

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

NORTH AFRICA REGIONAL PROGRAMMES

15 July 2004

The Federation's mission is to improve the lives of vulnerable people by mobilizing the power of humanity. It is the world's largest humanitarian organization and its millions of volunteers are active in over 181 countries.

For more information: www.ifrc.org

In Brief

Appeal No. 01.88/2004 ; Programme Update no. 1, Period covered: 01 January to 30 June 2004;
Appeal coverage: 53.7%; Outstanding needs: CHF 612,142 (USD 495,000 or EUR 400,000).

Appeal target: CHF 1,322,259 (USD 993,059 or EUR 851,148); The Appeal budget was not revised, however operational budgets have been reviewed to adjust to the income received so far.

Related Appeals: [Click here to access North Africa Annual Appeal – Contribution List](#) (weekly updated)

Middle East Regional Programmes - ([AP01.89/2004](#))

Algeria – Boumerdes Earthquake Appeal - ([AP14/03](#))

Morocco – Al Hoceima Earthquake Appeal - ([AP06/04](#))

Programme summary

- 2004: Year of Regional Conferences (MENA Conference in March, Mediterranean Conference hosted in Cairo by Egyptian Red Crescent (RC) in May, PanAfrican Conference in Algiers hosted by Algerian RC in September).
- February 2004: Al Hoceima Earthquake, deployment of a field assessment and coordination team (FACT) and Spanish logistics emergency response unit (ERU), Launch of an Emergency Appeal

The reporting period saw a busy round of regional and country activities in terms of emergency operations, ongoing capacity building work and meetings. The above conferences provided North African national societies with several opportunities to meet, discuss, share experiences, draw on lessons learnt and build up a regional culture. Effective collaboration, planning and operational support to these processes was provided from the technical staff (Health, PSP, DP, OD, Information) based in both the Federation's North Africa delegation in Tunis and its regional Middle East office in Amman.

The Appeal coverage to date is estimated at 47% thanks to a few traditional donors. Further efforts are being made to increase this coverage encouraging more contributions from various Donors , especially in the Health & Care area

For further information specifically related to the programme in North Africa please contact:

- In the Regional Office for North Africa: Anne E. LECLERC, Head of Delegation, Tunis
Tel: +216 71 86.24.85, Fax: +216 71 86.29.7, E-Mail: ifrcu01@ifrc.org
- In Geneva: MENA Regional Department, Pieter de RIJKE, Federation Regional Officer, Africa Department, Geneva;
email: pieter.de.Rijke@ifrc.org; Phone 41.22.730.42.04; Fax 41.22.733.03.95

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>



(Click on the name of the national society below to access the individual NS profile)

[Algerian Red Crescent](#)

[Moroccan Red Crescent](#)

[Egyptian Red Crescent](#)

[Tunisian Red Crescent](#)

[Libyan Red Crescent](#)



It is with great sadness that we learned of the death of Professor A. BOUKHROUFA on 23rd March 2004, one of the founding members of the Algerian Red Crescent and its President since 2000.

He will remain in our memories as a man devoted to the principles and ideals of the Movement and whose dedication was exemplary. His drive and vision of the future have allowed us to go far in our common activities. He leaves his successor, Dr. Badouna, to carry forward ambitious challenges.

Operational developments

Health and care

Programme Goal: The National Societies in North Africa contribute to improving the health of and care for the vulnerable in the communities through efficient, needs responsive and focused programmes.

Programme Objective: The national societies in partnership with the stakeholders have built a sufficient capacity to enable vulnerable groups to reduce susceptibility to diseases, accidents/injuries, to prepare for and respond to basic health needs and crises.

1/ HIV/AIDS & Other Infectious Diseases objective

The response of the National Societies to HIV/AIDS and other infectious diseases (e.g. polio) is developed and scaled up in the areas of prevention, care and the fight against stigma and discrimination.

Expected result: The National Societies have significantly scaled up their involvement in HIV/AIDS Youth peer education; Networking and exchange of experiences in prevention of HIV/AIDS and other sexually transmitted diseases (STD) have been reinforced through a dynamic, well functioning regional network and increased collaboration between the national societies in the region.

Progress/Achievements

- A representative of Egyptian RC was supported to attend the “Pan African Youth Forum on Aids: a matter of Education” in March 2004 together with two representative from the Scout organization. Preparatory meetings were arranged to discuss the HIV/AIDS situation in Egypt and the role of youth organizations in AIDS prevention. The workshop was hosted by the Senegalese Government. All National Associations on the African Continent (Scouts, YMCA & YWCA, Federation and the International Youth Foundation) as well as the World Bank and various UN agencies (WHO, UNICEF, UNESCO, UNFPA, UNAIDS, CEDPA). There was a focus on the importance of the “Youth force” (20 million members in Africa who can reach another 200 million people), the role of youth as “an agent of social change within communities”, the importance to strengthen and coordinate better national plan of actions, involving better youth sections, and the importance of effective partnerships.
- UNICEF, UNAIDS, UNFP and the National Office for the Family and the population organized a national workshop in early June on peer education. Tunisian RC and the Federation were invited to participate together with other partners (including NGOs, PanArab organization and Scout organization). The main objectives of the workshop were to: harmonize the concept and the understanding of peer education; harmonize the tools and the supporting material and analyze the gap between planned approaches and the reality in the field. Three representatives of Tunisian RC attended the workshop and the Tunis Regional Office presented the Federation Manual “Action with Youth: a training manual for young people, HIV/AIDS and STD”.
- Moroccan RC, thanks to DFID funding, designed a peer education programme (two training sessions and development of training material). The first session was successfully organized (Report available at the Regional Office upon request) and the second one is planned during the second half of the year.
- Egyptian RC has developed a project on HIV/AIDS awareness highlighting the importance of peer education. Training of trainers will be conducted to train ERCS members working in the HIV/AIDS field. TV spots will be developed to raise the public awareness about the “dormant” danger of HIV/AIDS. The project, thanks to the continuous support of Finnish RC, will be implemented during the third quarter 2004.
- Regional cooperation: closer collaboration between national societies in the region is still on the agenda. Due to a very heavy agenda during the first six months, nothing concrete has materialised during the reporting period. However, the message was clearly reinforced at the various regional fora (Regional meeting in Tunis, MENA Conference in Bahrain, and Mediterranean Conference in Cairo). During the regional cooperation meeting in Rabat (May 2004), the President of Algerian RC proposed to prepare a regional document on HIV/AIDS that will be presented at the PanAfrican Conference in Algiers. As a result, a regional health meeting is planned in July with the representatives of the five North African NS to discuss and draft this document. Algerian RC will take the lead and will be supported by the regional health delegate. Libyan and Tunisian RC have also decided to follow up on their commitment and have selected this important theme as one of the main topics for their international youth camps this summer. Libyan RC will organize a Mediterranean Youth Camp, and Tunisian RC will organize a North Africa Regional Youth Camp. Both cases are aimed at reinforcing their regional youth networks through a better sharing of knowledge, expertise and resources as well as through design of common programmes. The regional office will be supporting both initiatives but the lead and driving force will remain with the respective national societies.
- Additional regional cooperation is envisaged (migrants, HIV/AIDS program jointly developed and implemented by Libyan and Tunisian RC, and road safety) but needs to be discussed further.

