

# Report 2006-2007



International Federation  
of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

## Pacific and Papua New Guinea

Appeal No. MAA55001  
1 May 2008

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



Papua New Guinea Red Cross Society dispatched relief items to the province of Oro from its warehouse in Port Moresby in response to Cyclone Guba and the subsequent flooding. The national society responded to the disaster with the support of the Red Cross Red Crescent Movement and other humanitarian actors in the region.

### In brief

#### **Programmes summary:**

Despite the many challenges faced by the regional office and the national societies in the region, progress has been made in all programmes under the Appeal 2006-2007. Under the health and care programme, four national societies joined the Global HIV/AIDS Alliance, including the Cook Islands, the Federated States of Micronesia, Kiribati and Samoa. With support from the regional health delegate, a successful application was made to the Global Fund for the above-mentioned countries which has ensured sustained support in health for the next two years, with the possibility of extending into five years.

In disaster management, the Pacific remains a region where natural disasters are prevalent and civil unrest has increased. Support from the regional office during the last two years includes responding to two major natural disasters: the tsunami in the Solomon Islands in April 2007 and Cyclone Guba in Papua New Guinea in November 2007. Other events during the two years also required a response from the national societies and are outlined further in the context section of this report. Efforts have continued to integrate disaster risk reduction into the traditional fields of disaster response and preparedness.

The regional organizational development programme's focus for the two-year period has been on the continued improvement on governance and leadership development, financial management and volunteer management of the national societies and their communities. The undertaking of two organizational capacity assessments,

supported by the organizational development coordinator and volunteer development officer from the Federation Zone office in Kuala Lumpur, was the single largest task carried out during the two years. The assessments were conducted in Papua New Guinea and the Solomon Islands.

**Financial situation:** The total 2006-2007 budget was CHF 6,638,005 (USD 5.94 million or EUR 4.02 million) of which 65 per cent was covered. Overall expenditure against income for the period was 85 per cent.

**Click on the links below to go directly to the attached financial reports:**

[report 2006](#)

[report 2007](#)

[report 2006/2007](#)

**No. of people we help:** The Federation regional office currently supports 14 national societies and a country delegation in the region.

**Our partners:** The regional office worked with 14 national societies, the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) in two countries, the whole United Nations (UN) family based in Suva and 11 regional organizations.

## Context

Pacific island countries faced a volatile period in 2006-2007 - marked by internal unrest, raised tension and two significant natural disasters in 2007. This has strained the international relationship enjoyed by some of the countries. At the community level, islanders were open in expressing their dissent over the quality of much of their political leadership. This was evident in at least five Pacific island countries.

States of emergency were declared in Fiji, the Southern Highlands province of Papua New Guinea and Tonga as military coups, law and order, governance problems and pro-democracy riots took hold of the countries. The outlook in Fiji following the December 2006 coup is still uncertain, with the interim military government expelling the New Zealand High Commissioner in 2007. Discussions are ongoing between the interim government and the diplomatic corps in Suva. In the Solomon Islands, civil unrest flared up in Honiara following the March 2006 elections. The unrest spiralled out of control, forcing neighbouring countries like Australia, New Zealand and Papua New Guinea to intervene with civil defence forces.

Indeed, poverty, social instability and poor governance have been enduring characteristics of the region's political landscape for many years. Other common features aggravate many countries in the Pacific. Their small size, poor economic diversity, lack of natural resources, and isolation from major trade routes and commercial industries, often leaves them vulnerable to external shocks, extreme weather, disasters and unstable economic forces. As a result, many countries in the Pacific rely on good relationships and aid from former colonial powers and other donors. Such aid can come with requirements for political and/or economic reform.

In 2006, tension was evident between some smaller island countries and major powers in the region, such as Australia and to a lesser degree, New Zealand. Over the year, these tensions materialized in the form of sanction threats against Fiji following the coup, troubled relationships between Papua New Guinea and Australia, and the Solomon Islands' dispute over the Regional Assistance Mission to the Solomon Islands (RAMSI). The incoming labour government in Canberra has heralded the possibility of a fresh start and a new relationship which all sides have greeted with enthusiasm.

In terms of natural disasters, the Pacific faced a tsunami in Solomon Islands, Cyclone Guba in Papua New Guinea, Cyclone Gene in Fiji, droughts in Australia and the northern Pacific as well as flooding in some nations. Papua New Guinea was the most disaster-prone country in the region, enduring a series of volcanic eruptions, earthquakes and floods in different areas. Meanwhile, Pacific island countries on the whole are reportedly regressing on the 2015 Millennium Development Goals (MDG) for:

- HIV/AIDS prevalence;
- ratio of girls to boys in primary education;



Vulnerable communities benefit from regional Red Cross interventions that include integrated disaster risk reduction and preparedness as well as health initiatives.

- access to an improved water source for the urban population; and
- access to improved sanitation for the urban and rural population.

It is projected that the Pacific islands in general will also miss their 2015 MDG targets for under-five and infant mortality rates as well as rural access to an improved water source. Nevertheless, it has to be acknowledged that big variances exist between Pacific countries, with Papua New Guinea delivering the weakest performance.

Red Cross societies in the 12 Pacific states covered by the Appeal reflect the conditions of their country, with most having a low population base and minimal economic development. The structure of these societies tends to be very small, with one or two staff members, and often face difficulties in retaining skilled staff. Although volunteers are readily available in response to a disaster, they are otherwise often absent, making the building of a sustainable skills base within the staff and volunteer community nigh on impossible. This is an issue facing all institutions, not only the Red Cross Red Crescent Movement. Discussions about tactics and what can be done to address the retention of skills is ongoing with governments and donors across the whole Pacific.

Staff turnover in 2006 impaired institutional memory in the regional office and challenged the delivery of programmes. Over the year, the positions of the head of regional office as well as health, disaster management and organizational development were vacant for a period of time. In the case of the health, disaster management and organizational development positions, they remained vacant for as long as six months. In addition, the head of delegation position in Papua New Guinea remained vacant for most of the year, compelling the in-country disaster management delegate to take on the role, diverting attention away from his core responsibilities. In 2007, the situation stabilized somewhat. The heads of the regional office and the country delegation were appointed and the technical delegates were all in place for the whole year. There is need for a replacement for the disaster risk reduction delegate in early 2008.

