

Report 2006-2007



International Federation
of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

South America

Appeal No. MAA46001

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This report covers the period of 01/01/2006 to 31/12/2007 of a two-year planning and appeal process.



Psychosocial support activities helped people, particularly children, recover from the trauma of the earthquake in Peru. Peruvian Red Cross

In brief

Programme summary: During 2006-2007 the Lima Regional Representation consolidated its professional support of National Societies in South America with a strong integrated approach and team work. The development of integrated work among technical areas has allowed for increasing support of National Societies and mainstreaming community work at all levels. This integrated approach is clearly reflected in the Guayaquil commitments and the new Inter-American Plan 2007-2011, has been adopted by National Societies and has been long promoted by the Lima RR. .

Major achievements can be seen in National Societies programme areas: in health a significant scale up of actions in specific domains with a community health focus; disaster risk reduction increasingly links response and community risk reduction processes; the basis for strengthened humanitarian principles and values is in place. Communication support has been essential in these processes. Organizational development is at the core of our work; the Lima RR recognizes the importance of focusing support to National Societies on the core membership services, to ensure the institutional conditions are in place for effective programmatic work. In addition, our National Societies reached more than 350,000 people in small- and medium-scale disasters with direct support from our Federation. These achievements were possible thanks to strengthened partnerships with a range of actors, positioning the Federation and Red Cross work in the region.

Despite these net improvements, the ten National Societies in South America face an urgent need, although in different degrees, of modernization in order to maintain and strengthen their role within their national context and collectively in the region. Only a few of the ten National Societies have achieved the needed international standards to develop partnerships with non-traditional donors, and access increased and diversified funds to deliver the Global Agenda.

The sub-regional office for the Southern Cone in Argentina and the Federation Representation in

Colombia have closed due to financial constraints, and capacities were concentrated in Lima with technical areas strengthened in health, disaster risk reduction, organisational development, principles and values and communication. An office in Brazil was opened at the beginning of 2006. In order to better respond to the needs of the membership, the new Zone office opened a consultation process with some National Societies (both from the continent and cooperating with the continent) in order to develop together the New Operating Model for the Americas. This process will take place during 2008, considered a transition year. A new structure will be defined based on this process.

Goal: The National Societies in the region are implementing efficient, responsive and focused programmes which contribute to improving the lives of vulnerable people.

Needs: Total 2006-2007 budget CHF 6,436,577 (USD 5,757,225 or EUR 3,900,956) (out of which 82 per cent covered). **Click here to go directly to the attached financial reports:**
[report 2006](#) [report 2007](#) [report 2006/2007](#)

Peru Emergency Appeal n° MDRPE003, target amount CHF 10,895,000 (USD 9,917,000 or EUR 6,785,000). Appeal coverage: 71 percent (as of 19 February 2008).

No. of people we help: The Lima Regional Representation works towards developing the capacities of National Societies in South America. The direct beneficiaries of the Regional Representation's programmes are the National Societies of Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Ecuador, Paraguay, Peru, Uruguay, Venezuela, their governance, staff at headquarters and branch levels, and volunteers.

The people reached during the emergency response operations during this reporting period with external support (three international appeal and small- to medium-scale emergencies) were 357,550 people (71,510 families).

Our partners: The Lima Regional Representation continues to work with the following partners: the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO), the Latin American School of Social Sciences (Facultad Latinoamericana de Ciencias Sociales – FLACSO), European Commission's Humanitarian Aid department (ECHO), the Andean Committee for the prevention of and attention to disasters (Comité Andino para la prevención y atención ante desastres – CAPRADE), the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (CEPAL/ECLAC), the ProVention Consortium, the Organization of American States (OAS), International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (ISDR), MERCOSUR, Iberoamerican Federation of Ombudsmen, Oxfam and Save the Children Foundation. During the Peru earthquake operation, partnerships with other actors have also been formed, see below for details.

In addition, Movement coordination continues with the four Regional Representations of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and Partner National Societies (PNS) that cooperate, bilaterally or multilaterally, with the ten National Societies of our region, such as American Red Cross, Chinese Red Cross, Finnish Red Cross, French Red Cross, German Red Cross, Italian Red Cross, Netherlands Red Cross, Spanish Red Cross, Swedish Red Cross and Swiss Red Cross.

Current context

Over the past two years general elections have taken place in nearly all countries in South America - Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Ecuador, Peru, Uruguay and Venezuela – confirming the continued democratic tendency across the region with more central-left governments. At the same time, inequity continues being extremely high (highest in the world), social discontent was evident in most countries as the diverse needs of the population and the root problems generating poverty, inequity and exclusion are far from being tackled. Political instability continued at a lesser level in

Bolivia, Ecuador and Venezuela where new political models continue raising strong oppositions and tendencies towards separation in parts of these countries.

In **Colombia**, the re-election of the right-wing government, the continuation of the internal conflict and the humanitarian crisis has marked this period. The situation of Internally Displaced People in Colombia and refugees in neighbouring countries continue to be a major concern for the Red Cross. **Brazil** has also continued representing the paradox of a rich economy with huge potential while being affected by the highest inequity in the region: urban violence has increased and rural poverty levels remain high.