Expected result: The five National Societies have established/strengthened formal partnerships with their national AIDS authorities as well as other partners such as UN agencies and NGOs working in the field of HIV/AIDS;

Progress/Achievements

The five North African National Societies are members of their national AIDS committees and are in the process of strengthening their collaboration with health authorities, UN Agencies as well as local and international NGOs. A strong and shared willingness from all the actors in the HIV/AIDS sector is noted. Efforts to improve coordination and cooperation have led to better planning and programming. It has resulted in more effective use of resources and expertise, agreement on common positions and a plan of action.

- Thanks to the Finnish RC contribution, the Regional Office is supporting one participant to the 15th International HIV/AIDS Conference in Bangkok in July. A Representative from Moroccan RC was selected to represent North Africa at this Conference. Dr Ouchriff, President of the Health Commission in the Moroccan Red Crescent, is also an active member of the Global Fund (GFTAM) National Coordination Committee. The whole committee were to be present at the Bangkok Conference.
- After Algeria and Morocco, which have received some grants from the GTFAM, Tunisia is currently developing an application. The Tunisian Red Crescent was approached to support the Ministry of Health and to participate in the preparatory work as active member of the National HIV/AIDS Committee.
- The discussions are still ongoing regarding the implementation of the Memorandum of Understanding with the WHO Regional Office for Eastern Mediterranean Countries (EMRO).



Expected Result: Sustained campaigning against discrimination and stigmatization of HIV/AIDS affected people has been supported by the five National Societies to include special events for RC/RC Day and International AIDS day.

The future: The Tunisian Red Crescent discusses the meaning of humanity with youngsters.

Progress/Achievements

North African national societies were actively celebrating the RC/RC day focusing on action against discrimination after last year's campaign. Posters in Arabic were produced by the regional delegation for the Middle East and disseminated to the branches.

2/ Community Based First Aid (CBFA) objective

The mandate of the five Red Crescent Societies in first aid is strengthened within the civil societies of their respective countries. Capacities are reinforced to ensure adequate designing and implementation of community based first aid (CBFA) programmes empowering communities and preparing them to respond more efficiently to their specific needs.

Expected result: First aid curricula have been reviewed, increasingly standardized, tailored to the needs of specific groups that may be exposed to particular risks (children, volunteers, taxi drivers, women, etc.) and integrated into a disaster preparedness programme; Effective collaboration and experience sharing between national societies have been established through active networking;

Progress/Achievements

Ten National Societies have begun an extensive review of the Arabic version of the CBFA trainee and trainer manual. The process is led by the regional health delegate based in Amman. From North Africa, experts from the Egyptian, Moroccan and Tunisian RC were selected to review both manuals and submit written reports that include suggested changes. A meeting was held early June for all reviewers and selected NS experts (an Algerian RC expert joined the group) to finalize the revised manuals as well as to envisage the inclusion of additional

modules. The NS have agreed to adopt the new modified manual as per the revision submitted. Three modules will be added for optional use in the curriculum (cardio pulmonary resuscitation (CPR), psychological support (PSP), and road safety). Algerian RC will coordinate the group on PSP

It was also agreed that the regional certification will only accredit the full CBFA curriculum which includes four modules: RC/RC Movement training, disaster management, first aid (larges section) and public health. The participants formalized the nucleus for the first MENA regional CBFA Network in which duties and responsibilities are assigned.

A full report prepared by the regional health delegate is available at the regional office upon request.

Expected result: World First Aid Day has been marked by the five National Societies.

Progress/Achievements

North African NS are actively preparing the celebration of First Aid Day. This year the day will have a specific importance as it will be celebrated in Algiers during the PanAfrican Conference, in which 53 RC/RC NS will be present.

Expected result: Risk reduction public campaigns to include Road Safety have been conducted as part of regular activities.

Progress/Achievements

Road safety is increasingly becoming a priority in North Africa. Four out of five National Societies are already involved.

- Moroccan RC has recently signed a convention with the National Committee for Road Safety. A pilot programme was developed in two towns of Morocco (Rabat and Casablanca). This programme had such an impact that it was extended to seven other towns .
- Tunisian RC was very involved in road safety activities with the National Association for Road Safety as well as with the national committee. Specific days were organized (including the celebration of the WHO day on the Road Safety themes. The NS has also been developing efforts to target children's awareness.
- The Regional Office supported the NS to produce promotional materials (posters, leaflets) and has presented the two European Road Safety Campaigns. The Office continues to explore possibilities to access funding for the development of programmes in the region.
- As mentioned above, a specific working group linked to first aid was created to develop and add a module on road safety. Tunisian RC and Morocco RC are part of this group coordinated by the Lebanon RC.
- Other Arabic RCs have conducted road safety campaigns/programmes (Yemen, United Arab Emirates RC). The Regional Office is gathering these experiences and lessons learnt and sharing them with the North African NS.

3/ Psychosocial Support Programme (PSP) objective

Adequate psychological support services are provided through programmes, which have been established in the national societies thus enhancing individual and community capacity and resilience to respond to present needs and cope with possible emergencies.

Expected results: Four national societies have initiated contacts with other stakeholders and have worked on a harmonized and complementary psycho-social support approach; National societies have gained knowledge and exchanged experiences and best practices in the technical field of psychological support thus assisting the communities to be better prepared to cope with stress and reduce risks; The five National Societies have been actively participating in the PSP network to share experience, knowledge and best practices.

Progress/Achievements

- The last network meeting on PSP was carried out in Teheran in December 2003. Important information was shared and recommendations for the future work within PSP were given. The next one is planned for September/October 2004. The mapping of needs and activities within psychosocial support in the region has been an ongoing process, providing an overview of the NSs' initiatives in the field of PSP, their organizational capacity, and collaboration with partner NS, etc. The document compiled by the regional health unit based in Amman is intended to be a working tool for the PSP team and will serve to set priorities and find areas of common interest.
- As a concrete follow up of the networking meeting, Egyptian RC took the initiative in March 2004 to establish a PSP working group. A frame for a Plan of Action is set to be initially completed in July 2004. The first task of the PSP working group will be to map the core programmes in the NS and identify needs and opportunities to integrate PS components where relevant.
- As French is the main language in three of the five NS in the region, PSP material has been translated into French and is available for future PSP workshop in French
- Following the several disasters that struck Algeria, Morocco and Tunisia in 2000-2003, Red Crescent Societies in the three countries identified a need to provide psychological support to their own staff and volunteers involved in the emergency assistance programmes as well as to equip them with necessary skills to provide psychological first aid to the affected population. A three-year programme, funded by the Swiss Government Agency (SDC), was designed in 2003 to support the development of long-term community-based capacities for disaster risk reduction in Algeria, Morocco and Tunisia. The programme is addressing the causal factors in disaster vulnerability and involves the communities in making themselves and their families safer. One of the three axes of the programme is the promotion of psychological health, enhancing capacity of the Red Crescent Societies to respond effectively to the psycho social effects of natural and man made disasters. A regional meeting was organized in March and provided an opportunity for the NS to share and discuss their own experiences. The regional psychological support coordinator attended the meeting and introduced the global PSP programmes. The three Societies have already taken initial steps to address this need:
 - In Algeria the first aid training programme being revised with the French Red Cross covers some aspects of managing stress in the "Working in a Team" module. The Algerian Red Crescent has also gained experience over the last several years providing psychological support to victims of violence through centres run together with the ICRC.
 - The Moroccan Red Crescent established contacts with professional psychologists and started introducing elements of psychological support in the first aid training in Kenitra using the International Federation materials.
 - The Tunisian Red Crescent invited professional psychologists to address this issue during the forthcoming National Congress on Disaster Medicine organized in cooperation with the Ministry of Health.