## Achievement of objectives

### Disaster management

**Overall objective:** Pacific Island communities and vulnerable groups in particular are safer and more resilient to disasters through national societies that are better prepared for effective emergency response and community risk reduction.

**Project objective 1. Capacity building in disaster response:** National societies are able to provide effective response to vulnerable people in times of disasters.

**Project objective 2. Integrated community approach – Disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation:** National societies have carried out programmes that reduce risks in vulnerable groups including a pilot programme for climate change adaptation, which is implemented and later expanded to selected countries

Objectives were amended during the 2006-2007 period due to the evolution of the programme, particularly to reflect a growing emphasis on disaster risk reduction alongside disaster response and preparedness for response.

#### Achievements:

The regional disaster management unit was continually available and approached by national societies for technical support in the areas of disaster response, preparedness, disaster risk reduction and climate change. In-country missions provided the opportunity for training, meetings with government and civil society, and technical assistance for programmes. Funding opportunities were also available from the regional office throughout 2006-2007 for implementation of a wide range of activities.

Media coverage regionally and internationally shows that the Red Cross Red Crescent Movement is seen as a major contributor to disaster response in the Pacific, and the involvement of the Movement within the UN Disaster Management Team and other forums highlights its status in relation to its partners. Emergency response team (ERT) training has been undertaken with staff and volunteers from Samoa, Tuvalu, Tonga and the Solomon Islands and continues to evolve with a review of its content currently underway. The Federation continues to work towards the goal of having dedicated



Disaster preparedness containers in the Solomon Islands. A review of the container programme was carried out by the regional office with technical assistance from the New Zealand Red Cross.

disaster management staff in all Pacific national societies.

The New Zealand Red Cross (NZRC) provided a logistics advisor to the Pacific regional office to review the Pacific container programme and identify the logistic needs of the national societies. It was found that while the container programme is very suitable for some contexts, especially smaller atolls, alternative warehousing arrangements may be more suitable for places such as Papua New Guinea. Many containers around the Pacific require further maintenance, and in some cases, replacement. Restocking of containers has occurred in the Solomon islands, Tonga and Tuvalu, with support from the Japanese and Australian Red Cross societies.

Disaster management was a main operational focus of the organizational capacity assessment process for the Papua New Guinea Red Cross Society (PNGRCS) – including a separate assessment using the “characteristics of a well-prepared national society” methodology that was carried out in August 2006. The disaster management plans and standard operating procedures were revised as a result of this work. The PNGRCS benefited from the Pacific-wide communication system made available to the Red Cross Red Crescent Movement by the New Zealand Red Cross Society. In 2007, new disaster management staff members were employed by the PNGRCS and have been sent on several regional training courses. The Pacific-wide review of the container programme (reported elsewhere in this section) included the PNGRCS. One of the findings include the possibility of engaging the commercial sector in having stocks ready for immediate deployment more assertively in the future.

In 2007, rapid response<sup>1</sup> by national societies was demonstrated in the Solomon Islands tsunami in April, the flooding as a result of Cyclone Guba in Papua New Guinea in November and Cyclone Daman in December in Fiji. Tuvalu Red Cross responded to the flooding of houses caused by a high sea level event in the capital Funafuti only weeks after an emergency response team was formed. The Tuvalu Red Cross (in formation) has demonstrated that it is possible for even the smallest of national societies to work across the spectrum of disaster risk management, from response, preparedness for response and recovery to climate change and broader risk reduction activities such as vulnerability and capacity assessments (VCA), tree planting along coastal areas and awareness campaigns.

The Asia Foundation and Overseas Foreign Development Assistance (TAFOFDA) funding partnership continued with initial damage assessments and an introduction to disaster management training conducted in Samoa, Fiji, Tonga and the Cook Islands for their respective national societies. This increased collaboration between government agencies and national societies which in turn, enabled a shared discussion and understanding of disaster assessment. UNICEF convened a meeting on information in emergencies, drawing on lessons learnt from the Solomon Islands tsunami earlier in the year. A focus on information before (baseline data), during (assessments) and after (monitoring and evaluation) a disaster, was worked on by participants using a series of simulations which were created by the partner organizations such as UNOCHA, the Federation and TAFOFDA. Up to nine countries attended the workshop which addressed different sectors such as statistics, health and disaster management. Eight national societies attended the meeting in November. Countries have created action plans for information management and will be assisted by the Pacific Disaster Net as a central housing point.

The largest event for the Pacific Red Cross disaster management programme each year is the disaster management forum. It involves all 15 Pacific national societies as well as numerous regional organisations such as SOPAC, UNDP and the University of the South Pacific. Since 2006, the disaster management forum has evolved from a sit-down meeting into a simulation and training event which aims to reach different people within the Pacific societies. The forum in 2007 aimed to bring in branch-level staff and volunteers to provide them training in elements of disaster response and disaster risk reduction, and provided participants with the opportunity to be exposed to the variety of programmes undertaken by different national societies as well as to benefit from technical assistance available.

**Tuvalu: A Success Story**

The fourth smallest country in the world, Tuvalu consists of four reef islands and five atolls, lying midway between Australia and Hawaii in the Pacific Ocean. Despite the country's ten square miles in size with a population of approximately 12,000 people, the geographical vulnerabilities of the country and its communities are not overlooked by the International Federation's regional office in the Pacific.

With a national society in formation, the regional disaster management coordinator and disaster risk reduction officer conducted relevant trainings that contributed towards the Tuvalu Red Cross's (in formation) quick and successful response to a small tsunami and subsequent flooding that hit the country weeks after the workshops.

To date, the Tuvalu Red Cross has volunteers on all islands and has conducted numerous other trainings for its volunteers, including first aid and disaster response, with the support of the Federation's regional office. The national society also has a container as part of disaster preparedness and rapid response, and is working closely with government and aid agencies on climate change.

<sup>1</sup> For detailed reports in response activities to the disasters, please click on the following links:  
Solomon Islands Red Cross Society and Federation response to a local tsunami – [Operations Update no. 6](#);  
Papua New Guinea Red Cross Society and Federation response to Cyclone Guba – [Operations Update no. 3](#);  
Fiji Red Cross Society response to Cyclone Daman – [Information Bulletin no. 1](#)

Topics presented and worked on during the forums included public health in emergencies, climate change, disaster risk reduction, VCA, safer access, emergency communications, media and Federation response in emergencies.