Economic growth in the region has been steady during the period, and for the first time in a long time without the consequences of high international debt. Even so, it has not translated into more equitable and sustainable development. Levels of poverty and inequity (Gini-coefficient) remain extremely high. This combined with limited access to basic services such as health and education, presence of discrimination and violence and the limited protection of human rights means that the challenges are multiple both for the population and governments alike.

Figures for South America show an alarming increase in the number of people affected by disasters from 2001-2007: from a total of 717,345 people affected in 2000, to 4,161,239 people in 2007¹. The analysis shows that hydro-meteorological phenomena cause the worst impact, with increasing evidence of a relationship with climate change. Technological accidents, drought and forest fires also represent high impact levels.

During this period natural disasters occurred in nearly all countries in the region with recurring phenomena such as heavy rains, cold waves and volcanic and seismic activity, showing the clear link between impact and levels of vulnerability. National Societies and their branches responded to these humanitarian emergencies improving the lives of more than 350,000 people affected by immediate assistance, early recovery and rehabilitation actions. The Federation's Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF) was widely used for 15 minor and forgotten emergencies and Regional Intervention Teams were deployed extensively. Three major emergencies in Bolivia, Ecuador and Peru required the launching of International Federation emergency appeals, all covered in a range between 95 percent and 130 percent. The challenge ahead is to continue linking disaster risk reduction to sustainable development in a vulnerability reduction perspective at the community level.

Progress towards objectives

Health and Care

Objective: The National Societies are increasing health-related activities and are mobilizing volunteers, civil society and governments in order to achieve greater equity in health and have a greater impact on public health issues.

Thanks to the integrated work carried out by RR, the RR Health area has worked to support National Society health departments, increasing community health and care interventions in the following areas: community based first aid, promotion of voluntary blood donation, mother and child health, HIV and AIDS, and public health in emergencies.

Achievements: Two diplomas "Health Policies and Management" and "Health Policies and Disasters" contributed to strengthening National Society capacities in public health interventions. These diplomas were organized in partnership with FLACSO and the Pan American Health Organisation (PAHO). The

¹ Emergency Events Database - EMDAT Catholic University of Louvain - OFDA

health network is increasingly taking the lead in developing joint actions between National Societies, and promoting increased integration with other areas.

The promotion of first aid at the community level took place with community risk reduction and communication as part of an integrated approach. Taking advantage of the harmonization of first aid practices and techniques thanks to the handbook "International Harmonization of First Aid", Argentina and Ecuador integrated first aid work at the community level. Linking first aid to road safety issues within National Societies is the next step, as raised in the new Inter-American Plan.

The promotion of voluntary non-remunerated blood donation (VNRBD) within National Societies was scaled up significantly during this period. The Club 25 strategy has been adopted by five National Societies (Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Ecuador and Paraguay) as part of the continental plan to promote VNRBD and healthier lifestyles among young people. Only six months into the initiative, there are now 20 Clubs with more 2,400 young participants. This is done through an integrated approach adopted by National Society health and youth departments, linking this to HIV and AIDS prevention. Regional support has been constant during this process and for National Society participation in the International Colloquium on VNRBD to ensure greater positioning and to exchange experiences. The National Societies of Ecuador and Colombia continued to participate in the Global Advisory Panel (GAP) to improve the management and quality of their blood banks.

The promotion of maternal and child health continued in the National Societies of Bolivia, Colombia, Ecuador, Peru and Venezuela working with rural communities using the Integrated Management of Childhood Illnesses (IMCI) strategy contributing to reducing maternal and child mortality. Over 250 volunteers have been trained in the IMCI methodology strengthening the National Societies' capacities to develop the strategy at the community level in coordination with different social actors networks. Technical support has also been ongoing to the National Societies of Argentina, Bolivia and Paraguay in the implementation of community health interventions in the Chaco region, strengthening local branches and promoting integrated work with indigenous communities, to be complemented by the Community Risk Reduction DIPECHO V project now under way in this region.



Venezuelan Red Cross attending mother and child health needs using the IMCI strategy. Venezuelan Red Cross.

The promotion of HIV and AIDS actions in National Societies through the implementation of the Together We Can methodology has taken place during this period. The National Societies of Chile, Colombia and Paraguay are now reaching 600 young people through peer education and about 3,000 people between parents, friends and teachers, raising awareness of prevention and the fight against stigma related to HIV and AIDS. The International Conference on HIV/AIDS and the IV Latin American Forum on HIV, AIDS and STDs contributed to the consolidation of a regional working group on HIV/AIDS. The Global Alliance on HIV and AIDS will scale up actions in HIV and promote a more integrated approach at the regional level: during 2007 three National Societies from South America joined the alliance. It has to be recalled that the continent will host the annual Conference on HIV and Aids (Mexico).

Strengthened National Society capacities to face public health emergencies were clearly seen during emergency response operations. New skills acquired by National Societies during the FLACSO Health Policies and Disasters diploma were applied using Federation emergency response tools. The health team of the Regional Representation also gave specific support to National Societies to raise awareness and reduce the spread of disease, as during the dengue outbreaks in Bolivia and Paraguay. Particular support was provided to the Peruvian Red Cross (PRC) earthquake operation in

psychosocial support for volunteers and communities. Finally, through regional initiatives, National Societies are now fully aware of the Federation's Continental Contingency Plan for Pandemic Influenza. This is an area where major investment is needed in the next period.

