

Report 2006-2007



International Federation
of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

Viet Nam

Appeal No. MAAVN001

4 April 2008

This report covers the period 1 January 2006 to 31 December 2007 of a two-year planning and appeal process.



Helping hand: VNRC skill in first aid makes a daily difference.

In brief

Programme summary: In 2006 and 2007, Viet Nam Red Cross (VNRC) focused on disaster preparedness and response, avian influenza preparedness and awareness raising, community-based first aid and organizational development including volunteering. In addition, a cost norm – whereby each partner that works with and through VNRC operates within the same cost framework – was introduced to unify modes of partnership between the various Red Cross supporters and VNRC.

Typhoons, such as Xangsane and Durian in 2006 and Lekima in 2007, and subsequent severe flooding devastated large parts of central Viet Nam. The disasters diverted efforts and resources from the VNRC as well as the Federation and partner national societies. Various relief operations hampered other programming linked to this 2006-07 appeal.

While the first step of a cooperation agreement strategy (CAS) process was initiated in 2006, the VNRC focused on finalizing the Red Cross Law in early November for comment. This is due to be re-presented in the next session of the national assembly in May 2008.

Financial situation: The total 2006-2007 budget was CHF 3,960,902¹ (USD 3.54 million or EUR 2.40 million) of which 57% was covered.

[Click here to go directly to the attached financial reports.](#)

<2006>	<2007>	<2006/2007>
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No. of people helped: 1,410,000 (including the following: 190,700 in disaster management (including emergency operations for typhoons Xangsane/Durian in 2006 and relief distribution for typhoon Lekima in 2007, 1,210,000 for avian influenza, and 170 in organizational development).

¹ Exchange rates: USD1.00 = CHF1.118, EUR1.00 = CHF1.65

Our partners: Supporters of this Federation Appeal were the British, German, Italian, Japanese, Liechtenstein, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norwegian and Swedish Red Cross societies as well as Capacity Building Fund (CBF), DFID Partnership, and the Avian Influenza Global Fund. Partner national societies engaged in other support beyond this appeal included American, British, Canadian, German, the Hong Kong branch of China Red Cross, Japanese, Monaco, Netherlands, New Zealand, Singapore, and Swedish Red Cross societies. ICRC provides technical support to VNRC. In terms of support outside the Movement, the main players are: UNICEF, USAID, Intel Foundation, Irish government, and VERC/WHO Voluntary Emergency. Local partnership was maintained with Oxfam, National Disaster Management Working Group, Central Committee for Flood and Storm Control, United Nations Volunteers (UNV), World Church Service, and a number of local NGOs and businesses.

Details on [partner national society and Federation support](#) and [mapping of this support](#) are also available.

Current context

Viet Nam continues to change at an accelerating rate. The annual GDP growth for 2007 was as high as 8.3 per cent. According to a recent report of the Viet Nam ministry of foreign affairs, 25 million people have been freed from the clutches of poverty in recent years. In 2007, Viet Nam joined the World Trade Organization (WTO), and the country has been classified/categorized a middle-income nation. The downside of this achievement is an ever increasing gap between the wealthy and the poor. According to local statistics, about 70 per cent of the population in Viet Nam earns a living from agriculture and are still the most vulnerable to natural disasters (typhoons/floods) and disease (avian influenza).

The living condition of parts of the population in the north, and particularly in the central region of the country was aggravated by Xangsane/Durian typhoon (2006) and a series of typhoons (including Lekima) and floods (2007), leading to a shortage of food (rice) and the loss of homes for thousands of families. The Red Cross Red Crescent responded by providing rice, housing support and training which contributed to recovery and resilience among the vulnerable.

Avian influenza also hit Viet Nam hard. As of August 2007, 100 human cases had been reported, of which 46 were fatal². As low awareness of the risk and poor hygiene among parts of the population were identified as the main causes, the VNRC prioritized education to improve people's hygiene habits.

New VNRC leadership was installed after the national congress in June 2007 and introduced to the Red Cross Red Crescent during the Federation's general assembly and Movement's international conference in Geneva in November.

The Federation delegation and bilateral national society counterparts have moved forward towards a common approach in supporting the VNRC, encouraging the national society to make better use of resources and strengthen programming, including finance management.