Participant feedback highlighted communications as one of the most important elements in disaster management, with plans to address this issue by holding regular simulation exercises and practise using communications equipment. It was also useful for some branch-level staff and volunteers to be put in the shoes of the headquarters staff - this gave them a much better sense of the pressure associated with both sides.

The Federation, the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UNOCHA), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the Pacific Islands Applied Geoscience Commission (SOPAC) collaborated to set up a database for disaster risk management information in the Pacific. The web-based portal, in its final stages of development, can be accessed at [www.pacificdisaster.net](http://www.pacificdisaster.net). Presentations and updates on the Pacific Disaster Net were given at both disaster management forums and all emergency management core group (EMCG) meetings. The Federation's relevant information has been catalogued and placed on the database. It is hoped that once the national information is also uploaded, the tool will become very useful for sharing information and avoiding duplication in Pacific countries.

In total, four emergency management core group meetings took place in 2006 and 2007 with the national societies in the region. The ICRC and the French Red Cross began attending the meetings in September 2007. The emergency management core group meetings continue its function as an effective coordination platform, particularly as the number and scale of national societies working in the Pacific grows. There is a large amount of capacity in the Pacific Red Cross and it is through a spirit of cooperation and information-sharing, that work towards common goals can take place. The pooling of resources also avoids duplication and increases the overall support available.

The Pacific Red Cross Red Crescent Movement has contributed strongly to the implementation of the Pacific disaster risk management and climate change frameworks for action. The five pillars of the Hyogo Framework for Action have been promoted through training and implementation of risk reduction programmes, particularly focusing on schools given that the disaster reduction theme for 2006 and 2007 was 'disaster reduction begins at school'. National societies have been encouraged to get involved with disaster reduction and World Environment Day activities in both 2006 and 2007, with many organizing activities such as poster competitions, school and radio programmes, simulation exercises, drama and promotional events, often in conjunction with government and civil society with an emphasis on networks and partnerships. One of the lessons that have been expressed by national societies is that new networks and improved partnerships can provide an opportunity to disseminate the Movement's principles, leading to a better understanding of the roles of national societies within their countries.

Vulnerabilities and capacities assessment training conducted in Suva in August 2006 has assisted in the implementation of VCAs undertaken by the Cook Islands, the Solomon Islands, Tuvalu and Samoa Red Cross Societies. Samoa Red Cross climate change volunteers continued to work with four particularly vulnerable communities in the capital Apia in 2006-2007. As part of ongoing risk reduction work, the Samoa Red Cross advocated for these groups with government authorities and this resulted in the delivery of essential services. The Cook Islands Red Cross has significantly taken VCA forward with the production of a VCA tool box and tool box tips that have subsequently been used in training at the 2007 disaster management forum and by the Samoa Red Cross.

The Samoa Red Cross was very active in 2006-2007, producing two documentaries that was aired on national television and which was aimed at raising public awareness of climate change and disaster preparedness. The society also conducted a poster competition, scaled up its integrated community programmes and incorporated climate change into a very effective youth drama.

A 'web of life' exercise was utilized by the disaster risk reduction (DRR) delegate during the 2007 disaster management forum and in disaster risk reduction training. This game emphasizes that there are many factors that influence disaster risk and that the hazard alone is not the only cause of disaster. Population movements to national capitals in the Pacific are resulting in people being forced to live in particularly vulnerable areas that are prone to flooding for instance. Environmental degradation such as deforestation is also a growing factor in contributing to the severity of floods in the region. In line with the aims of the Hyogo Framework for Action, the DRR delegate has made an effort to highlight these linkages when training national society staff, with community risk reduction programmes being developed as a result.

Knowledge of climate change, the humanitarian implications of it and the encouragement of climate risk reduction in the region throughout this period, has increased through a number of mediums. This has included regular updates at emergency management core group meetings, training at the disaster management forums, projects with Tuvalu, Samoa, the Solomon Islands, Kiribati, Tonga and the Cook Islands Red Cross and liaisons with the Australian, French and New Zealand Red Cross Societies. Newsletter updates have included progress reports on the preparedness for climate change programme and have been posted on the Red Cross Red Crescent Climate Centre [website](#). In

addition, the humanitarian implications of climate change have been highlighted at regional forums, and two case studies have been produced and published for distribution. The Red Cross Movement from the Pacific was represented by six people who attended the Red Cross Red Crescent Climate Centre's *Humanitarian Implications of Climate Change* conference in the Netherlands in June 2007. They provided valuable input into the production of the Red Cross Red Crescent climate guide which was released at the November international conference.

Involvement with the Fiji School of Medicine (FSM) in the climate change adaptation to protect human health pilot project in Fiji, has increased the Pacific Red Cross' understanding of the interactions between climate and health, particularly in relation to water stress. An associate professor at FSM and the DRR delegate published a paper on climate change, health and the Red Cross Red Crescent Movement<sup>2</sup> in a Pacific medical journal in 2007. Knowledge of the impact of climate change and health are still very low and the aim of this paper was to increase awareness among health professionals in the Pacific islands.

The Pacific climate change and disaster risk reduction programme has emphasized the need for the two sectors to work together regionally and nationally in the Pacific. One example of this coming to fruition is via a successful bid in 2007 for a ProVention Consortium research and action grant that will be implemented in collaboration with the Worldwide Fund for Nature (WWF) South Pacific, the University of the South Pacific and Fiji Red Cross who will be acting as mentors. The grant aims to produce a tool that addresses growing climate risk in the Pacific region through the promotion of low cost risk reduction measures.

Another example of collaboration between partners and sectors was the implementation of the Pacific Communities and Climate Forum convened by the Federation regional office. Funding was sourced from the Red Cross/Red Crescent Climate Centre, UNDP and WWF South Pacific. The forum was held over two days for civil society practitioners from around the Pacific. The aim of the forum was to enhance work with communities in Pacific Island countries to reduce the impact of current and future climate, by exposing people who work with communities to the latest climate information-sharing. Other aims included growing ideas for community-based activities in the Pacific Islands region and allowing people from disaster management, health, climate change and environment sectors to identify opportunities for partnership and information sharing

### **Constraints and challenges:**

The regional office's disaster management programme faces the challenge of addressing situations such as the following: insufficient funding to implement projects, and understaffing during the implementation of planned initiatives due to the unique geography and number of countries in the region, and therefore, facing difficulty in prioritizing efforts and responding effectively, The issue of prioritization is made even more evident when disasters occur and plans are subsequently affected. Also, staff turnover in the national society is a challenge and institutional memory can be lost.