Challenges or Constraints: Strengthening National Society health departments was affected by the high turnover of National Society staff, highlighting the need for integrated OD support. At the same time, while the health network has been strengthened, the full potential of networking and exchanges between and among National Societies has still to be explored.

In the development of integrated community health programmes, the following points have been identified:

- Further harmonization of first aid practices needs to take place, with an integrated community focus involving all areas. The challenge is to link this process to first aid certification processes, which National Societies in the region are committed to.
- The adoption of a major role by National Societies in IMCI in their respective countries has yet to happen. The financial support for this initiative has been discontinued at the regional level, and it is imperative that National Societies approach non-traditional funding sources in order to consolidate and expand their presence in IMCI.
- Water and sanitation continues to require seed investment in order to support building capacities for future scale-up.
- Psychosocial support should be strengthened within National Societies, a task for the recently formed psychosocial support thematic group.
- Despite much work done in the past, there's a crying need to increase actions to reduce stigma and discrimination towards people with HIV and AIDS and to further prevent HIV infection. The opportunities in this domain are represented by intensified support to the National Societies in terms of humanitarian principles and values.

Disaster Risk Reduction

Objectives: National Societies are implementing programmes which contribute to reducing the impact of disasters on the lives and livelihoods of vulnerable people.

During the two year period the programme developed a more focused approach ensuring the integration of disaster response and disaster preparedness and community risk reduction in line with National Societies' needs. Disaster Risk Reduction plans and those of the Pan American Disaster Response Unit (PADRU) were also integrated and linked to ensure coherence.

Achievements: Emergencies in the region during this period have been characterized by floods, cold waves, earthquakes, volcanic activity and fires, showing a dramatic increase in the number and type of emergencies. National Societies in the region are on the frontline of these emergencies and have responded to support those worst affected. With the support of the Federation, National Societies responded with at least 15 response operations assisting 71,510 families (357,550 people) during 2006-2007. For this, a total of CHF 2,194,400 was allocated by the Federation's Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF) while three emergency appeals received a total of CHF 10,9 million launched to support operations in Peru, Bolivia and Ecuador. The support of the Federation was timely in providing logistical, human and financial resources when needed. Regional Intervention Team (RIT) members have been trained across the continent during this period and a total of 26 RITs were deployed to support South American sister National Societies in their operations.

The appeal in Peru constitutes one of the largest operations in the region in recent years. Close Federation support to Peruvian Red Cross has been essential in this operation. At the onset of the emergency, in addition to PADRU, all RR technical areas supported the National Society operation.

During a number of emergencies, coordination with and technical support to PNS has taken place, showing a more dynamic relationship between the RR and Movement actors in carrying out its humanitarian mission. Although there has been a shift towards early recovery and community development within response operations, still work needs to be done to ensure support to vulnerable people in the long-term as well as their immediate needs, integrating disaster response and community risk reduction to ensure National Society community development interventions provide continuity. Vulnerability and Capacity Assessment (VCA) training was also strongly promoted amongst National Societies providing tools to measure risk and vulnerability at the community level.

The integration of PADRU within the RR in Lima since 2006 and until October 2007 contributed to closer relations between National Societies and the Federation Secretariat. The response to disasters with the support of the Federation's response system has improved and PADRU has actively participated in planning processes and training for response. It is hoped that a new PADRU delegate will soon replace the previous one. A number of National Societies have launched planning processes and have shown interest in changing their structures to include an integrated focus, inspired by the Guayaquil commitments. Argentina developed a Plan of Action with an integrated approach, Colombia continues working strongly in risk reduction, and Bolivia and Paraguay are also working on integrated planning processes.

The sustained increase in the number of people affected by disasters in the region reinforces the need to continue working in vulnerability reduction and building response capacities at community level. In this sense, the work carried out by the RR in this period had a strong focus on creating and strengthening the institutional and organizational conditions needed to improve the capacity of National Societies to influence the reduction in vulnerability of local communities.

The development of an integrated approach to community risk reduction is one of the most important commitments that the Federation has made to respond to the Global Agenda goals. An important milestone was the Inter-American Conference in Guayaquil, where this integrated approach was presented and National Societies from the Americas confirmed their commitment adopting a concrete development strategy along these lines.

Significant steps were made to improve technical capacities in community risk reduction. Within the "Reducing Risks: Safer and Better Prepared Communities" initiatives, the learning platform DesAprender was developed aimed at sharing experiences, tools and useful mechanisms to generate knowledge and collective innovation optimizing actions within community risk reduction. Along the same line of knowledge management, a toolkit with over 350 tools on disaster preparedness and risk reduction for National Society technical personnel and for other actors in the field, particularly those NGOs who participate in the implementation of ECHO-DIPECHO plans of action, and carry out activities such as local risk management and disaster preparedness in Argentina, Bolivia, Chile and Paraguay. These actions generated concrete results by improving technical capacities of the larger community of practitioners and of 100 communities in selected countries.