All the three Red Crescent Societies have a well developed system of first aid training, which includes training for Red Crescent volunteers to provide emergency first aid as a team (Certificat de Formation en Premier Secours en Equipe, CFPSE). The majority of Red Crescent volunteers providing assistance in emergencies are all trained in CFPSE. Developing an extra module and adding it to the existing CFPSE curriculum has been identified as an appropriate way to address the issue. ICRC and French RC are closely associated to the development of this programme. French Red Cross has expressed a strong commitment following the earthquake operation in Al Hoceima to support Moroccan RC in the development of their PSP programme. The Federation PSP Coordinator will be visiting soon French RC to present the regional PSP concept, look at the expertise available and the best use of the resources in the region as well as further discuss the complementarity of the approaches.

4/ Community based social programme objective

Focused and effective community development projects in the field of education (literacy programmes), social welfare (vocational training), health promotion, first aid, and disaster preparedness are adequately supported to respond to acute vulnerability.

Expected result: The Red Crescent Societies in Algeria, Egypt and Morocco have reached an increased number of vulnerable people through their integrated community services covering first aid, psychological support and disaster preparedness activities; Community participation has increased significantly in the planning, design and implementation of the programmes;

Progress/Achievements

The work of mainstreaming psychological support in the core programmes of the NS has started. This process has been very much welcomed as it leads to better coordination and information on programmes. However, it is probably too early to measure this result as NS are still developing this integrated approach. Traditional social programmes continued to be run. Unfortunately no funding is yet available to support the new generation of community based projects. Therefore, pilot projects could not be put into place, except in Egypt where integrated community based projects are successful thanks to a good fundraising strategy (involvement of the communities, good participation of the business sector).

Impact

The work on the three health components (HIV/AIDS, CBFA and PSP) has a development approach and therefore requires a long-term commitment to ensure sustainability and a visible impact. However we can note the following:

- One positive aspect (of networking, regional planning sessions, and regular visits to NS) is the confidence of NS towards Federation support. It results in an increased communication, sharing of information but also specific demands placed on the Regional Office and its technical support.
- Better planning and ownership of the programmes by the NS themselves.
- NS in the region are becoming more open to the regional context and have started contributing to the North African approach. This openness is also perceived in the development of partnerships with other health key players.

Constraints

- Although many health activities are implemented by NS in North Africa, health strategies remain weak and in some NS it is missing.
- Lack of a regional pool of NS experts.
- Resources/staffing within NS: in many cases counterparts are not yet in place.
- Poor capacity in project management (financial management, reporting, monitoring, evaluation).
- Resources, poor funding of health activities. Projects have been developed at NS level but cannot be implemented because of lack of funding (Egyptian RC: establishment of additional training centres: Moroccan RC and Algerian RC: HIV/AIDS project – peer education).
- Regional cooperation is not yet effective.
- Heavy agenda this year for North African Societies (International Conferences) coupled with disasters (Al Hoceima earthquake being the major one, flash floods in Algeria, and a gas explosion in Algeria) has impacted on the implementation of programmes. Most activities were postponed to the second half of the year.

Conclusion

Positive developments have occurred during the reporting period, helping to establish a solid basis for future programming. The Regional Office will continue to support the development of NS health strategies, reinforce the impact of the health programme and support NS in positioning themselves as strong and reliable partners in the health sector. The Federation's Middle East health delegate is planning a mission at the end of July. The issue of resources both at the national and regional level will be addressed in order to support the overall process.

Disaster management

The regional disaster management programme was reinforced with the arrival of a disaster management coordinator in mid-January. Since then, missions have been undertaken to four National Societies in order to establish a working relationship and to further define the activities to be carried out during the year. The Egyptian

Red Crescent was busy with the organisation of the recently held Mediterranean Conference, and requested that the mission be carried out at a later date.

The new coordinator for the Algeria post-earthquake rehabilitation project who began his assignment in April is a logistics specialist. This will also boost the capacity of the regional office to provide technical support to the National Societies, in line with the appeal objectives, which were based on the needs identified by the Societies themselves.

The emergency events which occurred during this reporting period have also served as a good basis on which to assess the current disaster management capacities of the National Societies concerned, and to better identify the focal areas for support in enhancing capacities to handle future events. The Regional Office has also been supporting the systematic review of these operations in order to identify key learning points which will serve to continue to develop the disaster management capacity of the National Societies.

The coordination with the disaster preparedness delegate in the Amman Delegation has also assisted in providing the support required by the National Societies. This will be continued during the remainder of the year.

Disasters in North Africa

- 19 January 2004 Gas explosion at the industrial complex of Skikda (Algeria)
 - 27 dead
 - 87 injured

Mobilization of 4 ARCS mobile teams to provide relief aid and psychological support to affected victims & families

- 24 February 2004 Morocco – Al Hoceima earthquake (6,3 Richter Scale)
 - 756 dead
 - 1,000 injured
 - 500,000 homeless

MRCS intervention teams rapidly on site, regional FACT and Spanish Logistics ERU deployed, Emergency Appeal launched by the Federation

- 14-15 April 2004 – Flash Floods in Timimoun - Algeria
 - 1680 families affected

ARCS national and regional intervention teams deployed to support relief distributions. Federation supported some food procurement.

Programme Goal: The National Societies in North Africa are well prepared to contribute in a timely, efficient and coordinated response to the needs of the vulnerable population affected by disasters; thus reducing the impact of the emergencies.

Programme Objective: The North African Red Crescent Societies have strengthened their position as key humanitarian actors in disaster management to prevent and alleviate suffering of vulnerable communities through effective response, preparedness and mitigation.

Expected Result: Disaster management structures have been established in Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia and Egypt to implement plans of action and coordinate DP/DR activities.