In addition, despite global attention given to the issue of climate change, there remains insufficient emphasis on climate risk reduction on the ground. Overall, disaster risk reduction and the lives saved as a result of it remain overlooked, with funding and media coverage focussed mainly on post-disaster operations.

### **Best practices and lessons learned:**

Due to the unique geography of the Pacific region, it is essential that the national societies, with the support of the Federation, work in close partnership (including knowledge sharing and lessons learnt), to minimize duplication and increase the impact of the Red Cross Red Crescent Movement's actions in the region. This includes addressing issues such as disaster risk reduction and climate change, where the Movement can provide a credible voice in focusing attention on the humanitarian implications. Furthermore, Red Cross volunteers, especially youth, can play a very important role in DRR activities, particularly by conveying messages creatively through drama, song and art work.

The radio is an effective means of reaching many of the more remote areas of the countries, and linkages between environmental degradation and disaster have been highlighted and incorporated into messages given out on community radio programmes. For example, in its youth drama programme for communities, the Samoan Red Cross includes the message to 'cut down one tree, plant another' and advises people not to clear steep slopes. Tuvalu Red Cross volunteers were involved in tree replanting along the foreshores in Funafuti, in an effort to reduce erosion.

In addition, small, manageable amounts of money, while challenging on an administrative level, was found to be more effective for some of the smaller national societies in the region to successfully carry out their projects.

Also, in order for the Federation's support to be effective in such a vast and challenging region, two delegates are needed to cover the full spectrum of disaster risk management, from preparedness for response, recovery, mitigation, development and adaptation to climate change.

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<sup>2</sup> Click [here](#) to access publication.

## Health and care

**Overall goal:** Health status of Pacific communities has improved through contributions from the Red Cross in the region, enhancing community and individual capacities to lead an informed, socially useful and productive life.

**Programme objective:** Pacific national societies have addressed community health needs through effective and sustainable health programmes, including during disasters and emergencies.

The programme objective was modified in 2007 by combining the two original health objectives of the 2006-07 appeal in order to achieve greater focus for the regional health unit, in its support to the Pacific national societies while moving towards a programme-based approach.

### Achievements:

#### Expected results

- National societies are able to assess and identify health priorities/ target groups in the community through community health assessments.
- Communities have received quality health promotion activities from national societies, which are linked with water and sanitation as well as sustainable commercial first aid that meets the Pacific's quality standards.
- National societies are better prepared to respond to community health needs during emergencies.
- National societies have effectively managed HIV interventions on prevention, care and support, including anti-stigma and discrimination as well as safe blood provision through voluntary, non-remunerated blood donor recruitment.
- National societies have built effective linkages with other relevant partners both within and outside the Movement through regular networking and cooperation.

#### *HIV and voluntary non-remunerated blood donor recruitment (VNRBDR)*

Five Pacific national societies joined the Global HIV alliance with the aim of scaling up their respective HIV intervention in the coming years. These include the national societies of Kiribati, Fiji, Samoa, FSM and the Cook Islands. The regional health delegate, as a member of the Pacific Regional Country Coordination Mechanism (CCM) for the Global Fund, submitted a long-term proposal on behalf of four national societies for the round 7 funding for 2008-2013. The regional office's proposal formed part of a successful Pacific bid to the Global Fund and the regional office was awarded USD 2 million (approximately CHF 1.79 million) over the next five years, starting July 2008. These funds will be used to scale up HIV activities while supporting capacity building efforts in these national societies, including the setting up of robust monitoring, evaluation and reporting systems.

The regional office supported national society efforts in scaling up their respective voluntary non-remunerated blood donor recruitment (VNRBDR) interventions as part of HIV prevention efforts. Four national societies, namely Fiji, Samoa, the Solomon Islands and Kiribati, conducted VNRBD training for their staff and volunteers, facilitated by the regional health unit. The Regional health delegate worked with WHO on developing a VNRBD training curriculum for Pacific countries. These simplified training materials were well received by the national societies. All national societies in the Pacific were supported in conducting World Blood Donor Day celebrations on 14 June each year. Most national societies conducted mass awareness campaigns aimed at targeting youth donors in their countries, in partnership with their respective governments. In addition, regular contact has been established with the Pacific Islands AIDS Foundation which will hopefully lead to a coordination of efforts and minimize duplication.

HIV/AIDS work in PNGRCS was restructured in 2006 with the support of a bilateral delegate from the Australian Red Cross Society.

#### *First Aid*

The Federation Pacific regional office, along with the New Zealand Red Cross Society, continued to support First Aid activities in the region. A Pacific national society emergency care first aid manual was developed to complement the Pacific first aid course curriculum. The increase in the number of first aid instructors in the national societies of Fiji, the Solomon Islands, the Federated States of Micronesia, Samoa, Vanuatu and the Cook Islands have enabled them to sustain and expand their commercial First Aid activities which have also brought in additional revenue.



VNRBDR training for Kiribati Red Cross Society and central blood bank staff, led by regional health delegate and representative from the World Health Organization.

The PNGRCS continued to work on the health programme in 2006, with the support of the Federation's country and regional offices. First aid training, both commercial and aimed at communities who need and requested for assistance in developing these skills, was undertaken in several of the key regions of Papua New Guinea.

#### *Public health in emergencies (PHiE)*

In the last two years, the regional health delegate worked with the regional disaster management unit to identify health and disaster management-integrated activities. The health delegate facilitated a session on health in emergencies for the Pacific emergency response team training in 2007, the first time health was included in ERT training. With the success of this endeavour, it was decided to expand the time and scope of PHiE elements including avian and human influenza, in subsequent RDRT trainings scheduled for 2008.