Advocacy has been developed effectively during the period. The development of the set of indicators to improve the measurement and follow-up of the preparation and risk reduction at the local level, and decisions to prioritise vulnerable communities, were well received by the community of practitioners and by strategic partners. In addition, the European Commission adopted the set of indicators developed by the Federation, and the global DIPECHO programme has restructured its lines of action on this basis, showing an important capacity in the region to generate results, impacts and move advocacy processes at the international level.

At the inter-governmental level five governments in the Andean region announced their official support for community risk reduction processes and the Federation tools. The South American Gran Chaco region project (DIPECHO V) sees the Federation acting as a facilitator of the integration of actions between MERCOSUR and the Andean Community of Nations. The participation of the National Societies of Argentina, Bolivia and Paraguay in this experience will allow for them to generate concrete

results in highly vulnerable communities, and increase their participation and advocacy with national governmental systems and regional and international structures. The RR played an important role facilitating the integration of Chile and Paraguay in CAPRADE actions.

Challenges or Constraints:

The following constraints were identified during this period:

- Internal changes within National Societies (staff and organizational) affected continuity of processes and implementation of activities.
- The limited capacity of absorption at national and local levels affected the flow of cooperation resources and suggested precaution in negotiating new sources of funds.
- The structure of most National Societies includes capacities in disaster response and risk reduction within the same department, which creates competition for time and resources, particularly during emergencies.

Challenges identified include:

- Consolidating a *regional multihazard approach to risk and disasters*, promoting specific strategies and actions, to homogenous multinational zones, prioritizing the most vulnerable.
- Strengthening coordination with PADRU after the end of mission of the Disaster Management delegate.
- Accompanying National Societies in harmonizing their plans to the Inter-American Plan, including disaster risk reduction, disaster preparedness and response, and early recovery.
- Developing strategic alliances for risk reduction at community level and advocacy oriented to decision makers at regional, sub-regional, national, and local level.

Organizational Development

Objective: The ten National Societies in the region are increasingly adhering to the criteria of a 'Well Functioning National Society' and are improving their capacity to work with vulnerable communities.

The new and strengthened Organizational Development (OD) area has provided continuous accompaniment and tailor-made support to National Societies in key areas of work during 2006-2007: implementation of planning processes, improved National Society integrity and accountability, resource mobilization and development, focused and independent approaches to youth and volunteering, promotion of knowledge management and increased links with the private sector.

Achievements: Close accompaniment to National Society planning processes during this two-year period took place, going beyond the alignment of strategic plans with the Inter-American plan, promoting the harmonization of all levels of planning. National Societies now recognize the important link between plans - from operational, strategic and the Inter-American Plan - using a top-down/bottom-up approach. This was emphasized in the framework of the implementation guide for the new Inter-American Plan 2007-2011 developed with National Societies of the Americas in November 2007.

The development of the situational analysis of the organizational capacities of the ten National Societies in the region proved to be an essential tool for the OD area and the RR as a whole in 2007. The analysis (updated on a quarterly basis) covers the areas of planning, statutes/integrity, volunteering, and resource mobilization and development. Inspired by tools such as Well Functioning National Societies, it was used as a basic internal tool and its findings have been shared with National Societies on an individual basis. It will continue to be useful in OD support including additional information on National Societies and their contexts.

Finding a solution to the integrity case of the Peruvian Red Cross (PRC) has been a major focus for the OD area and important progress has been made: ensuring the provision of ongoing legal support to the National Society, promotion of peer support from sister National Societies in the region, coordination

with Movement actors present in Peru (ICRC, PNS) and the Inter American Regional Committee (CORI), and ongoing contact with the Peruvian executive and judicial powers. In terms of results, 2007 marked an important year in this process, as the judge decided to change the judicial administrator, and on the judge's request the Federation proposed two candidates, the judge selecting one of them. The Federation also supported the new judicial administrator in the recruitment of a minimum administrative structure. The OD area then supported this new team in the development of a two-year plan for the reconstruction and institutional strengthening of the PRC, which is currently being implemented and will ensure steps towards the full recovery and the election of a new governing board of this National Society.

The earthquake that hit Peru in August 2007 proved to be a major challenge for the PRC, taking into account that the team in place when the earthquake hit had no prior emergency experience. One of the main components of the operation is institutional strengthening, within the framework of the above-mentioned two-year reconstruction plan.

The Peruvian case highlighted the importance of integrity issues in South America. The OD area has identified that most National Societies of our region could potentially face some sort of integrity risks. These risks include external risks (political context, financial issues and public issues) and/or internal risks (leadership, separation of government and management). For this reason and on the basis of National Society demands in the region, the OD area prepared an integrity risk management tool, based on the OD situational analysis and in alignment with the Federation Integrity Policy, in order to implement the preventive measures foreseen in the Federation revised statutes. National Societies who wish will be able to use this practical tool to manage early signs of integrity risk involving all members from governance, to management and volunteers. Some National Societies have adopted specific measures to address potential integrity risks, like the Argentine Red Cross.

Linked to this process, the revision of statutes within National Societies was a priority for the OD area. Major steps have been made towards the revision of statutes of Bolivia, Chile, Colombia, Ecuador, Uruguay and Venezuela. In Peru, the foundations for revision are in place. The value of technical support at the regional level was recognized by National Societies who are now more open to this process. Linking this revision to planning processes is an identified priority to ensure they are done so in an integrated manner within National Societies.