Achievement of objectives

Disaster management

Programme Objective: VNRC fulfils its designated strategic and implementation role in the context of Viet Nam's disaster management network.

Achievements:

Major achievements under disaster management over the last two years were in three areas: increased resilience of communities to hazards, building better prepared communes to cope with disasters, and the promotion of VNRC's role and image in disaster preparedness. It is also highlighted that along with the implementation of activities as part of this appeal, VNRC was stretched to respond

² Source: www.vnagency.com.vn

to the 2006 typhoons Xangsane/Durian, as well as the three-month flooding spell that included those caused by typhoon Lekima in early October 2007. Achievements included:

- About 345 hectares of sea-dykes in eight project provinces are covered with mangrove and bamboo, thus contributing to the reduction of impact by disaster, for instance through shielding the areas from the strong winds during the Damrey typhoon in 2005.
- Generation of income for some 450 households through the catching of sea produce from the mangrove forest.
- Building more resilient communities by providing disaster preparedness knowledge to school teachers and pupils.
- Implementation of risk reduction activities using hazard, vulnerability and capacity assessment (HVCA) in communities.

Developed capacity to manage the national disaster management programme at the headquarters and local level: Disaster preparedness (DP) training for Red Cross staff and key people at commune level were organized to strengthen community preparedness planning. DP training has benefited Red Cross staff and population in communities including:

- About 840 Red Cross staff and community representatives in disaster-prone communities who received training were able to use new skills when making their own annual DP plans.
- About 37 VNRC staff and volunteers were trained in the functions and operations of a rapid response team, as part of the effort to make VNRC more effective in supporting communities during disasters.
- 19 Red Cross teams from disaster-prone area were trained in response, first aid and relief.

However, activation of the teams depends largely on the national society's plan of action to put these resources to regular use.

Enhanced skills and knowledge on disaster preparedness for school children and teachers, and staff of local authorities in selected provinces: DP training was provided to school teachers and pupils to help adopt good practices. Child-focused training materials were also developed to facilitate the training. Outcomes were:

- About 850 school teachers attended training
- Some 24,000 pupils were provided information on DP by the teachers

Reduction of damage and losses caused by natural disasters due to risk mitigation activities, including mangrove plantation in several target provinces: Training on community-based disaster management (CBDM) and hazard, vulnerability and capacity assessment (HVCA) progressed, notably the following:

- 125 staff from Red Cross chapters and 400 people in communes in the five project provinces attended CBDM and HVCA courses.
- Thousands of people had access to their villages during the flooding season thanks to the construction of four bridges.
- About 698 people gained access to clean water instead of using river water.
- Some 20 children received a newly built kindergarten thanks to community consultation and decision making.

While VNRC's capacity at local level was strengthened through such training, a high turnover of branch staff challenged the practice of acquired skills/knowledge and the sustainable implementation/management of CBDM and HVCA in communities.

The VNRC's ability to mobilize community input is a cornerstone of the success of a Japanese Red Cross-supported coastal protection programme for mangrove plantation. The planting of mangroves and bamboo is a proven technique to protect coastal communities and environments by reducing the impact of strong waves and winds, and providing protection to river dykes. For instance, in Hai Phong alone (Dai Hop and Bang La communes), according to the local people's committee staff, each year mangroves save about VND 7 billion (USD 400,000 or CHF 447,200) of government funds for sea dyke maintenance. Over the last two years, mangroves and bamboo have been planted in six project provinces, covering 345 hectares.

An active established role within local, national and regional networks for disaster management: VNRC's role and image in disaster preparedness, particularly in the mangrove reforestation programme, was promoted through study tours by other national societies to Viet Nam,

as well as through local and international media coverage. The national society's reputation was enhanced through:

- The visits of Japanese Red Cross volunteers every year (2006 and 2007) to project sites such as Hai Phong, Quang Ninh and Nghe An.
- Study tours by national societies such as the Thai Red Cross and Sri Lankan Red Cross to mangrove project sites in Ha Tinh and Hai Phong.
- The field visits and home-stay were good opportunities for visitors to see the communities' contribution to the project and the difference the mangrove forest has made to the life of people. Income generation opportunities and more resilient communities have been created.