Progress/Achievements

- Discussions have been held with the Moroccan and Algerian Red Crescent Societies in this regard, and both are in agreement in principle with the idea. However, this needs to be approved by the Central Committee and the General Assembly respectively, and will be discussed at these levels before final approval is granted for beginning recruitment. It is expected that both National Societies will have DM coordinators in place by autumn. A job description for the position has been developed by the Regional Office in order to guide the recruitment process.
- Tunisia has appointed a member of its Central Committee as the coordinator of its disaster management programme. The main task for this individual at this time is the coordination of the community based project which is being implemented with funding from the Swiss Government. This project has formed the basis for the launching of other disaster management activities.

Expected result: Contingency plans have been formulated in Tunisia and Algeria and harmonized with their respective national disaster preparedness plans.

Progress/Achievements

- As part of this process, the Algerian Red Crescent (ARC) was supported by the Regional Office, in coordination with Geneva and the French Red Cross, to carry out an initial evaluation of the May 2003 earthquake operation. Among the lessons learnt from this exercise was the need to develop operational procedures in disaster management. A first draft was developed during the evaluation exercise. Further work will be done during the remainder of the year. At the same time, the Algerian government is in the process of revising its disaster plan (Plan ORSEC), which will include a revision of the role of the Red Crescent Society, based on the precedence set through its positive contribution during the above-cited operation. The ARC is awaiting this revised role to also reflect this in its contingency plan.
- A draft disaster management strategy has been developed by the Tunisian Red Crescent. This will be further fine-tuned during the remainder of the year.

Expected result: National Societies have been made fully aware of available Federation disaster management tools and mechanisms.

Progress/Achievements

- This is being done as the opportunities present themselves. In the case of Morocco, the earthquake operation in February provided an opportunity to remind the National Society of the different tools which the Secretariat has developed to reinforce its disaster management capacity. In the case of other National Societies, this was discussed during different fora, and will be continued in the various workshops planned for later in the year, and into 2005.

Expected result: National Societies have improved their capacity in community based disaster preparedness programmes by using the vulnerability capacity assessment (VCA) as a tool for better planning and programming at the community level.

Progress/Achievements

- Two of the three National Societies (Morocco and Tunisia) which are involved in the programme funded by the Swiss Government have taken the decision during the planning meeting held in March (*pictured left*) to



implement community VCA exercises as a first step towards the execution of the three-year project. It was felt that in order to better define vulnerable groups, their capacities, and the key messages to be imparted to them during the awareness raising segment of the project, VCA exercises would be carried out. Consequently, both National Societies have received VCA training during this reporting period, in coordination with the Amman Regional disaster preparedness delegate. Emanating from these trainings, plans have been developed for the implementation of these exercises during the coming months.

These exercises will involve other actors and representatives from the communities.

Expected Result: VCA studies have been conducted in Morocco, Algeria, Egypt and Libya

Progress/Achievements

- While the studies have not yet been undertaken, in the case of Morocco and Tunisia, these will begin shortly. Training workshops which were scheduled for Libya and Algeria had to be postponed for logistical reasons. The Moroccan and Libyan Red Crescent will each send a participant to the upcoming global VCA Training of Trainers. Subsequent to the training, these persons will be used to support VCA processes within their countries, as well as serve as regional resources.

Expected result: Community based disaster reduction projects have been designed to integrate social aspects (first aid, psychological support, educational programmes) and implemented in Morocco, Algeria and Egypt.

Progress/Achievements

- Morocco and Algeria have begun the implementation of integrated community based project during this reporting period. In the case of Algeria, the psychological support component builds on existing projects of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC); and the first aid component is aligned with the training activities of the French Red Cross. As part of the rehabilitation phase of the Al Hoceima earthquake operation, the Moroccan Red Crescent will be putting additional emphasis on projects of this nature, in Al Hoceima, as well as in other high risk areas. The Egyptian Red Crescent has for many years been involved in these projects, and they are continuing. The Tunisian Red Crescent has also begun to implement a project of this nature.

Expected result: National Societies in Algeria, Tunisia, Morocco, and Egypt have clarified their role with regard to the national response plans and subsequently have increased their coordination capacities with the communities, local authorities and other key partners involved in disaster management.

Progress/Achievements

- Discussions have also been on-going between the Tunisian Red Crescent and the Civil Protection, the Ministry of Health and other government agencies in order to more closely coordinate activities, and to eventually further define the role of the National Society in disaster management.
- The Algerian Red Crescent has already held discussions with the authorities on different occasions, and is awaiting the finalization of the revision of the national plan which will reflect the revised role of the National Society.

- Owing to the role played by the Moroccan Red Crescent during the response to the Al Hoceima earthquake (*pictured right showing their presence on the ground*), the National Society is now involved in a working group that is examining issues related to inter-sectorial coordination, as part of the government's efforts to increase effectiveness in disaster management. The results of these working groups will be presented at a conference to be held later in the year. The inclusion of the Red Crescent in this process is heralded as the first step towards the government's recognition of the National Society as a competent player in disaster management. The earthquake rehabilitation plan is designed to increase the capacity of the National Society and vulnerable communities, hence ensuring that its response to future emergencies will be even more efficient.



Impact

- The Regional Office has increased its support in disaster management to the National Societies, owing to its added personnel capacity. National Societies have expressed their satisfaction. The Office has recruited someone specifically to support them in this important area.

- The increased DM capacity in the Office has begun to foster increased networking between National Societies within the region.
- Increased networking with other international players (e.g. UNDP and WHO) has begun during this reporting period. Discussions have also been held with both agencies to explore the possibility of creating a working group on disaster management in Tunisia.

Constraints

- The existence of two working languages (French/Arabic, or English/Arabic) within each National Society, and three working languages within the region has led to a lot of time being spent on translation of working documents and/or correspondences. The absence of administrative support dedicated specifically to the programme has also led to increased workload to do these translations.
- As a result of the number of regional conferences which have been scheduled within the MENA region this year (with two to be hosted by North African National Societies), host National Societies have faced an increased workload and have had less time for programming. This has resulted in activities being curtailed in the lead up to these events, due to NS staff being occupied by preparatory activities.

Conclusion

Overall, progress has been registered during this reporting period as per the appeal objectives. This will be built on during the remainder of the year and will set the stage for further success in 2005. Plans are already in place to address the other areas of the appeal during the second half of the year.

The community based disaster management project being implemented in three countries within the region (Algeria, Morocco and Tunisia) for the next three years (2004-2006) with the financial support of the Swiss government has consumed a lot of the regional disaster management coordinator's time, as there was the need to develop mechanisms necessary for the start-up of this project. Nonetheless, this has been a useful process. It has complemented the work envisaged within the appeal, and has started to develop the structures necessary within the target National Societies to enable them to more effectively work towards the reinforcement of their capacities, as they seek to increase the disaster management capacity and reduce the vulnerability of communities in high risk areas. A separate report on this project has been prepared, and this and other background documents can be consulted for further details.

The response to the Al Hoceima earthquake in Morocco provided the opportunity for further coordination with donor National Societies, as well as with other organizations. At the same time, the National Societies within the region once again demonstrated their solidarity through the offers of personnel support, as well as the dispatching of relief supplies. In coordination with Geneva, the Regional Office coordinated the support of the donor societies in the response phase. The plan of action which was developed for the rehabilitation was also closely coordinated with these Societies, and was designed to include their interests. This process led to increased effectiveness in support to the affected National Society. This model of cooperation has been very positive, and will be used in future operations.