The recruitment of a Youth and Volunteering Officer at the regional level ensured major progress in these two topics from within the OD team. In youth, the first Red Cross Inter-American Youth meeting was organized in Guayaquil, where youth representatives from the three regions prioritized key issues for Red Cross youth in the Americas and whose final recommendations were included in the Inter-American Plan 2007-2011. South American youth representatives met after the Conference to evaluate the South Youth Plan, to link this to the Inter-American youth priorities and discuss ways of improving the youth network. The successful long-distance youth leadership diploma was held throughout 2007 for National Society youth representatives in the Americas. The diploma addressed the diverse issues faced by youth and how to apply this within National Societies. Coordination with the area of Health ensured the effective implementation of Club 25 and Together We Can initiatives.

Support to volunteering within National Societies also took place. Capacity building initiatives such as the online course were organized by the Reference Centre on Volunteering, and members of two National Societies of the region participated (invitation from Spanish Red Cross). During both years, strengthening volunteering in the National Societies of Uruguay and Venezuela took place with support from the Federation Capacity Building Fund (CBF). While the project did not produce all the expected results, the systematization carried out allowed National Societies to identify best practices and develop recommendations such as increased capacity building for volunteers and improved volunteer management systems. At its last network meeting, the volunteering network redefined itself as a support network to National Societies in the development of volunteering and mapped volunteering resources (human and tools) in the region. The proposal to develop a platform for volunteering was approved at this meeting, to improve volunteer management through peer-to-peer support. At joint

sessions with the Disaster Management network meeting, volunteering in emergencies was identified as a topic which needs to be developed within National Societies.

Considering the diverse capacities of National Societies in Resource Mobilization and Development (RMD) in the region, first steps towards their strengthening in this issue involved preparing a study on these capacities and the organisation of a forum on RMD. A second forum, held at the end of 2007 for South American National Societies, clarified fundraising concepts and the diverse experiences were shared. The brand value was discussed and was much appreciated by participants. Other recommendations, like mapping of corporate contacts with National Societies at the national and regional levels, were developed amongst participants, as a starting point to have a closer, coordinated, and structured approach to the corporate sector.

The OD area considers it essential for National Societies to fully understand the difference between RMD and Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) before the latter is developed further. In this sense, CSR was not addressed during this period and remains a topic for future development.

With the support from the OD area, knowledge management has become increasingly important for National Societies in the region. The consultancy carried out on knowledge management in 2006 was useful in identifying strengths and weaknesses of National Societies in this issue. Increasing capacities through knowledge management is the next step. While National Societies have yet to integrate knowledge management into their way of working, the support of the OD area has allowed for the exchange of experiences and identification of best practices. The systematizations of experiences on: cooperation, the functioning of planning and project offices, and the development of branches in the National Societies of Bolivia, Ecuador, Paraguay and Venezuela and the systematization of the regional volunteering project in Uruguay and Venezuela were steps towards this. The OD area is working to promote the incorporation of this learning component in all levels of action.

Colombia

During 2006-7, the new Federation Representative in Colombia provided much needed support for core aspects of organizational development within the Colombian Red Cross Society (CRCS). The most significant accomplishments include: the revision of the CRC's statutes, the identification of major areas of institutional risk (carried out with the CRCS and other Movement actors), the adoption of a new programmatic structure by the CRCS bringing the organization into alignment with the Movement, and the development of a Cooperation Agreement Strategy (CAS) with the CRCS, ICRC and PNS operating in Colombia to ensure effective cooperation between Movement actors in this challenging humanitarian context.

Brazil

During this period specific OD support was provided to the Brazilian Red Cross (BRC) by the Federation Representative and the Organizational Development delegate based in Brazil. This support has been focused on two major areas of work, the resolution of the current financial crisis faced by the BRC and at the same time building internal capacities of the National Society.

Major efforts have been made by the BRC and the Federation to find national and international solutions to the serious financial crisis. During this period, the Secretary General of the Federation appointed a special representative for Brazil to contribute to this process. Partners were identified to support the Operational Alliance in Brazil, to be based on voluntary blood donation through the Club 25 initiative. The implementation of the initiative is on hold until the BRC can recover from its financial crisis, emphasizing the urgent need for the recovery of the National Society. The resolution of this situation remains a major priority for the Federation and the BRC alike.

In parallel to this process, strengthening the BRC has taken place in the following ways: technical support to branches in the development of local operational plans in line with the BRC strategic plan, strengthened and renewed human resources in headquarters including a new Secretary General (dependent on the payment of essential staff salaries), reactivation of the communications department with new human resources and a new plan in place to promote internal and external communications.

Strengthening internal capacities has also been successful in key areas such as work in community health and risk reduction promoting integrated community work. Coordination with the ICRC has continued throughout this period to ensure complementary support to the BRC.