Furthermore, a documentary film was produced by the Federation delegation and used for fundraising by the Japanese Red Cross in December 2007. The mangrove reforestation programme has been praised around the world and featured on BBC World and other media groups.

Overall, the disaster preparedness programme contributed to building more resilient communities. Regular monitoring to find solutions to difficulties and a follow-up will enable quality implementation of activities. During the initial implementation of relief distribution and planning, the regional office in Bangkok provided extra support to the delegation.

Constraints and challenges:

The programme has been hampered by a shortage and rapid turnover of human resources at grassroots level. VNRC staff at the district/commune level are often government employees as well and have responsibilities other than Red Cross work, making it difficult for them to fulfil their duties.

The VNRC's planning, monitoring and reporting (narrative and financial) of the disaster management programme was sometimes delayed at the start-up of each project cycle, and relied on the Federation delegation support. The VNRC's relief distribution to those affected by Lekima and subsequent floods initially caused a slowdown in appeal related activities, such as training to Red Cross staff, teachers and pupils.

Best practices and lessons learned:

The DP programmes contributed to building stronger communities and reducing poverty. For instance, the mangrove plantation project enables the active participation of local people by involving them in decisions on what should be planted and where, and subsequent protection of the trees. The community's living conditions have improved thanks to the income from planting fees and the catching of seafood in the planted areas. The value of risk reduction also garnered attention through the BBC's Earth Report.

By providing DP skills/training to children, the programme contributed to raising the awareness of school children to a variety of hazards. The training for children was used as a case study at the Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction held by ISDR UN in Geneva from 4 to 6 June 2007. Teachers and school children are key players in the learning and dissemination of DP knowledge among their communities.

Large numbers of the VNRC staff who received international training on various aspects of DM will be encouraged to apply skills they acquired into their daily work and bring more value/exchange of experience to the programme.

Health and care

Programme Objective: The VNRC delivers quality health and care programmes and services that address the needs of the vulnerable people in Viet Nam.

Achievements:

VNRC's focus in 2006-2007 has been on raising awareness of people on the dangers of avian influenza (AI), and rebuilding and consolidating VNRC's capacity in community-based first aid. Blood donation, though not planned for 2006-2007, gained some momentum after meetings with WHO/Federation and the VNRC's blood recruitment department. Other activities as described in the 2006-2007 logframe such as HIV/AIDS, and primary health and care were not realized due to the lack

of external funding from the appeal. Five areas including AI preparedness, CBFA, HIV/AIDS, blood donor recruitment (mainly focusing on non-remunerated voluntary blood donor recruitment), and water and sanitation will be key areas of the 2008-2009 programme.

Avian influenza preparedness initiative: The project started in September 2006 and is on-going till May 2008 thanks to the contributions from German Red Cross, Netherlands Red Cross, American Red Cross and response from other partners to the Federation's Global Appeal on avian influenza as well as bilateral support (UNICEF). It aims to increase community awareness of the dangers of human exposure to the virus through distribution of information, education and communication (IEC) materials and household education.

As low awareness of the risk of AI and poor hygiene among parts of the population were identified as main issues, the VNRC prioritized education to improve people's hygiene habits (e.g.: separating animals from living environments, fencing in poultry, and washing hands after being in contact with poultry). Altogether, 283,605 households in the ten targeted provinces benefited from the intervention with 123,000 families receiving soap and reminders to wash hands after being in contact with poultry. Another 164,600 households were enlightened on the risks of avian influenza.

Volunteers played an important part of the project success. About 2,100 persons, including women, were recruited as volunteers and trained to educate their communities. They visited each selected household in communities to advise families on how to protect themselves and their communities from exposure. It is worthy to note that VNRC recruited people from minority groups to teach their communities in their local languages.

The project benefited communities as well as the VNRC. The national society's efforts to reach communities, provide IEC materials and education in each household have contributed to the prevention of an outbreak. This has made VNRC a stronger presence in local forums including the government's board on avian influenza where VNRC is the only non-government organization.