Humanitarian values

Programme Goal: Community concern and responsibility for the most vulnerable is increased with a noted higher respect for humanitarian values, improved mutual understanding and increased tolerance.

Programme Objective: Humanitarian values and principles are part of all Red Crescent programmes, initiatives and training. Dissemination and integration is supported by tools and materials available in French and Arabic. Information and communication capacities of the National Societies in the region are strengthened thus increasing the visibility of their activities and contributing to the promotion of the humanitarian values.

Expected result: The Red Crescent Societies in the region have increased their involvement in advocacy within and outside the Movement.

Progress/achievements

- Promotion of the RC/RC Movement's fundamental principles and humanitarian values were ensured through joint workshops organized by ICRC with Tunisian RC. Those workshops were part of the ICRC dissemination programme. The Regional Office was closely associated to the exercise.
- The Regional Office has also produced new posters in the three languages (Arabic, English, and French) on the RC/RC Principles and Protecting the Human Dignity. These posters were sent to NS and to the branches.
- Promotion of the principles and humanitarian values is actively celebrated at any NS RC events and is an intrinsic part of the communication activities.
- Although the national societies in North Africa are maintaining good contact with the media, and therefore are ensuring good coverage of RC activities, there is a need for reinforcing their advocacy plans and communication strategies, especially at the time of emergencies. Good lessons were learned from the Earthquake operation in Morocco (Al Hoceima).
- Following the pilot project developed last year in Tunisia (workshop on the Global Action to reduce discrimination and violence within communities), a refresher course is planned in September/October and Egyptian RC, Libyan RC and Moroccan RC have expressed their willingness to host and organize similar workshops. Unfortunately, funding is not yet available for the implementation of these projects. Funding is sought to cover these activities.

Expected result The Red Crescent Societies have been established as a prime source of information relating to natural and man-made disasters in North Africa, through fast response and the provision of news related to the needs of the affected people to media, donors and the humanitarian world.

Progress/Achievements

- A first information/communication workshop was held in Algeria in June 2004 (*pictured below*). Representatives from ARCS branches, various media, and volunteers participated in the training. The curriculum focused on how to deal with the media during disasters, regular programme activities to promote NS work, writing articles and press releases, building relations with the media, organizing press conferences and networking and coordination with branches. The workshop was well received. A second one is planned in October as only half of the branches' representatives (24) could attend.
- A similar workshop is planned in Tunisia in the second half of September and in Morocco in October. For these workshops, the Algerian RC head of the information unit will be used as regional resource for the training.
- At present, only Algerian RC has been developing its own Web Site <http://www.cra-dz.org>. Tunisian RC and Moroccan RC are in the process of developing their own sites.



- So far, the North African NS have not been using the Federation Extra Net but training is planned for the second half of the year.

Impact:

- Good collaboration with ICRC. Better awareness on the RC/RC Movement at regional and local committee level. Better understanding on the Federation role and dissemination of Federation material at the local level.
- The importance of communication and the need to build a strong information unit within National Societies has been recognized by most in North Africa. Concerned NS have expressed their commitments to build capacity in this area.
- The promotion of the Fundamental Principles and Humanitarian Values is valued as an important activity and integrated in the different RC programmes.

Constraints:

- Lack of structures, of human resources within NS
- Lack of promotional material adapted to the North African context

Organisational development

Programme Goal: Well-functioning National Societies in North Africa are contributing to civil society through an efficient service delivery and advocacy, based on a clear vision regarding their role.

Programme Objective: Adequate capacities, structures and systems are established in North Africa's Red Crescent Societies to enable them to carry out a full spectrum of programmes in an effective manner.

Expected result: Skills of Red Crescent staff and volunteers have been reinforced in planning, project management, financial management and reporting; The National Societies in the region have benefited from financial transparency and accountability and the confidence of donors and other RC/RC partners has consequently increased.

Progress/Achievements

- A series of workshops (see below table) were proposed to the North African National Societies, organized in close collaboration with the Middle East Regional Office. After discussions with the concerned NS, it was decided to balance the training approach between country and regional workshops to better respond to the NS expectations and create an effective core group of NS trained staff. A database is maintained and will serve as a basis for the development of a regional expert pool. The workshops proposed are meant to be directly linked to the programme implementation. The Regional Office is working on the definition of indicators that will help the NS and the Regional Office to measure better the impact of these trainings. These workshops and training are targeting different audiences, from the leadership and senior management to middle managers, members and volunteers. The main objectives are to develop practical skills improving their performance in project management, and to broaden participants' understanding and knowledge.
- A document has been prepared at the attention of the North African leadership describing the type of training that can be offered to NS staff to improve their skills. It includes the concept of the training, the profile of the participants, a standard agenda and the material available (in English, Arabic and French). Upon request and according to funding available, the Federation will support the organization and the facilitation of these in-country workshops. As a first step, the Regional Officer/consultant is presenting the material, the methodology, and is facilitating a training of trainers. At the second phase, a Plan of Action will be established with NS counterparts to disseminate this knowledge within the NS through training for additional NS staff/volunteers in branches. The responsibility of the second round of training is left with the NS and will

reflect their commitment and willingness in this capacity building field. This approach has already been successful, especially in Egypt (psychological support, and soon branch development).

Workshops	Pro gr.	Country/ Regional	Location	Dates	Algeria	Egypt	Libya	Morocco	Tunisia
BTC ¹ Leadership Training Modules (2)	OD	Regional	Amman	18-22/05	X	X	X	X	X
	OD	Regional	Amman	24/04 –		X	X	X	X
			Geneva	03/05	X French				
Gender	OD	Regional	Amman					X	
VCA	DM	Country	Morocco Tunis	24-26/05 28-30/05				X	X
VCA ToT	DM	Secretariat	Alicante	01-07/07			X		
PPP	OD/ CB	Regional	Amman Amman						
Financial Management	OD/ CB	Country	Tunis Morocco	Ongoing				Federation Procedures Budgeting	Financial Reporting Audit Rep.
CBFA meeting	Health	Regional	Amman	1-4/06	X	X		X	X
Information/ Communication	P& V	Country			X				
Telecom	OD	Regional	Dakar						X

- Planning has been very high on the agenda. The Regional Office aims to genuinely transfer the ownership of the regional and operational planning to the North African National Societies. For too long the Federation Appeal has been, and still is, perceived as a Federation or donor driven document. It is important that National Societies recognize their inputs in the document, and feel committed and responsible for its implementation. For this reason, the Regional Office has multiplied since last year the opportunities for NS leaders and programme managers to meet, share and discuss issues of common concerns. It has encouraged the National Societies to take the lead on specific themes, develop and propose concrete regional projects. Positive and encouraging developments have so far been noted:
- Algerian RC offered to take the lead in the drafting of a regional document on HIV/AIDS and PSP. These documents are to be presented during the PanAfrican Conference in Algiers
 - Tunisian RC has proposed to organize a regional workshop on Volunteers Management
 - Libyan RC has offered to hold some regional workshops in Libya, but also to support the regional office with staff on loan position

The Regional Office (including its country office based in Algeria) is also working on increasingly involving the bilateral partner NS and ICRC in this planning exercise, to reinforce this regional cooperation as well as offering North African NS a comprehensive and coordinated Movement support. Despite the good relations between all the stakeholders, the process is slow and too much a one-way effort. The Federation's commitment of "working together" is a real challenge.