Challenges or Constraints:

Although quite some progress has been achieved by our National Societies, the major challenge is still represented by the urgent need to modernize the structure of the 10 National Societies:

- At the start of 2006, it was expected that a community of OD practitioners from National Societies would be developed. The priority of the new OD team was to know the needs of National Societies before the development of initiatives of this nature.
- The development of leadership capacities in National Societies remains a challenge and a priority in the region.
- In order for volunteering to be strengthened, National Societies need to have integrated volunteer development programmes accompanied by efficient volunteer management processes.
- National Society governing bodies and management in most cases do not fully support the importance of having an area dedicated to RMD.
- The lack of financial support for the presence of the Federation in Colombia led to the forced withdrawal from this country after years of valuable work.
- In Brazil, the solution to the financial crisis is the biggest challenge for the National Society.

Humanitarian Principles and Values

Objective: National Societies are promoting the Fundamental Principles and Humanitarian Values of the Movement both internally and externally.

The humanitarian principles and values objective was refocused in 2007 to contribute to the fourth goal of the Global Agenda: ensuring National Societies are references in Humanitarian Principles and Values; promoting respect for diversity and human dignity, reducing intolerance, discrimination, social exclusion and violence; increasing exchanges between programme areas to ensure Humanitarian Principles and Values is cross-cutting and is strengthening alliances with external actors.

Achievements: With the recruitment of a Humanitarian Principles and Values Officer at the beginning of 2007, concrete steps have been made towards strengthening this area within National Societies and at the regional level. The internal promotion of humanitarian principles and values within National Societies was the first priority, as an essential milestone to this promotion externally.

On the basis of recommendations made by National Societies at the Presidents meeting and technical seminars in 2006, focal points in humanitarian principles and values have been identified by each National Society in South America as a basis to form a network in this area. This way of working has proved to be effective in other technical areas and will contribute to internal and external strengthening through peer-to-peer support. The identification of focal points showed important internal recognition by National Societies of the importance of this area, in great need of development.

This period has also been crucial for building internal awareness of humanitarian principles and values within regional programmes, to incorporate non discriminatory initiatives in key areas such as risk reduction, volunteering, youth, organizational development community health, and HIV and AIDS related stigma. Joint initiatives have been developed using the integrated approach adopted by all areas, further enhancing the cross-cutting nature of this area.

The Inter-American Conference in 2007 proved to be a catalyst in the definition of processes already underway in this area in South America. The new Inter-American Plan 2007-2011 clearly reflects this dual need to strengthen National Societies internally, in order for them to promote humanitarian

principles and values externally. In preparation for the Conference, efforts focused on stimulating the debate amongst National Societies on the humanitarian principles and values thematic document to accompany the new Plan.

To address the change needed internally within National Societies, the area is developing a humanitarian principles and values capacity building kit for National Societies. The kit is being prepared as a training tool for the humanitarian principles and values network in the region, for focal points to train branch members to promote attitude changes both within National Societies and the community, and to facilitate participative analysis and consensus regarding concepts such as discrimination and respect for diversity. This will contribute to the incorporation of these issues in strategic planning processes and to the fundamental change that is needed in the region. Finally, the kit will contribute to the sharing of knowledge in the region, and the development of regional instruments to enhance humanitarian principles and values as a pivot to guarantee quality services to communities.

To further promote learning, a module on humanitarian principles and values will be included in the learning platform DesAprender and will be included in the capacity building kit, with an emphasis on risk management, risk reduction and humanitarian assistance provided to particularly vulnerable people in emergency and disaster situations.

In terms of direct support to external promotion of this area, specific technical support was provided to the Peruvian Red Cross (PRC) response operation to the earthquake, in terms of attention to vulnerable groups such as children, people with disabilities, elderly, pregnant women, and women responsible for infants, African descendants, placing attention on non-discrimination and special needs and capacities.

Finally, building strategic alliances with organizations engaged with the defence of human rights of the most vulnerable people – like the ones being built with the Ibero-American Ombudsman Federation and Save the Children – is an opportunity to develop new ways of working and finding innovative ways of strengthening this area.

Constraints or Challenges: Financial support for this area has been a severe constraint. While RR programme areas such as health, youth, volunteering and OD increasingly recognize the importance of including non discrimination and respect for diversity which could also contribute to the sustainability of actions in this area, increased support at this stage is considered essential.

Creative solutions have been sought by working jointly with programme areas and other regions on initiatives with National Societies. In addition, strategic alliances have been sought with regional actors in order to find new ways of working and to strengthen National Societies in this area. The major challenge at this point is how to ensure sustainability to this strategically important area.

Communications

Objective: National Societies' communications areas have been strengthened to scale up the work in favour of the most vulnerable and to promote the Movement's Fundamental Principles and Values.

The increased need to strengthen National Society communication departments and the parallel demands for communications activities, both external and from programme areas led to the development communications plan for 2006-2007.

Achievements: The focus of the communications area in 2006-2007 has been strengthening National Society communications actions through direct technical support and through regional programme initiatives.

At the National Society level, communication departments were visibly strengthened thanks to ongoing

accompaniment and technical support from this area. An increased number of National Society strategic and operational plans and budgets now include communication actions and budgets. Emergency operation plans also include communications, from small to large-scale operations such as Ecuador, Bolivia and Peru. In the case of Peru, more specific technical support was provided to the newly recruited communication team in the National Society in the face of this large-scale emergency.