#### *Regional health meeting*

The second regional health meeting was organized by the regional health unit in August 2007 and was attended by senior representatives from 13 national societies in the region. During the three-day meet, discussions touched on various health areas including HIV, voluntary non-remunerated blood donor recruitment (VNRBDR), pandemic influenza, chronic diseases, community-based First Aid, public health in emergencies (PHiE) and finance management. The meeting provided an occasion for Pacific national societies to share information about their health interventions. The meeting also provided the regional office with input from the national societies for developing the health plan for 2008-09 Appeal, and all agreed to form a regional health committee that shall oversee the health programming in the Pacific<sup>3</sup>.

#### **Constraints and challenges:**

The major constraint faced was the lack of adequate funding for the health programme in the Appeal. This had a major impact on the kind of support the regional health delegate could provide to the national societies, particularly in relation to conducting country visits. This constraint was minimized to an extent by focusing regional support on a restricted number of national societies in South Pacific region, particularly in Kiribati, the Cook Islands and Papua New Guinea.

#### **Best practices and lessons learned:**

A major achievement for the regional office was the successful bid for the Global Fund round 7 funding cycle. The Federation's prominent membership of the regional CCM and its successful partnership with the Secretariat of the Pacific Community resulted in the Federation's regional HIV proposal being awarded a USD 2 million grant for the next five years starting from July 2008. This will go a long way in scaling up national societies' response to HIV as envisaged in the HIV Global Alliance.

The Federation regional office has the potential to raise funding for health interventions in the national societies through partnerships with strategic partners in the region, particularly because the resources in the Pacific are mainly available at the regional level, with most institutional donors and other stakeholders having offices in Suva.

## Capacity development

**Goal:** Well-functioning national societies are better able to carry out their mission effectively, providing relevant services to vulnerable people.

The overall organizational development priorities established by national societies within the Pacific region are governance, financial management and volunteer management. These priorities informed and guided the regional programme during this two-year appeal period.

In the governance arena, a pool of national society governance trainers was formed through a training of trainers' course in late 2005. These trainers have since assisted not only their own society, but also neighbouring boards through the provision of governance training. In the area of volunteer management, a 14-point checklist, *The Pacific Minimum Standards for Volunteer Management*, has provided a baseline for volunteer management in the region.

The financial management project has seen improvements in three of the national societies that it was designed to assist. One is yet to show major improvements and one did not receive the anticipated assistance due to external political events. Regional changes have also been noted. The establishment of a finance core group, comprising national society finance representatives, saw the development of several tools moulded to Pacific needs. This includes the *Pacific Standard Terms of Reference* for external audits and *Pacific financial management indicators and minimum standards*.

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<sup>3</sup> For details and outcomes of the meeting, please click [here](#).

**Objective:** National societies have strengthened programme delivery to communities as a result of organizational development and capacity building initiatives.

### **Governance and management**

National societies have improved their standards of governance and management, and support one another's development towards these standards.

In 2006, the Papua New Guinea Red Cross Society (PNGRCS) was focused on the internal assessment and subsequent restructuring of the national society by using the organizational capacity assessment (OCA) tool. The OCA was a detailed process which affected every level of the organization and involved significant travel to branches. It was led by the PNGRC and the Federation, and supported by the Australian Red Cross Society and the ICRC. The culmination of the year-long process was a Cooperation Agreement Strategy for the national society, allowing the PNGRCS to take greater control and ownership of its partnerships. Information was also generated as part of this process on the way external support can be best supplied to the national society to meet the needs of affected communities through its branches. The biggest single event of the two years for the PNGRCS occurred in December 2007, when the governing board of PNGRC appointed a new secretary-general.

The Fiji Red Cross Society (FRCS) and the Vanuatu Red Cross Society (VRCS) have completed a process of revising their respective statutes. Three other societies have initiated a review process: Kiribati Red Cross Society (KRCS) has completed draft statutes; Samoa Red Cross Society (SRCS) has begun the drafting process; and Tonga Red Cross Society (TRCS) has held preliminary discussions on the revision of their statutes.

The FRCS and VRCS also created new strategic plans during this appeal period while the PNGRCS undertook an extensive mid-period review. The KRCS made minor amendments to their strategic plan and intend to institute a new process in the coming year, and the Cook Islands Red Cross Society (CIRCS) has made good progress towards the establishment of a new strategic plan for their society.

National society trainers, particularly in 2006, provided governance training to the board members of their respective societies and other national societies. This has been a highly successful programme, with some governance training recipients becoming more active within their national society. In Samoa, the governance trainer went on to lead a team in the drafting of the SRCS' constitution. In the CIRCS, the trainer provided training to the branch committees, while the trainer from Palau has provided governance training in the Federated States of Micronesia. Not only has knowledge of governance among board members been enhanced, trainers have increased confidence, improved skill sets and provided more opportunities for them to work across projects and countries. Although the Solomon Islands Red Cross Society (SIRCS) and VRCS governance trainers provided training for their boards and branches, these trainers have since moved out of the area and are no longer available to their society. Should funding permit, a formal evaluation of the training will be undertaken prior to establishing the most appropriate option to continue, with further enhancement of governance development within the region.

The finance development project initiated in June 2006 resulted in several significant changes in the financial management systems of targeted national societies and coherence through agreed minimum standards for the Pacific. Five national societies were identified for assistance, a regional plan was devised and accounting software was purchased for these societies.

With updated software and training, the SIRCS and Palau Red Cross Society (PRCS) now join other Pacific national societies in the effective management of their finances and the production of high quality financial reports. The SIRCS has implemented numerous procedural improvements and summarized these into a draft procedural manual. This manual is due for consideration by the SIRCS Board. Additionally, the SIRCS finance officer now provides training on best practices in financial management to other staff members and branches.

The Samoa Red Cross is making progress towards the achievement of its finance development plan. In the initial stages of the regional finance project, there were challenges due to the high demands on the time of finance personnel, with the finance officer out of the country for some time. However, since the finance officer's return and the provision of financial skills training for several office staff, these challenges have been overcome.

The KRCS continues to seek improvements to its financial management. Financial systems have been reviewed and all staff and board members trained in the new financial procedures which include systems to deal with the lack of reconciliation and reporting, record keeping, staff performance and asset management. The resignation of the finance officer in mid-2007 was a setback, and a recent audit report has highlighted future challenges for the society. Following the audit, a new treasurer has been appointed as a step in the society's commitment to the improvement of their financial management.