Planning Meeting								
NA Leaders Meeting	Regional	Tunis	10-12/02	X	X		X	X
DM regional Planning	Regional	Tunis	24-26/03	X			X	X
Donors Regional Planning	Regional	Rabat	10-13/05	X			X	X

¹ 8 candidates from 5 NA NS have attended the RC basic training course (BTC) organized jointly by the Regional Office for Middle East and ICRC. 4 NA participants were highly recommended for international missions, 1 for regional mission, 2 were rejected due to their poor skills in English (francophone speakers)

Planning review and discussions on programmes are primarily through country visits and missions. This consultation process, dialogue and follow up enables the Regional Office to anchor its regional planning on the different and specific country approaches.

Missions to North African NS Country Planning/activities review	Delegates	Dates	Purpose
Algeria	DM	11-22/02	Briefing/Post Disaster Evaluation /Planning
Morocco	DM	25/02-02/03	Al Hoceima earthquake: FACT Team
Egypt	HoD PSP Coordinator	01-08/03 02-05/03	Field trip /Planning/PSP/PanAfrican evaluation PSP Assessment and Planning workshop
Morocco	PSP Coordinator	15-23/04	PSP Assessment and Planning
Morocco	HoD	28/03-02/04	Planning: finalisation PoA Earthquake operation
Libya	DM	04-09/04	Briefing/Planning 2004 Activities
Algeria	HoD	18-20/04	PanAfrican meetings
Morocco	HoD	06-16/05	8 th of May/Reg. Cooperation/Donors Meeting/PoA
	DM	08-17/05	Reg. meetings/Post Disaster Evaluation
Algeria	HoD	16-18/05	PanAfrican Meetings / Planning: PoA

National Societies in North Africa have expressed their interest in developing their capacity to implement and manage programmes. However, the human resource capacity and the structures within the National Societies have to be soon addressed in order to respond effectively to this increasing demand.

Funding is also a concern. The funds received for North Africa Regional Appeal are earmarked for specific programmes and it will be difficult to respond to the NA NS demand. The Regional Appeal budget has not been revised and reduced as the objectives outlined in the Appeal remain valid, realistic and based on existing needs and priorities defined by the North African NS. As such, the Federation is appealing to donors to contribute to its capacity building effort. Building a pool of experts in the region is a sustainable and cost effective investment. For information, please find enclosed the planned timetable for the rest of the year.

Planning schedule for the second half of 2004

Workshops	Prog.	Country/ Regional	Location	Dates	Algeria	Egypt	Libya	Morocco	Tunisia
DM Camps	DM	Regional	Morocco	22-29/07	X	X	X	X	X
Leadership Training Modules (2)	OD			27/09-1/10		X	X	X	X
PPP (Arabic) PPP (French)	OD	Regional Regional	Amman Tunis	23-27/08 Dec/tbc	X	X	X	X	X
VCA Wksp Follow up	DM		Tbc/country				Sept.	X	X
Logistic Assessment Training		Country					X August Sept.	X Sept. October	
Youth Camps	OD/ Youth	Country	Libya Tunisia				Mediterranean 21-30/08		North Africa 08-20/08
Financial Management Information/Communication	OD/ CB P&V	Country Country			Dates tbc October X			October X	15-18/09 X
Reporting	OD	Country			Tbc			X	X

Assessment Training (ToT)							19-20/07 Sept/Oct	16/07 October
Branch Dev. Review ToT	OD	Regional Country	Tunis	Tbc	X	X	X	X
Action against discrimination & violence	P&V	Country	Tunis Rabat	Sept/Oct			X	X

Planning Meeting								
Health Regional Planning	Regional	Tunis	28-30/07	X	X		X	X
NA Leaders Meeting	Regional	Tbc	Sept/Oct	X	X		X	X
DM regional Planning	Regional	Tunis	October	X			X	X

Regional Events								
Launch of WDR	Regional Country		27 Oct	X	X		X	X
First Aid	Regional Country	Algiers Country	11 Sept	X	X	X	X	X
HIV/AIDS	Country		1 Dec	X	X	X	X	X

Mission to North African NS Country Planning/activities review	Delegates	Dates	Purpose
Morocco	HoD	18-25/07	DM camps/POA follow up
Algeria	HoD	August	Planning/PanAfrican preparatory meetings
Libya	HoD Youth Sec Fed	August	Mediterranean Youth Camp
Algeria	HoD	September	PanAfrican Conference
Egypt	HoD DM		Field visit/Planning: Branch Development/PSP/Hiv-AIDS
Morocco	HoD	October	Field visit/WDR launch/Planning review

Expected result: Youth sections have been better integrated into national societies, playing a crucial role in advocacy and are increasingly and effectively mobilized in programmes such as disaster preparedness and community health.

Progress/Achievements

Youth sections have been and will continue to be present on the international agenda in 2004. Both conferences in Bahrain and in Cairo invited youth sections from the MENA and Mediterranean regions and they actively participated through debates and working groups. A plan of action was prepared and adopted as recommended in the declarations.

As a follow up to these conferences, Libyan RC is planning a Mediterranean Youth Camp in August focusing on specific themes (HIV/AIDS, Drug and Prevention, Migrants, etc.), as well as workshops to share knowledge/NS experience and other interactive activities. Earlier in August, Tunisian RC will also organize a North Africa Regional Youth Camp focusing on the promotion of the Fundamental Principles and humanitarian values, peer education programmes, regional cooperation in first aid (standardization and certification) and disaster management (increased coordination) as well as humanitarian and social work.

Both National Societies are taking the responsibility in organizing and are hosting the participants from the different countries. The Regional Office will support these initiatives, providing facilitation for the different sessions and making available the necessary material. As an outcome of these two meetings, it is expected that a clear plan of action that will be integrated in the planning process for the Appeal 2005.

Youth representatives of the North Africa NS will also participate in a youth meeting in Lebanon, planned as a follow up of the MENA conference. During the youth working group, the youth decided that there was a need to

train young volunteers. Two priorities were identified: HIV/AIDS and road safety. A specific session will be provided for training FedNet editors and to review communication issues.

The Pan African Youth Forum in Dakar was attended by one Representative from the youth section of Egyptian RC.

