsletter keeps internal and external stakeholders informed about current news and activities and helps promote a positive image for the Movement.

Unit level stakeholders were encouraged and engaged in developing their units under the branch/unit development package. The regular publication and circulation of the *Package Bulletin* has assisted in the sharing of information and experience among key players.

**Constraints**

A shortage of staff has impacted on the ability to properly monitor branch level activities.

*Finance resource development project objective:* Increase BDRCS' capacity to generate, access, mobilise and manage financial resources and ensure sustainable support to vulnerable groups.

**Expected Results**

- Comprehensive and well developed fundraising strategies and related plans;
- A regularly reviewed and updated database of actual and potential local donor's utilisation, involvement and fund generation; and
- Increased and improved financial management and reporting skills.

**Progress/Achievements**

An external consultant was used to formulate a resource mobilisation policy and a four-year strategic resource mobilisation plan for the national society. The policy formulation process involved discussions with the planning and development department, fundraising, youth, estate, unit affairs and the Federation organisational development (OD) team. BDRCS will implement the policy after its approval by the managing board.

The department has also developed database software which will enhance efficiency and be useful for storing fundraising data and information.

The fundraising department organised a charity golf tournament in January which raised Taka 800,000 (CHF 17,800). The funds will predominantly be used for procuring buffer stocks of family kits, etc. for responding to emergency relief needs. The fundraising department continued development of souvenir items for sale. The sale of ballpoint pens, notebooks, key rings and Red Crescent pins has earned Taka 108,000 (CHF 2,400).

A resource mobilisation workshop, together with a donor seminar, was held at seven units. A total of 50 participants drawn from unit executive committees, senior volunteers and local level officials attended each workshop. Following a SWOT analysis, the workshops formulated 'donor forums' at the branch level. During the seminar, potential donors at the various units committed Taka 7,358,700 (CHF 163,526) which is an unprecedented amount for such a fundraising drive in a single month.

**Impact**

Fundraising methods and techniques disseminated to unit executive committee members, volunteers and officers are further strengthening unit capacity to explore local resource mobilisation and achieve self reliance.

The unit resource mobilisation workshop helped motivate units to explore fundraising opportunities and to network with the local stakeholders.

The various promotional and souvenir items which have been developed are resulting in a revenue stream.

**Constraints**

Some activities relating to the BDRCS partnership fund were implemented in the 1<sup>st</sup> quarter; this overlapped with regular activities.

**Representation, Implementation and Management****Progress/Achievements**

The Federation and country delegation continued to solicit and coordinate international support from UN agencies and diplomatic missions for humanitarian emergency operations and capacity building initiatives undertaken by BDRCS. Several meetings have been held with donor missions, mainly to advocate on issues related to the upcoming monsoon season. All donors approached gave assurances that they would support any forthcoming Federation appeals. Regular contact with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs has been maintained regarding delegation administrative matters. The head of delegation attended the SARD team meeting and the South Asia regional partnership meeting during the 1<sup>st</sup> quarter.

The Federation Secretariat (both at Geneva and country level) continued to play a leading role in attracting funding support. This assistance has been particularly helpful with international donors based in Bangladesh. The Secretariat has advised and assisted the national society in its operational management, and is guiding it through an ongoing process of organisational change.

Support is extended by non-Movement partners and new PNS. BDRCS has a strategic four-year partnership agreement with the British Red Cross Society which will continue to support DM and OD activities. The WFP and other UN agencies are also supporting national society programmes.

Cordial, cooperative and mutually beneficial relations between the Federation's country delegation and the ICRC regional delegation based in Delhi have been maintained.

The director general and the Bangladesh desk officer of the British Red Cross Society visited Bangladesh in January to observe ongoing DM and capacity building activities. The ICRC regional head of delegation along with the regional cooperation delegate visited to observe the work of the national society on dissemination activities.

The Norwegian Red Cross Society has again donated some emergency buffer stocks of BP5 biscuits and provided some financial support for logistics and warehouse management training.

A reply to the Joint Statutes Commission in Geneva was sent by the chairman of the BDRCS Constitution Review Committee responding to the comments of the amendments to the draft national society constitution submitted for approval last year.

**Impact**

New initiatives and support to assist in strengthening the management and governance of BDRCS have enabled the national society to make some major advances in line with its change management process.

**Constraints**

Nil