The Inter American Communications Network has continued to share experiences, and the area facilitated the evaluation of the Communications Plan of the Americas 2003 -2007 and the evaluation of the previous Inter-American Plan 2003-2007. This prompted an analysis amongst National Societies to refocus of communication actions to fulfilment of the global agenda and the reformulation of the new Communications Plan of the Americas. Specific support was provided to the Ecuadorian Red Cross in carrying out the planned communications actions during the XVIII Inter-American Conference held in Guayaquil.

National Societies have been supported in the use of electronic tools. The web page for Latin America was developed extensively during this period, offering National Societies a space to publish updates and information. Technical advice was made available to National Societies in the development of their websites, and a hosting service was offered by www.cruzroja.org. In addition, thousands of Red Cross volunteers received free electronic email under the www.cruzroja.org domain. The use of FedNet by National Societies was not as extensive as hoped.

At the regional level, the area worked closely with all programmes to develop integrated communication actions in support of National Societies. Active participation in the celebration of key dates and support to National Societies was ensured at events such as World Red Cross Red Crescent Day, International First Aid Day, International Day for Risk Reduction and World AIDS Day amongst others.

Coordination with the ICRC and PNS took place through the development of joint actions, where possible, to ensure optimum support to National Societies in communications actions.

Regional initiatives were been promoted with the health and community risk reduction programmes. With the health area, support to National Society anti-stigma and prevention campaigns in HIV and AIDS and the promotion of Club 25 and Together We Can initiatives has taken place. The dissemination of the community risk reduction toolkit and indicators was effective amongst communicators from National Societies and regional and national actors. The area of communications has also provided support to humanitarian principles and values to ensure the continuity of work in this area in 2006.

One of the driving forces behind achievements in this area during the two-year period has been the internal recognition by National Societies and regional Federation programmes of the importance of communication actions in contributing to the impact and success of Red Cross work.

Challenges or Constraints: The major constraint during this period was the lack of financial support for this area. While communications effectively represents a way of working, at the same time there is a clear need to strengthen communication departments within National Societies. As a result of this situation, on the departure of the Communications Officer it was decided that this position will remain closed. It is anticipated that this could have a serious negative impact as technical support provided to National Societies in the region, to the communications network and that provided to programme areas in the Regional office will not be in place. The challenge at this stage is therefore to identify how to ensure the strengthening of this area in National Societies to support their fulfilment of the strategic lines laid out in the Inter-American Plan and the Framework for Action.

Minor constraints during this period include:

- While developing reporting capacities within National Societies did not take place,

accountability to donors, membership and communities was ensured through reports prepared by the Regional Representation in English and Spanish.

- FedNet is considered useful to National Societies as a source of information; however, it has yet to be an innovative tool for them to share experiences.

Working in partnership

During 2006-2007 a number of initiatives were made to strengthen the position, credibility and visibility of National Societies in South America and the Federation through external alliances and strategic partnerships with academic institutions, donors and humanitarian organizations.

- The existing partnership with the Pan American Health Organisation (PAHO) strengthened programme work including coordinated work in health in emergencies, maternal and child health interventions using the IMCI strategy, the health policies and disasters online course for members of National Societies, and the promotion of voluntary blood donation.
- A partnership with the Latin-American People living with HIV and AIDS Network (REDLA) has contributed to strengthening similar alliances between National Societies and local networks, increasing the impact of common actions in HIV/AIDS activities.
- The ongoing partnership with the Facultad Latinoamericana de Ciencias Sociales - Latin American School of Social Sciences (FLACSO) has led to the successful implementation of three diploma courses (health policies, health in emergencies and youth), strengthening capacities within National Societies.
- The working relationship with the ProVention Consortium and the Organization of American States (OAS) has ensured the fulfilment of common objectives in favour of strengthening communities in the area of community risk reduction.
- As strategic partners of the inter-governmental Andean Committee for the prevention of and attention to disasters (CAPRADE), coordination has taken place in implementing community risk reduction indicators and facilitating the integration of Chile and Paraguay in CAPRADE actions. Work carried out in the Disaster Risk Reduction programme has also contributed to announced support from the five governments in the Andean region for community risk reduction processes and the Federation tools.
- The partnership with European Commission's Humanitarian Aid department's (ECHO) has shown important results, as the DIPECHO programme has adopted the community risk reduction indicators (developed by the disaster management programme within the DIPECHO IV project) and restructured its lines of action on this basis at the global level.
- Steps have been made towards developing a strategic alliance with the Ibero-American Federation of Ombudsmen, active in humanitarian principles and values, to open up possibilities for regional initiatives with National Societies.
- In addition, work is being developed with Save the Children. These alliances are seen as an opportunity for National Societies to increase knowledge and understanding on human rights and place the issue of discrimination and respect for diversity on the public agenda.
- The new MoU with the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (CEPAL/ECLAC) will be signed shortly, which will open opportunities to develop areas of common interest identified earlier this year.

During emergencies, coordination was successful between the Red Cross and government institutions (particularly as Civil Defence), inter-governmental agencies (UN), international cooperation agencies, the private sector, the academic sector and international and national non-governmental organizations (NGOs) contributing to effective emergency operations and the assistance of thousands of people. The earthquake operation in Peru is an example of this, and showed how coordination and cooperation relationships with non-traditional actors (private sector) can contribute to an even greater impact, opening up new possibilities for future collaboration. More than half of the funds obtained for the

operation in Peru come from non-traditional sources.