Expected result: Development of strong branches as the key to National Societies' ability to respond to the needs will have been fostered

Progress/Achievements

New training modules for branch development were finalised by the OD department in Geneva, the first draft was sent to the Regional Office who supported the translation in Arabic and in French. These modules were tested in the field. Documents need to be revised and adjusted accordingly. The Regional Office, thanks to the DFID contribution, supported the translation in Arabic and in French of Capacity Building Framework, and the Management Handbook. These documents, once finalised will be shared within the MENA region and Africa Department (francophone and Arabic countries). It will also be posted on FedNet for easy access.

A regional meeting is planned with North African NS counterparts and ICRC to review the branch development standard curriculum, adapt it to the regional context and establish a Plan of Action. The pilot project is planned in Morocco. However, Algerian RC and Egyptian RC have expressed a strong interest. The overall project will be presented at the next NA NS Leaders Meeting.

To support the branches, the Regional Office has made available some equipment: desk top computers and mobile phones thanks to the contribution of the Secretariat and Ericsson.

Impact:

The several visits, missions and regional meeting have contributed to building some confidence and the creation of better dialogue between North African RC societies and the Regional Office. Concrete results are:

- the finalization of country planning for four out of the five societies,
- the NS willingness and request to develop the Federation support in the region (alignment with the Federation's S2010)
- the "starting" process of interaction between NS

The most interesting impact of these regional Conferences (PanAfrican, MENA, and Mediterranean) is not only the commitment that NS have expressed in their declarations, but their concern for a better accountability within the region. It was interesting to acknowledge from the Ouagadougou Declaration evaluation, that NS have recognized the need for better follow up mechanisms. One of the outcomes of the MENA regional Conference was the creation of two regional committees (chaired by the Egyptian RC and the Tunisian RC), which will be tasked to follow up on the recommendations of the Manama Declaration and to ensure a proper implementation of the declaration. A similar outcome of the Mediterranean Conference was the establishment of a Mediterranean Secretariat based in Spain which will also ensure a follow up of the Conference and its recommendation.

Constraints:

NS capacity and structures to absorb these new programmes remains limited. There is also a need for an adequate assessment and human resource review. There continues to be insufficient coordination with PNS operating bilaterally (despite a few encouraging developments). Funding concern to carry out all the activities planned.

Coordination, cooperation and strategic partnerships

Representation, Management and Implementation

Goal: The Red Crescent Societies in North Africa have effective partnerships and alliances enabling them to advocate on behalf of the most vulnerable and mobilize support to respond to their needs through effective delivery of programmes and services.

Objective: The National Societies of North Africa supported by the Federation have strengthened their capacities through a well structured regional cooperation and diversified and effective partnerships within and outside the region and are recognized as strong and reliable partners.

“There is a need for Arab National Societies to come together and devise the best way of dealing with new challenges” - Dr Abdullah Al-Hazaa, Secretary General of the Organization of Arab RC/RC

The first six months of 2004 offered several opportunities to meet and discuss regional issues. The consultation process between leaders of the North African NS was reactivated. This meeting is held twice a year and serves as a: platform for future regional planning; discussion of specific themes of common interest; review on the success and challenges in the region; review on better tailoring Federation support to NS needs.

Regional Fora

- 10-12 February – Tunis North Africa NS Leaders Meeting
- 14-17 March – Bahrain 4th MENA Conference
- 27-29 April – INSARAG Lessons learned Meeting – Hammamet Tunisia
- 10-11 May – Rabat Regional Cooperation Meeting (Algeria, Morocco, Tunisia) with PNS operating bilaterally in the region
- 12 May – Rabat – Presentation of the PoA for the Rehabilitation phase of Al Hoceima earthquake operation
- 24-27 May – Cairo 9th Mediterranean Conference
- Active preparation of the PanAfrican Conference to be held in Algiers in September (8-13th)

For the first time, a meeting was organized with all the PNS operating bilaterally in the region on: the support planned for the North African Societies for the next 3 to 5 years; the importance of a clearer and coordinated planning and programming; a better use of the regional resources (from both sides of the Mediterranean); a complementary approach for the benefit of the NA NS.

Follow up will be ensured to find a better and more effective way to work together.

- The MENA Regional Conference, which was held under the theme “New humanitarian Challenges and Partnerships with the Private Sector”, identified five keys areas on which National Societies should focus in the coming two years:
 1. accessibility (access to the victims of disasters or conflicts was identified as the first priority)
 2. new sources of vulnerability
 3. partnership with the private sector
 4. resource mobilization
 5. youth



- The Mediterranean Conference (*addressed by the Federation’s secretary general, pictured*) highlighted the importance and the increased role that youth has to play within National Societies. The themes developed were focusing on youth and relief, youth and violence and youth and addiction/AIDS. A series of resolutions were adopted recommending a stronger cooperation and communication between the NS of the Mediterranean in the following areas: partnership (youth organizations), exchange of experience and knowledge, joint meetings and camps for

youth, better involvement of youth. More specific recommendations were defined that reflect the commitments of the Mediterranean RC/RC Societies. A complete report is available at the Regional Office upon request and will be posted soon on the FedNet

- The Regional Office is actively supporting, together with the Secretariat, the preparation of the PanAfrican conference in Algiers (*see logo below*). The Tunis head of delegation (HoD) was involved in the evaluation process of the Ouagadougou Declaration, especially supporting a consultant for North Africa in his work (country interview, organization of a workshop in Egypt). Two meetings were organized in Tunis with the full team of consultants (the team leader, and the four consultants for North Africa, West and Central Africa, East Africa, and South Africa), the PanAfrican coordinator, ARCHI officer and senior officer from the Secretariat's monitoring and evaluation department to discuss methodologies and findings. The evaluation was completed and presented to the Federation Board and will be presented at the PanAfrican Conference.



Expected result: New partnerships have been developed by the National Societies (UNDP, UNAIDS, OPALS, WHO/EMRO, etc.) and funding for selected projects have been secured;

Progress/Achievements

Visits and meeting were organized with the main actors in the region together with the National Societies to present the Movement approach, Federation regional work and country programmes and activities developed and implemented by the respective National Societies. New partners were contacted in the region. Contacts with the private sector were also

developed on the basis of the global agreement signed with the Federation.

In most cases, the potential support provided by these partners are not necessarily financial but can be translated into a resources person who can support training or share their expertise in some specific areas:

- WHO Regional Centre for Reduction of Vulnerability (HQ based in Tunis). Contacts were made within the DM perspective. One of their representatives attended the SDC regional planning workshop. They have expressed their willingness to continue this type of cooperation and to contribute to a better coordination of efforts deployed in the field of “vulnerability”. Recently this year, many of the competences initially allocated to EMRO were transferred to this Office. Tunis will reinforce contact and further discuss the implementation of the agreement with EMRO.
- African Bank for Development (ABD). Their Headquarters were transferred temporarily from Abidjan to Tunis, following riots in Ivory Coast. Contacts were made with their office, to follow up the invitation of the President as a guest speaker for the Pan African Conference. Further discussions regarding possible support in the health areas (more specifically related to HIV/AIDS sector) will be held.
- Centre of Arab Women for Training and Research (CAWTAR) with Headquarter in Tunis. The centre is a unique institution in the Arab region Its interests are focused on gender issues, and it seeks to promote Arab's woman's participation in development and provide services to the different parties concerned with these issues. These services include training, research and networking. Following preliminary discussions, one of the possible services is an evaluation of NS programmes/activities in regard to gender and this aspect can be better integrated in programmes. Further meeting are planned after the summer.
- Organisation PanAfricaine de Lutte contre le SIDA (OPALS), an NGO based in Morocco since 1997 supported by the French RC (Dr Gentilini, President of OPALS). An agreement was signed in 2003 with Moroccan RC to reinforce their cooperation in prevention and the development of a public awareness campaign using the RC volunteer network to reach communities. Discussions are ongoing for the opening of another OPALS centre in south Algeria. A meeting was organized in Rabat to envisage a closer collaboration using material developed by OPALS/Morocco for other NS HIV/AIDS programmes available in Arabic in the region.