In addition, VNRC's wealth of experience - both success and lessons learned from previous projects, capacity to raise awareness of the dangers of human exposure to the virus among communities - plus technical support from the Federation have enabled the Red Cross to gain confidence and support from UN agencies. It was selected to implement a UNICEF-funded project. After various consultations between the Federation and UNICEF on the benefit of a collective effort, this is set to evolve to a co-funded UNICEF/Federation/American Red Cross initiative that works through and with VNRC. The project will cover both the distribution of leaflets (UNICEF) and intensive education at households (Federation/ American Red Cross). This joint project is expected to benefit 28,900 households in the five provinces where the intervention is made.

It has also been noted that channelling different financial support to one project helps VNRC abandon its practice of developing projects for specific donors rather than treating initiatives as a part of the national society's overall health plan of action.

Although the avian influenza initiative produced good outcomes, there is a challenge in managing the project at the headquarters level. A more streamlined project apparatus, for instance reducing the number of people/units indirectly engaged in project management/ implementation at headquarters level, will help shorten time spent on communication and decision-making, thereby enhancing professionalism in project implementation/management.

The success of the project resulted from the VNRC's efforts, most significantly of its volunteers, to give door-to-door education on the avian influenza dangers and prevention. However, the national society, at the present time, does not have experienced Red Cross volunteers who are familiar with the Fundamental Principles and are available to be called upon by the Red Cross at any time. Consequently, training on Red Cross principles have been included in all coaching sessions, monitoring visits and evaluation meetings, and will be added to pre-briefing of any new project.

Furthermore, as with disaster management, Red Cross staff members at the local level, with few exceptions, are also occupied with tasks other than Red Cross responsibilities, and are not always familiar with the Movement's Fundamental Principles.

Community-based first aid (CBFA): The project is designed to develop a standardized manual for 64 Red Cross chapters given a variety of references and approaches in training within the VNRC, and to provide a synchronized first-aid training methodology to the VNRC at all levels. It has been noted that the project is a product of joint efforts to support VNRC by the Federation and French Red Cross, ensuring the effective utilization of human resources and funding.

The VNRC hosted a workshop to consider inputs from the ministry of health (MoH) and experienced individuals. The Federation and French Red Cross headquarters facilitated. Comments received have been consolidated in the final manual which will be finalized in 2008. The MoH has endorsed the manual which meets international standards on first aid. The newly designed manual includes a section on the Red Cross Red Crescent Movement and its principles.

The first training, also facilitated by the French Red Cross headquarters, aims to train VNRC staff from the headquarters and selected chapters to become national instructors. As a result, five out of eight trained people were able to conduct first aid training, using a new interactive and easy-to-understand teaching approach for use in communities. Trainers at all levels are committed to this methodology when carrying out first aid skills training so as to benefit the communities.

Under this support, the national instructors ran CBFA training-of-trainers (ToT) with the expectation that participants then proceed to train volunteers in various communities. However, only two out of 19 trainees qualified. The two continued to train 40 volunteers in the provinces of Da Nang and Vinh Phuc.

While the number of trainers receiving training from this project is modest, the change by the intervention is encouraging, with a new manual and methodology and raised standard for trainers.

However, to develop a Red Cross first aid network nationwide, the VNRC will need to be more aware of selecting the right people for training, utilizing trained staff, and how/where to expand the capacity. A functioning first aid capacity will also help the national society to generate income from the business community, which now has high demand for first aid training.

At local levels, celebration of the World First Aid Day is common. Chapters such as the Hochiminh City Red Cross chapter and the Ha Tay Red Cross chapter are role models and the Federation delegation promoted the chapters' efforts by summarizing their celebrations and sharing internationally.

Constraints and challenges:

The major challenges are the shortage of human resources at the headquarters and the need to strengthen professionalism in project management/implementation. Usually, one staff member is assigned to work on several projects, which creates an unmanageable workload and stressful environment that hinders progress. An environment which nurtures professional skills in project implementation/management needs to be created at the VNRC. Solutions to address these issues will continue in dialogue between the Federation delegation and the national society leadership.