The Lima RR has encouraged the expansion of partnerships to non-traditional allies, such as the private sector, the more socially responsible private companies and financial institutions, and has closely supported National Societies in this process.

Coordination with Movement actors was constant and effective during this period. The close coordination with the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) has allowed for joint and complementary actions to take place, and led to positive outcomes in Brazil, Colombia and with the integrity case in Peru. Coordination with Participating National Societies (PNS) increased and improved over the past two years, and the various PNS that cooperate bilaterally or multilaterally with the 10 National Societies of our region recognize the added value of the RR in their actions. Additionally, technical support has been provided on request by PNS in the development of national and regional initiatives. The Inter-American Conference in 2007 provided an opportunity to strengthen relationships between Movement actors and focus efforts on the fulfilment of the new Inter-American Plan 2007-2011.

Overall, the Lima RR is increasingly recognized by partners as a facilitator for improved cooperation with National Societies. At the same time the RR is committed to the added value of combined knowledge and capacities by working together with Movement partners. The use of simple tools and mechanisms for coordination of cooperation (such as the tripartite agreements among a National Societies, the ICRC and the Federation, and the inclusion of PNS), the finalization of the Cooperation Agreement Strategy (CAS) processes where appropriate could prove essential in this process.

Contributing to longer-term impact

The Regional Representation in South America continued to support the ten National Societies of the region in their increasing commitment to working with vulnerable communities. It has done so taking advantage of opportunities for innovation in order to support the needed modernization of the National Societies. A few examples mentioned in the short summary presented above:

- **Better context analysis:** the RR has taken an active role in promoting the study of the Americas carried out by the Complutense University of Madrid for the XVIII Inter-American Conference in Guayaquil, as well as consistently providing elements for improved context analysis to Presidents of National Societies.
- **Focus at community level:** the RR support to National Societies is clearly focusing on supporting their efforts to focus their programmes at community level, as clearly reflected in the Guayaquil Inter-American Plan.
- **Focus on Capacity Building:** the RR action is entirely devoted to building capacities in National Societies along the Membership Services of the Federation of the Future.
- **Knowledge management:** the DesAprender learning platform is an open (non exclusively Federation) virtual platform that has great potential to capture best practices and provide an open space for the development practitioners in community risk reduction.
- **Distance learning professional training:** in association with a renowned postgraduate academic institution (FLACSO) three innovative tailored-made postgraduate diploma courses were run, one for health professionals, one for health and DM professionals, and one for youth leaders.
- **Community Disaster Preparedness set of Indicators:** developed in partnership with DIPECHO, responding to a clear need and gap, and were rapidly adopted by that institution as a key basis for all their activities worldwide, thus contributing both to the Hyogo Framework for Action and the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals. This contributes to increased adherence to international standards in DM in the region, by National Societies and other actors (including the active inter-institutional promotion of Sphere etc).

- **Integrity cases intervention:** for the first time in the region, the Federation has taken a very active role in driving the process towards the solution of an integrity case (Peru) and taken important steps towards the identification and solution of integrity risk situations.
- **High levels of integration among programmes:** driven by the integration of activities when National Societies work at community level, the RR has developed a highly integrated approach in its support to National Societies.

Looking ahead

While much has been achieved during the period, and the professional support to member National Societies has improved and become more focused, the challenges of the rapidly changing South American context and its dimensions of vulnerabilities require additional capacities by the Red Cross to face them. It is clear that Movement actors have several unexplored options to improve their common work to deliver the Global Agenda. The new operating model, as defined by the Federation of the Future process, represents both a challenge and an excellent opportunity to increasingly achieve our common mission.

The strategic positioning of the Federation in South America is positive, and there are plenty of opportunities to provide support to real scale-up of humanitarian activities of our membership in the region. As a precondition to this, though, National Societies still need to strengthen their commitment to real modernization (of leadership styles, standards, systems, procedures, staff, structure) in order to comply with stricter international standards; and cooperating National Societies still need to fully commit to the strategic thinking behind the Guayaquil Inter-American Plan.

Within this context, the new Zone team has defined a process to involve the membership (both National Societies from the Americas and National Societies working with the Americas) in jointly defining innovative ways of working together. This includes redefining in a flexible way the best-positioned entity to provide a determined service for actors, in order to maximize our capacities.

The RR for South America will accompany and co-lead the reflection process in support to the membership in our region, and based on the outcomes will define the adjustment of its structures in order to better support the provision of the service to the membership and the New Operating Model in this region.

How we work	
All International Federation assistance seeks to adhere to the Code of Conduct and is committed to the Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Disaster Response (Sphere) in delivering quality and accountable 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	
The International Federation's activities are aligned with its Global Agenda, which sets out four broad goals to meet the Federation's mission to "improve the lives of vulnerable people by mobilizing the power of humanity".	Global Agenda Goals: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduce the numbers of deaths, injuries and impact from disasters. • Reduce the number of deaths, illnesses and impact from diseases and public health emergencies. • Increase local community, civil society and Red Cross Red Crescent capacity to address the most urgent situations of vulnerability. • Reduce intolerance, discrimination and social exclusion and promote respect for diversity and human dignity.
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