Three of the five societies targeted for assistance through the regional finance project currently have in-country mentoring available to them. The SIRCS, assisted by the Australia Red Cross Society, has established a mentoring arrangement for its finance officer with PricewaterhouseCoopers, while the SRCS and KRCS have Australian Youth volunteers mentoring their societies, particularly in the area of finance development and fundraising.

The Pacific standard terms of reference developed for external audits during the 2006 Pacific finance 'think-tank' gathering, was used by the KRCS for the external audit of its 2006 finances. This audit was one of 11 undertaken by the 11 direct beneficiary national societies of the Pacific during this appeal period, as these societies move towards low risk and transparent financial management practices.

The CIRCS and the FRCS undertook fundraising training during the reporting period. The CIRCS has yet to utilize their training but is satisfied with the new knowledge gained, and both societies continue to receive support from the trainer as requested. The FRCS had disappointing outcomes in fundraising for the 2008 financial year and intends to review their methodology in the coming year.

Targeted national societies now have more efficient human resource systems. The FRCS and the SIRCS have drafted human resource procedures and manuals, and the FRCS has written job descriptions for all staff.

In January, two national society staff members from this region and regional organizational development personnel attended a finance development forum in Kuala Lumpur. The purpose of this forum was to identify strategies and solutions to strengthen approaches to finance development and thereby maximise the impact on the vulnerable. This forum allowed societies from the Asia Pacific region to share challenges and mechanisms for addressing them, while providing valuable opportunity for finance officers within national societies to establish relationships for ongoing support throughout the region.

Regional support networks are slowly being established. The FRCS, the Micronesia Red Cross Society (MRCS), the KRCS and the SIRCS joined the Australia Red Cross Society (ARCS) and the New Zealand Red Cross Society (NZRCS), in sharing their experiences and ideas through their respective society's newsletter.

In addition, representatives from around the Pacific joined together in the finance development 'think tank' gathering in 2006. The 'think tank' designed a set of easy to understand minimum standards for financial management for the Pacific environment. The 'think tank' also produced a standard chart of accounts and a step-by-step guide for implementing the minimum standards. Three national societies have now implemented the new chart of accounts with minor adjustments. The 'think tank' was an important networking experience for finance officers, enabling them to feel less alone in their responsibilities.

Staff from the national societies of the Cook Islands, Palau, the Solomon Islands, Tonga and Tuvalu attended an international conference on climate change. This conference was designed to assist societies to integrate risk reduction into their planning and programmes, discuss common issues and work towards the development of a 'tool kit' of guidance and experiences, for use by all national societies.

Representatives from FRCS and the CIRCS attended a *volunteers in emergency* workshop at which a new volunteer-in-emergency cycle was discussed and recommended for further work and adoption.

Board members from FRCS travelled to Samoa in late 2007, to assist the SRCS with the reactivation of its branch and share ideas and knowledge.

### **Integrated capacity building**

Capacity building initiatives integrated with health and disaster management programmes have enabled the Red Cross Red Crescent to be more effective at the community level.

National societies continue to enhance the effective management of their disaster management and health volunteers. At the close of this appeal period, six societies (the Cook Islands, Fiji, Kiribati, Micronesia, Palau and the Solomon Islands) hold records of volunteers ready and able to respond to identified needs, while the FRCS, SIRCS and PNGRCS have all experienced an increase in their volunteer numbers. The latter is most often a result of raised awareness and increasing interest during and following a disaster.

During the SIRCS tsunami emergency response, TRCS sent a delegate to assist and build capacity in the Solomon Islands.

In the early part of 2006, the Pacific minimum standards for volunteer management were developed. Aspects of these standards have been implemented with the support of the Federation's regional office by five national societies (Tonga, Tuvalu, Micronesia, Palau and Samoa). This 14-point checklist has provided a standard for national societies

of any size, to aim to achieve. Through its use, a baseline was established and national societies can monitor their progress over time through re-assessment against the checklist. This was supported by volunteer management training at regional meetings.

Five national societies in the Pacific have youth focal points (Cook Islands, Fiji, Kiribati, Tonga and Vanuatu) and two of these have further developed their youth programmes. FRCS has established a youth commission following working with a youth consultant to develop a youth policy that has been disseminated, and a training module developed and implemented. SRCS and KRCS have particularly committed and enthusiastic involvement from their youth volunteers.

Among other developments, the FRCS has established divisional service centres (DSC) as a way of focusing support on branches and target groups. The two DSC coordinators have been trained in major programme and operational areas and are positioned to advise and support branches through the delivery of training to branch members, volunteers and the wider community. FRCS branches prepare and present action plans to their national office annually. An evaluation of the FRCS change process and adoption of a DSC model has been undertaken. The preliminary findings of this evaluation are that although all activities agreed have been achieved, the expected outcomes of change management underpinning the process have not been fully met.

The KRCS implemented the second part of a three year capacity building and disaster management programme. While the KRCS has raised its profile through successful programme implementation, challenges in systems and human resource management continue to slow its progress. However, a self-assessment conducted by the board in August 2007 established that the society is making some progress.



The Asia Pacific Zone volunteering in emergencies delegate provided support to the regional office in conducting an evaluation of the Fiji Red Cross change process, including interviewing headquarters and branch staff, members and volunteers.

### Constraints

During this reporting period, the regional office as well as the Federation country delegation in Papua New Guinea faced human resource challenges which impacted the organizational development programme, as well as the PNGRCS and Federation offices overall. The coup in Fiji in December 2006 forced the regional finance officer to evacuate from the country – he was unable to return to the delegation until March 2007. The incumbent organizational development delegate left his position in October 2006 and was replaced by a newcomer to the Red Cross Red Crescent Movement in January 2007. Following this, the head of the regional office for the Pacific and the acting head of the delegation in Papua New Guinea left the Pacific, leaving the organizational delegate to assume these roles until late April and mid-May respectively.

The human resources situation improved somewhat in 2007, when the Federation was able (after almost 12 months) to fill the position of the head of the country delegation in Papua New Guinea, although not that of the disaster management delegate. The turnover of staff in the PNGRCS remains an area of difficulty but the society is not alone – this is a problem facing all national institutions across the Pacific, such as governmental agencies.