Best practices and lessons learned:

The following issues are important to take note of for future programmes:

- Follow-up studies (evaluation) to draw lessons learnt for improvement in future projects similar to that of the avian influenza project (studies on phase one and two are available) should be initiated at the end of projects. This will also help enhance VNRC's accountability.
- On-the-job-training proved to be time and cost effective. For instance, VNRC staff - no matter from which technical department - were engaged in follow-up studies on avian influenza project carried out by an external consultant. Participation helped improve skills in monitoring and evaluation, essential for good project management. Furthermore, a learning environment and application of knowledge acquired needs to be stimulated within VNRC.
- Joint projects, for example UNICEF/Federation/American Red Cross in avian influenza and Federation/French Red Cross in CBFA, are good models to replicate in other projects to maximize benefits to community. In addition, it also institutionalizes the VNRC practice of treating initiatives (including those outside the Movement) as a part of the national society's overall plan of action rather than developing projects for specific donors.

Capacity development

Programme Objective: The VNRC is a strong, relevant and well-functioning society that is more effective at all levels thus providing better service to vulnerable people.

Achievements:

In the field of financial development, 'Guidelines on accounting and financial development' was printed and distributed to chapters. A **cost norm** has been developed, and the VNRC will be financially supported in a more coordinated and consolidated way as a result of this norm. The cost norm sets an agreed rate of expenditure for work through and with VNRC for the Federation and partner national societies. The VNRC has remained well-informed during the development process. The Federation and five partner national societies, i.e. all with the exception of the Norwegian Red Cross, have signed the agreement. Further briefings with VNRC will ensure understanding throughout the national society.

Job descriptions for each department and its directors to enable VNRC to produce more focused and coordinated work have not materialized, though the ground has been prepared for such development with support from the Federation delegation. The new leadership has expressed interest in having terms of reference in place for each department at headquarters. This process will start in 2008.

A flexible approach was taken to further the **VNRC's capacity in monitoring and evaluation (M&E)**. The Federation delegation initiated the inclusion of programme officers from various technical departments of the VNRC headquarters in an avian influenza follow-up study undertaken by an expatriate volunteer so as to give the staff an opportunity to learn from practice. It was also intended that strengthened and consolidated M&E capacity at the headquarters level would motivate the formulation of an M&E unit/taskforce to exercise M&E support for all VNRC projects. As a result of this on-job-training activity, two young staff members were taught professional M&E skills. However, this capacity has to be constantly updated as the trained staff members were offered employment outside VNRC.

In addition, the Federation delegation tried different ways to support capacity building for the VNRC in the context of funding constraints. The support was not only at the headquarters level, but also at the chapter level. The Federation adopted a new **coaching** approach on M&E and reporting for the VNRC headquarters and the chapters which implemented Xangsane/Durian operations. The coaching was facilitated by the Federation and led by a consultant who worked on a voluntary basis. Staff from national, provincial, district and commune levels participated. The coaching provided insight into monitoring and reporting, as well as a better understanding of Red Cross Red Crescent Fundamental Principles.

The approach proved workable and initial feedback indicates its potential. Small classes including implementers from all levels made it easier for trainees to share knowledge and increase their confidence. Through the training, trainees at local levels had better knowledge of how professional M&E and reporting supports project management and enjoyed a forum to exchange experiences. The coaching helped the delegation identify areas of need at local levels, and the headquarters to identify what, where and how to support their chapters more effectively as well as improve their communications/project management at the central level.

The VNRC six-month volunteering project supported by the American Red Cross is ongoing. The Federation has provided technical support from the beginning of the project proposal. By the project end in March 2008, VNRC will be able to introduce its regulations on volunteer management, as well as activate its volunteer database. Three workshops to get input from provincial chapters were respectively organized in the north, centre and south of Viet Nam. The impression after this series of workshops was that volunteering is more active in the south particularly in well-functioning chapters such as Binh Dinh, Phu Yen and Hochiminh City. It was interesting to note that the understanding of the definition of volunteers between headquarters and chapters was often different. Technical support from the Zone office in Kuala Lumpur was sought to help VNRC understand better the institutionalization of volunteering in several other national societies, and alert the national society of who and how to maintain database on volunteers.

VNRC aims at better visibility and a stronger voice in meetings hosted by other stakeholders, such as the United Nations Volunteers (UNV), so that it can promote the national society's comparative advantage of having around 3.9 million volunteers and youth³. Its experience on volunteer development, particularly that of good chapters, can be shared with other organizations.

