

COUNTRY FOCUS - URUGUAY 2004



1. Introduction

Uruguay currently finds itself in a serious economic recession, which is partly linked to the regional Mercosur context on which the Uruguayan economy is dependent. Recent events including the economic collapse in Argentina have not helped the plight of the Uruguayan economy. Despite Uruguay's slow population growth, job opportunities are scant. Unemployment, growing poverty and social marginalization are threatening the achievements of Uruguay as a middle-income country.

Regardless of the above, Uruguay has some of the best indicators in the region; this makes it less attractive to potential donors.

2. National Context

Human Development Indicators 2003

Country Ranking - HDI	40
Total population (millions)	3.4
Life expectancy at birth	75.3
Annual population growth rate %	0.6
% population under 15 yrs of age	24.7
% population aged 65 and above	13.1
% urban population	92.1
% of the population living below \$1/day	<2
% of the population living below \$2/day	<2
GDP per capita (US \$)	5,554
Infant mortality per 1,000 live births	14
Under 5 mortality per 1,000 live births	16
Maternal mortality rate per 100,000 live births	26
% of births attended by skilled health staff	99
% of population using improved water sources	98
% of population using adequate sanitation facilities	94
% of population with access to essential drugs	80-94
% of adults living with HIV/AIDS	0.30
Women living with HIV/AIDS	1,400
Children living with HIV/AIDS	100
Net primary school enrolment ratio %	90
Adult literacy rate % MALE age 15 yrs +	97.2
Adult literacy rate % FEMALE age 15 yrs +	98.1

(UNDP 2003)

Access to health care is high in Uruguay, with 95% of the total population covered in some way, and two-thirds of the population with health care insurance. However, public health covers less than half of the population and 8% have no health coverage at all. The public system receives insufficient resources from the state and its capacity is overloaded.

The social and economic impact of the present migratory trends should not be underestimated. In particular, there is a tendency for younger, skilled people to leave the country which has a serious impact and important implications for the future.

3. Priorities of the National Society

Recognized by ICRC	1900
Number of branches	20
Staff	67
Active volunteers (estimated)	1000

The Uruguayan Red Cross (URC) initiated an adaptation process in relation to *Strategy 2010* as of 2001, giving rise to organizational change and a review of National Society priorities. Revision of the Statutes and the national development plan and the creation of new departments at the headquarters level are the main results. The development of a financial plan and stable resources for programme development, together with the compilation of a current profile of the branches, form part of the goal for the future.

The National Society receives income from members, government contributions and donations. Income is also generated by the National Society's nursing, first-aid and lifesaving courses; however, there is no overall fund-raising plan.

The priorities of the URC:

- ÿ Establish policies for the management of human resources to obtain continuity in community work.
- ÿ Modernize and ensure flexibility of the organizational structure of the National Society through its Statutes.
- ÿ Strengthen the capacity of the National Society to raise funds and modernize its financial systems.
- ÿ Strengthen the image and identity of the URC.
- ÿ Strengthen the programmes relating to the prevention of drug-addiction, HIV/AIDS, social work, first aid and disaster preparedness.
- ÿ The nursing school operating at headquarters, which is among the best in the country and which has become the URC's main resource-generating service.
- ÿ Dissemination of Humanitarian Values.

AT A GLANCE

URC	COMMENT
Statutes	Done in 2002
National Development Plan	In process
Cooperation Agreement Strategy (CAS)	2003-2005
Self Assessment	2003
Last Elections	2002
Next Elections	July 2004
Yearly audit	No
Youth representative in the NS governance	Yes, five
Disaster response plan in NS plan	Yes
Disaster response plan integrated with the government plan	No

Main strengths

- Strong inter institutional relations with NGO's and governmental organizations.

Main challenges

- ÿ Improve the management structure.
- ÿ Diversify the funding sources.
- ÿ Review standard procedures and organization of the branches.
- ÿ Strengthen the management of volunteers.
- ÿ Adjust Statutes.

4. Red Cross and Red Crescent Priorities

In general, there is little donor interest in Uruguay. As a result, the National Society has few funding partners. The Federation supports the development of Camalote programme, in the most vulnerable communities of the Rio de la Plata basin. Other priorities are the strengthening of disaster response and HIV/AIDS prevention in coordination with REDLA+.

The Spanish Red Cross supports the organizational development of the National Society through the drawing up of a national development plan and the remodeling of the nursing school, which is recognized by the Ministry of Health. The ICRC supports certain activities within the dissemination and communication department.

Partner	Health	Relief	DPP	Humanitarian values	Organization Development
ICRC		Communication and Diffusion		Yes	
Federation	Yes	Camalote Programme	Yes	Yes	Yes
Spanish Red Cross	Yes	Relief, DPP, Health, Training Centre for Human Resources and Centre of Projects and Programmes			Yes

5. Priority Programmes for Secretariat Assistance

Health and care

Ÿ HIV/AIDS prevention.

DPP and Disaster Management

Ÿ Strengthening the response capacity.

Ÿ Diagnosis of the relief structure.

Ÿ CBDPP.

Ÿ Camalote programme.

Organizational Development

Ÿ Strengthening of governance and branch management.

Ÿ Volunteering.

Ÿ Strengthening of activities at the Montevideo branch.