- INSARAG Lessons Learned Meeting – Bam and Morocco Earthquakes (INSARAG Regional Group Africa/Europe Meeting). The Federation was invited to participate in the meeting, given the role it played in the Morocco and Iran earthquake operations. The meeting sought to reinforce international coordination and cooperation by examining key moments within the response operation, with a view to identifying important aspects, which could guarantee greater efficiency in the response to future emergencies. Among the areas discussed were the early warning, mobilization and deployment phase, on-site USAR coordination, and the role of other international responders and interface with USAR teams. One of the highlights of the meeting was the inauguration of the INSARAG Antenna in Tunisia. The Office will serve as a liaison with African countries, to increase their awareness about the INSARAG, through the provision of an overview of the work. Its main tasks will be the translation of documents into French and Arabic, for onward dispatching to states; establishment of a website in French and in Arabic for dissemination purpose; and the development and maintenance of a database. Among the recommendations of the meeting was for the regional grouping to explore the possibility of conducting an INSARAG USAR exercise in North Africa in 2005, to provide an opportunity for the countries within the sub-region to practise INSARAG response methodology. The Tunisia outpost will be the focal point for this exercise.

The meeting provided a good opportunity to connect with disaster groups, especially those focused on search and rescue, and to increase understanding of the role and purpose of the organization. It has reaffirmed that the Federation, through its networked National Societies, has a vital role to play in ensuring that issues such as search and rescue are properly planned, with the dissemination of internationally developed and recognized guidelines and standards. The privileged position enjoyed by NS as auxiliaries to their governments can enable them to advocate for issues as this to be included in the national disaster plans. The Antenna in Tunisia provides an opportunity for the Regional Delegation to support the Tunisian RC in developing closer relation with the Civil Protection, and for both institutions to identify ways to complement each other's work.

With the private sector:

- DHL. Discussions were held during the MENA Regional Conference with the DHL representative regarding the recent agreement signed with the Federation and their participation and support to the earthquake operation in Morocco. During the HoD's mission in Morocco, a visit was organized with the regional DHL representative for Maghreb to discuss possible fields of cooperation. The outcome was positive and several offers were made (from training facilities, such as logistics of transport, to visibility of the operation). Names and references of country representatives were shared and positive feedback was received regarding their support to the organization of the PanAfrican Conference (sponsorship).
- Ericsson: 80 mobile phones have been offered and shipped for free to Moroccan RC by Ericsson. These phones will be used for the National Intervention Teams, and during the DM exercise (Simulation) that will be organized at the end of July. Discussions are still ongoing regarding the participation of the Ericsson Representative in Morocco at the DM exercise for training on the use of GSM in times of emergency. 30 mobile phones were also offered to Algerian RC for the organization of the PanAfrican Conference. After the event, the phones will be used by the national intervention teams and in the branches.

The Regional Office continues to implement the Manama Declaration by exploring together with the North African National Societies new ways of cooperation that can lead to an effective and sustainable collaboration within the region. It is hoped to identify new types of resources and diversify funding sources to avoid dependence on "a few funding sources, especially governments and institutional donors".

Expected result: Relevant information to external partners has been regularly disseminated through various channels (Federation website, national societies' websites, RC/RC publications, programmes updates, reports, etc.).

Progress/Achievements

Information is channelled through different channels (Al Ittihad, websites, DMIS) but needs to be shared on a more regular basis. The Regional Office as well as the national societies have not started yet to use the Federation extra net system (FedNet) to post information. Training is planned for the second half of the year.

However, the role of information officer in raising the NS' profile, spreading knowledge about their activities, strengthening the relation with the media and establishing partnerships with the private sector is gaining more prominence in the region. National Societies pledged during the last MENA Conference to identify opportunities to improve communications in the region, including the development of the Federation website and the FedNet extranet using the expertise that exists in the region.

The first meeting of information officers of RC/RC societies was held in Amman at the end of December 2003. As a follow up of the recommendations from this workshop, three out of the five NA NS have decided to organize an in-country information officer workshop. One has been already successfully organized, and three more are planned between September and December. An opportunity will be taken to include a quick training on the Federation's FedNet.

The Regional Office will also look at recruiting an additional staff. The person will focus on information/communication issues in the three working languages of the region (Arabic/French/English) and support the NS in establishing their communication strategies as well as developing their own websites.

Expected result: The Federation has signed a Status Agreement with the government of Tunisia.

Progress/Achievements

The negotiations for obtaining a Status Agreement were initiated five years ago. All documents and files were submitted, shared as requested with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Despite several visits from Federation leaders (then secretary general Didier Cherpitel in October 2002, head of MENA department Ali Said Ali in July 2003), several meetings, exchange of correspondence and visits from the previous Federation Representative and the new HoD, no progress has been made.

During the North African Leaders Meeting in February 2004, a visit was organized at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs with the "Chargé d'Affaires pour les Affaires Maghrébines". Mr Ben Hatem received the secretary general of the Federation, Markku Niskala, together with the delegation of the North Africa Leaders (Prof Gabr, SG from Egyptian RC; Dr Badouna, President of Algerian RC; Mr Bensaoud, SG Moroccan RC; Dr Cheniti SG Tunisian RC), the Director of MENA Department, Dr Said Ali and the HoD.) Positive and encouraging feedback was given. However, no further development has been recorded.

This absence of a Status Agreement is problematic in the daily management of the delegation. The Federation remains in an illegal position towards its staff (no legal contracts can be released from the Office to the staff, which means that they are not part of the Tunisian social system, cannot benefit of any pension, or medical coverage). It implies also difficulties and great complications in the administration of the delegation. (As an example: no RC vehicles can be leased or purchased as no registration of the plates can be granted; no residence permits can be released to Federation delegates although diplomatic visas were individually and temporary granted).

More serious is the non-recognized profile of the Federation in Tunisia, which impacts seriously on credibility as a Regional Office among the international community in the country. At a time when the Federation's effort should focus on developing and building new partnerships and reinforcing the representation part of our work, it is difficult to profile a non-recognized organization. As a consequence, the Federation office does not figure in the diplomatic list and therefore is not part of the main events in Tunisia.

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