Celebration of World Red Cross Day has become an annual event of the national society where the VNRC cherished achievements and promoted Red Cross activities to the local media. In 2007, the event was attended by the head of the Federation's regional office and a representative from ICRC, both in Bangkok who, in their speeches, furthered the message of the Federation/ICRC that there is an increased need to have closer coordination and effective partnership inside and outside the Movement to help build stronger and safer communities. The event, as well as other news of Red Cross activities such as Red Cross response to typhoon/flood-affected people, was also covered by the local media.

The national society also earned more visibility worldwide thanks to a film on Japanese-funded mangrove plantation programme made by the BBC, and a news story which highlighted how the provincial Red Cross chapter of Vinh Phuc and the business community supported people with disabilities. The story was written by the Federation's regional information delegate.

The VNRC's Red Cross Law was presented to the national assembly (NA) of Viet Nam in November 2007 for comment. According to local media, among other things, NA delegates were concerned that the draft implicated it as being a decree of an association (society) rather than a law regulating humanitarian activities as a whole, and that people who prepared the draft law were not familiar with the nature of the Red Cross. The VNRC is revising the draft law, consolidating inputs/comments by the NA delegates. The Law is due to be considered for approval in May 2008. The Federation and ICRC met the VNRC leadership to provide input to the law. The Movement's joint statutory commission gave comments twice during the process. The Federation supported translation of the draft into English and the Commission's comments into Vietnamese.

The cooperation agreement strategy (CAS) process has not been furthered since 2006. The initial efforts included the development of a positioning paper defining the priorities of VNRC, its terms of cooperation, the roles and the responsibilities of the national society and its partners, and the establishment of a CAS committee and working group within the VNRC. The foundation for a CAS is there, and the new leadership has indicated that they will give this priority.

The national society acknowledges the need to generate more income for its core and programme budget in addition to managing traditional sources of fundraising. In November 2007, the headquarters in sponsorship with a foreign company held a music performance night in favour of people affected by Agent Orange. Donations from this company and various sources will be utilized to build Red Cross houses for those in need of help.

In addition, the ability/experience to organize professional fund-raising events is growing among the provincial chapters where Hochiminh City chapter is a model with six TV broadcasting fundraising events a year.

Constraints and challenges:

Overall, concerns shared by the VNRC leadership are the lack of human resources at the headquarters and provincial levels, apart from cooperation, coordination, and communication among departments and provinces engaged in projects/programmes. In addition, a learning environment in which people are inspired to acquire new skills/knowledge and who are committed to putting these to use would go a long way in improving the working environment.

Best practices and lessons learned:

Strengthening M&E and reporting skills through coaching at the chapter level will continue in 2008, with a focus on the chapters that have potential to develop. This kind of coaching will enable Red Cross staff at all levels to be more accountable to project implementation and more familiar with professional management.

³ According to VNRC statistics

The lack of a definition and consensus on volunteering in a Vietnamese context needs urgent attention as well as guidelines on volunteer work. A plan for the establishment and maintenance of a database for active Red Cross volunteers is in the pipeline.

On a wider perspective, there is a need to identify and bring together human resources at local levels to promote exchange and support initiatives within VNRC across the country. The VNRC headquarters is positioned to undertake this task, and will be supported by the Federation delegation in doing so.

Working in partnership

Various approaches to partnership have emerged over the last two years both outside and inside Viet Nam. The cooperation agreement signed by VNRC, Lao Red Cross and Cambodia Red Cross reflects the commitment towards effective programme cooperation and long-term partnership around similar challenges. A series of activities have been carried out as result. For instance, cooperation was strengthened by cross-border exchange visits by the VNRC and Cambodian Red Cross to address vulnerability through the sharing of expertise in HIV/AIDS prevention by the Cambodian Red Cross and the provision of free treatment and medicine to poor people living in two border provinces of Cambodia.

There were also campaigns to raise awareness on avian influenza risks at province borders with China, Lao PDR and Cambodia. National societies of the three countries also participated.

The Red Cross is an active member of disaster preparedness and response at the central committee for flood and storm control (CCFSC), a government organization including representation from various ministries engaged in disaster preparedness and response. The Federation delegation has been invited to provide Sphere training to various NGOs, for example, World Church Service and Oxfam.