The organizational development programme has experienced funding uncertainty during this appeal period. This uncertainty has had several effects: firstly, larger events such as a governance training event has been postponed until a more secure financial position is achieved; secondly, no attempt has been made to replace the finance development officer; and thirdly, activities designed to enhance skill sharing between national societies, such as a finance core group meeting and a meeting of governance trainers, have been postponed.

## Implementation and coordination

### Coordination, cooperation and strategic partnerships

One of the biggest influences during the period was the Red Cross Red Crescent General Assembly and international conference held toward the end of 2007. The General Assembly confirmed that the directions which the Pacific national societies have been taking in risk reduction due to climate change are appropriate. The niche identified by the Federation's regional office in the Pacific and enjoyed by the national societies in the context of climate change and in interacting with vulnerable communities, governments and regional organizations, has been embraced by the whole Federation. All 14 of the Pacific national societies made a joint commitment and are working toward the next international conference with a view to ensuring much wider government attendance and commitment. The pledge gives a direction to the work and an opportunity to engage with governments in the coming four years.

Regional partnerships continued to be strengthened in 2006-2007. Taking a lead from the Federation document, *Learning from the nineties*, which pointed out that one of the missed opportunities was forming better global partnerships, the view has been taken that non-traditional partnerships can provide an opportunity for dissemination and better understanding of Movement principles and roles. Partnerships in technical areas have been reported within the technical sections, but in summary, the Federation's regional office and the Papua New Guinea delegation partnership with the 11 regional organizations are present and active within the region. These organizations are owned by the Pacific governments and are directed by them, with each organization possessing slightly different memberships according to the mandates. These organizations include the Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC), the Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP), the South Pacific Applied Geoscience Commission (SOPAC), the Forum Fisheries Agency (FFA), the University of the South Pacific (USP) and the Fiji School of Medicine (FSM).

The Netherlands Red Cross Climate Centre has been an invaluable partner, lending to the regional office a technical credibility which has benefited all Red Cross Red Crescent actors in the Pacific.

Throughout the last two years, a host of different approaches have been employed in delivering services and coordination to the national societies in the region. There remain issues of effective coordination – evidenced by the two major disaster responses during the period. Uncoordinated actions do not make effective use of available resources and the wider Pacific community expects the Red Cross Red Crescent to work in an efficient and coordinated manner. During the two years, attempts have been made to work in a coordinated way with external actors – notably governments and larger non-governmental organizations. Within the Movement, attempts have been made using joint training modules, sharing of staff and exchange visits to develop a flexible operating model. These are some of the steps taken by the regional office to help maximize the use of Red Cross Red Crescent capacities at the regional level.

By engaging regional bodies with the numerous UN organizations, attempts have been made to reinforce the value in regional networks and structures in setting regional programming priorities, developing and sharing resources, and responding quickly to needs at local and regional levels.

### **Management of the regional office**

During the two years under review, the management of the country and regional offices has not been easy. There were difficulties (reported earlier) in filling the two Federation positions in Papua New Guinea. The Federation has an obligation to the PNGRCS to provide a disaster management delegate and a head of delegation. This has not proved to be possible. In 2008, hard discussions are needed between the PNGRCS, the Federation, and the Australian and New Zealand Red Cross Societies as well as the ICRC, in order to make a workable partnership plan. Additionally, funding has been a consistently difficult area.

The regional office in Suva underwent a difficult 2006 but saw improvements in human resources in 2007. The year 2006 saw a huge turnover of staff with all delegates changed, including the head of regional office, the health delegate, the disaster management delegate, the disaster risk reduction delegate and the financial management volunteer delegate. By mid-2006, the first aid delegate position ceased and the delegate left. In 2007, a new head of regional office was recruited while the disaster risk reduction delegate who ended her mission at the end of the year, will be replaced in 2008.

Funding was reasonably consistent during the two year period – the big piece of news affecting 2008 and onwards was the successful application for a multi-year and multi-country grant from the Global Fund for the health (HIV/AIDS) programme.

During the reporting period, the regional office has attempted to implement a Pacific plan of action – a set of regionally agreed directions as agreed by the national societies in the region, during the partnership meeting in Samoa in 2005. A similar partnership meeting is planned for 2008 – during this session, the regional office will aim to set its core agenda for the coming three to four years.

## **Working in partnership**

### **Disaster management**

The Red Cross Red Crescent Climate Centre Preparedness for Climate Change programme assisted Tonga, the Solomon Islands, the Cook Islands and Kiribati, and directly assisted with funding and technical assistance to the Federation. Close relationships have been maintained between the French, Australian and New Zealand Red Cross Societies and the regional office's disaster management programme, to support training, technical information and funding. Examples of such support include the VHF and satellite phone training provided by the New Zealand Red Cross, and the Australian Strategic Engagement project supported by the Australian Red Cross as well as the

implementation of the French Red Cross's regional platform that incorporated the training of 60 volunteers in Noumea in December 2007.

Further support from partner national societies include the deployable water unit from the Australian Red Cross and the development of a telecommunications ERU with the New Zealand Red Cross. The Japanese Red Cross continues to be a valuable contributor to the disaster container and climate change programmes in national societies, while the Canada Fund was utilized in the beginning of 2006.

### **Health and care**

The Federation is considered a key regional ally by major health stakeholders including the Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC) and World Health Organization. Regular meetings and dialogues have enabled these stakeholders to better understand the roles and mandate of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, creating opportunities for linkages and cooperation with them. Indeed, the Red Cross Red Crescent's extensive network in communities, gives it the potential to carry out far-reaching health activities that could fit well with the regional and country plans of these stakeholders. The regional health delegate took part in the Regional CCM meetings for the Global Fund on a regular basis as a representative of the civil society, and also contributed significantly at regional meetings coordinated by SPC on the development of the Pacific Regional Strategic Implementation Plan phase 2 (PRSIP 2) for 2009-2012. The VNRBDR, a major component in the PRSIP2, was included after strong advocacy by the regional office.