The VNRC is also enjoying a wider partnership by signing the partnership on avian and human influenza (PAHI).⁴ Signing up to this framework together with the Federation enables the VNRC to be open to more effective ways of working as well as sharing of information.

An emerging trend of partnership is evident through the joint planning and implementation of a DipECHO disaster preparedness programme involving VNRC with the support of the Netherlands Red Cross and Spanish Red Cross, a joint project on avian influenza supported by UNICEF/the Federation/American Red Cross (as mentioned earlier under health and care), and collective efforts by the VNRC/Federation/American Red Cross with experience/input shared by the Norwegian Red Cross in the volunteering project.

While the VNRC has been drafting and processing a Red Cross law, the Federation delegation has not made headway in obtaining a status agreement with the government of Viet Nam. However, the people's aid coordinating committee, the government authority responsible for extending this permit to the Federation delegation is reviewing the delegation's status as an international non-government organization (INGO). At present, this authority does not think it is relevant to label the delegation as INGO but cannot confirm its legal personality as an international organization at this stage. This second deliberation may result in a good opportunity to move forward the Federation's request for legal status.

Implementation and coordination

Monthly coordination meetings between the VNRC, the Federation and partner national societies are now institutionalized. Heads of VNRC technical departments--the key implementers of projects--are now included in the meetings to ensure that they are well informed of the agreements made. This is particularly important to ensure follow-up after discussion/meeting. The VNRC leadership will co-chair the meeting with the country Federation representative from 2008 onwards.

The Federation has supported the establishment of sectoral working groups, for instance volunteering, first-aid, and water and sanitation, which hold their meetings depending on the need. Group members include the respective VNRC technical departments, and partner national societies which have

⁴ Partnership framework between the national steering committee for avian influenza of Viet Nam and international partners

programme interest. This forum is a good way to share knowledge, experience and lessons learnt and to seek agreement on approaches among different projects on similar areas.

VNRC chaired, for the first time, coordination meetings after typhoon Lekima to inform Red Cross partners of the developments and VNRC's actions. This initiative, fulfilling the role of a host national society, was much appreciated by the partners.

Contributing to longer-term impact

The Viet Nam programme contributed to the International Federation's Global Agenda principally in terms of goals 1, 2, and 3⁵. Prompt relief to communities affected by typhoons Xangsane/Durian and Lekima and a commitment to help them rebuild for the better and be more resilient contributed to Goal 1; effective avian influenza pandemic preparedness contributed to Goal 2; and efforts to improve volunteer management as well as enhance project management skills for implementers at local level contributed to Goal 3. The VNRC's visibility among the diplomatic corps and business community in-country continued to be strengthened through joint visits by VNRC and the Federation to embassies in Hanoi. Contacts have been established with various chambers of commerce. The European Chamber of Commerce included the typhoon Lekima flyer as part of their monthly newsletter in October, a first attempt to raise funds among the business community.

The challenges of meeting the Millennium Development Goals by 2015 are huge in general but Viet Nam is making progress in many areas such as poverty reduction. It can be said that by strengthening its service delivery and organizational ability at the community level, VNRC will play a significant part in this major effort and is set to do so in the coming years.

The VNRC's recent commitment to share its financial report with partners every six months reflects a new approach to finance management and accountability.

Looking ahead

The Federation will continue its dialogue with VNRC leadership on the national society's strategy for human resources, issues of coordination, cooperation and communication, and decision-making processes in project implementation. This will also serve to revitalize the CAS process to be followed by a partnership meeting.

The Federation delegation will also extend cooperation with the national society to the chapter level. More contacts, visits and technical support will be provided to the society chapters.

Follow-up on resolutions and guidelines adopted at the Federation's general assembly and the international conference in November 2007 will be added to the agenda for 2008.

The Federation delegation will continue to play a key role in coordinating Red Cross partners in collaboration with VNRC in 2008. Support from the regional office in Bangkok and from the zone office in Kuala Lumpur will also be maintained.

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>

⁵ Goal 1: reduce the number of deaths, injuries and impact from disasters; Goal 2: reduce the number of deaths, illnesses and impact from diseases and public health emergencies; Goal 3: increase local community, civil society and Red Cross Red Crescent capacity to address the most urgent situations of vulnerability

<p>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".</p>	<p>Global Agenda Goals:</p> <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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