Partnership with WHO was further strengthened with the two organizations working jointly to produce training materials on VNRBD – this was piloted in Kiribati where national society staff and volunteers were trained alongside members of the ministry of health's blood bank. This collaboration with WHO has led to a closer relationship between Kiribati RCS and the ministry of health, with a Memorandum of Understanding scheduled to be signed between the two in 2008. These training workshops were also supported and facilitated by the regional health unit in Fiji, Samoa and the Solomon Islands. The workshops had a similar effect there with the respective national societies and the health ministries agreeing to work closely on safe blood.

The regional health unit supported the participation of the secretary general of the Cook Islands RCS at the Pacific health ministers meeting in Vanuatu, on behalf of the Federation. The meeting provided an excellent opportunity to raise the profile of the Red Cross with senior policy makers in the region, and they identified the importance and need for ministries of health to work closely with the national societies in their respective countries.

### **Capacity development**

The American, Australian, Chinese, Japanese, Republic of Korea and New Zealand Red Cross societies and the Federation's capacity building fund have contributed significantly to the further development and support of national societies, through their generous contributions to the work that the Federation undertakes. The Federation worked closely with the ICRC in the provision of Movement messages and organizational development, particularly during 2006.

Regular cooperation meetings have been held between the ICRC, the Federation, and the Australian, New Zealand and French Red Cross Societies. These meetings are designed to promote the harmonization of operational programmes and the best use of resources for support and assistance provided to Pacific Red Cross societies.

The Pacific Islands Association of NGOs (PIANGO) and non-governmental organizations provide excellent in-country training resources, particularly in small island nations such as Kiribati, Tuvalu and Samoa. Several national societies now utilize international volunteers to assist with skills transfers.

## **Contributing to longer-term impact**

### **Disaster management**

The regional disaster management programme continues to ensure that Sphere standards are promoted in training sessions on emergency response. In addition, there is a need to examine and actively promote gender within the context of Red Cross Red Crescent activities. There are currently plans for a meeting in early January 2008 to address the issues of climate change, disaster risk reduction and gender with the Australian Red Cross, the UNDP Pacific Centre and the Federation.

The disaster management programme is in line with the Federation's Global Agenda Goal 1, which is to reduce the number of deaths, injuries and impact from disasters. Employing several measures - from training sessions and workshops on disaster management to the formation of emergency response teams trained in rapid response - the regional delegation has helped increase the capacity of the national societies in the Pacific, to demonstrate self-reliance and cooperation between themselves to respond quickly and effectively amidst the challenging geography of the region.

### **Health and care**

The VNRBDR workshop in Kiribati led to a positive impact as the national society organized a successful Blood Donor day by recruiting the country's first voluntary non-remunerated blood donor - the national vice president of the country. The workshop also led to enhanced sensitization and cooperation between the national blood bank, the WHO country office and the national society. In addition, meetings with the regional partners such as SPC, WHO and SOPAC have helped raise the Red Cross profile as one of the leading stakeholders in health. This also increases the possibility that the Pacific regional office may have access to technical and financial resources on behalf of the national societies at a regional level, thereby allowing the office to best provide support to them.

### **Capacity development**

The regional organizational development programme works predominantly with national societies to increase their ability to address the most urgent situations of vulnerability. The programme focus areas of governance, financial development and volunteer management, have been identified by the region's national societies as the current priority areas of support.

The strengthening of national societies in these focus areas, has enabled them to work more effectively with vulnerable communities. For example, donors show a greater interest in working with societies that can demonstrate robust financial practices. This leads to improved funds for services that benefit target beneficiaries. Training in governance and the development of strategic plans, provide focus when identifying vulnerable communities, prioritizing needs and establishing a framework to address those needs.

## **Looking ahead**

### **Disaster management**

The Solomon Islands tsunami reflected the need for a regional disaster response team which would be more efficient and culturally accepted by the affected national society. The arrangements for this are beginning to take place for 2008-2009. The tsunami also revealed the need to revise the ERT training programme which is aimed at branch level staff and volunteers – this programme is already underway.

National societies have found disaster risk reduction to be a way of establishing new and improved in-country relationships with stakeholders in disaster, health and climate change. Many opportunities exist for further collaboration and addressing risk. To enable community-based adaptation projects and ensure community input into risk reduction activities, the VCA tool needs further development in the Pacific Red Cross context, with a pool of trained VCA facilitators who can be available for exchange between the national societies. A VCA tool box for the Pacific, developed with the assistance of experienced national societies, could also help guide those still new to the technique, based on a similar tool produced in the Caribbean. Looking beyond and within the Movement for technical assistance is also advisable.

The Solomon Islands, Tonga and the Cook Islands Red Cross Societies are prepared with action plans on climate risk reduction in their countries, while the Fiji, Vanuatu and Papua New Guinea Red Cross Societies have plans to undertake a *preparedness for climate change* programme.

### **Health and care**

In health and care, plans include the development of a regional HIV programme based on the HIV Global Alliance framework, with a focus on the five partners from the Pacific, namely the Cook Islands, Samoa, Kiribati, Micronesia and the Fiji Red Cross Societies.

In addition, the regional health coordinator will work with WHO and the Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC) to develop a framework and training manual for a 'healthy lifestyle' pilot project in the Cook Islands and Samoa. With these partners, the regional health coordinator will also carry out training for national society staff and volunteers on the avian/pandemic influenza. Within the regional office, the health unit and the disaster management programme will jointly develop a national society avian/pandemic influenza preparedness and response plan, targeting at least four national societies in 2008.

The regional health unit will also focus on the adaptation of the 'community-based first aid in action' manual for the Pacific, and examine the possibilities of conducting a community-based first aid sensitization workshop in the Pacific in the first half of 2008.

### **Capacity development**

The priority areas of governance, volunteer management and financial development shall remain the major focus areas of the capacity development programme, until the partnership meeting in the first half of 2008, at the minimum.

A number of disasters in the region during this appeal period have highlighted the relationship between well-functioning societies and the ability to respond to national disasters. Combined with the disproportionately high risk of loss of institutional memory and skills through the loss of management personnel in these small societies, there is a need to focus on governance to ensure that effective governance from boards is present at all times. Related to this, is the continuing need to strengthen regional cooperation and communication. An opportunity to discuss further opportunities to achieve this regionally, could present itself at the partnership meeting.

The governance training and finance core group projects will be evaluated to establish a way forward for these programmes.

Additional details on future plans for all programmes can be found in the [Pacific Appeal 2008-2009](#).