

CENTRAL AMERICA: HURRICANE MITCH OPERATIONS

appeal no. 02/99

17 May 1999

situation report no. 1

period covered: February- April 1999

Although pockets of emergency relief needs are still being addressed, the operations are now moving into the rehabilitation phase, despite issues such as land titles and macro-institutional funding that are slowing down developments and prolonging the existence of temporary shelters. The current planting season makes seed distribution a priority, while assistance to get people back on the road to recovery must be achieved before the rapidly approaching rainy season .

The context

From 25 October to 1 November 1998 Hurricane Mitch battered Central America, devastating Honduras, severely damaging many parts of Nicaragua and causing widespread destruction in parts of Guatemala and El Salvador. It was the most destructive hurricane in the history of the western hemisphere, directly affecting over 2.5 million people and indirectly an additional 4.5 million. The impact included

- * Destruction and severe structural damage to homes and buildings , caused by high winds.***
- * Exceptionally high rainfall (over 2,000 mm) causing extensive flooding that in turn led to mud-slides that buried people, land and homes and destroyed water and sanitation infrastructure, as well as schools, clinics and hospitals.***
- * Surging river waters ripped up trees and dislodged rocks which destroyed bridges (in Honduras up to 80% of all bridges were either destroyed or so badly damaged as to be unsafe), and by destroying or severely damaging road systems, cut off access and caused longer term disruption to transport, trade and travel***
- * Up to 50% of all agricultural land including coffee and banana plantations were destroyed, causing production losses and immediate and possibly long term unemployment***
- * Secondary landslides occurred down water-logged hillsides, causing 2,000 deaths in one single incident in Nicaragua alone.***

Strong natural phenomena are not uncommon in this region, but the force and devastation of this disaster totally overwhelmed the disaster response capacity of the respective governments and aid agencies, including the National Red Cross Societies. The vast majority of people affected lost almost everything they possessed, their homes, clothing, and household goods, their livestock, agricultural land and their livelihood, and now face a long recovery period. Core data summarised below gives an indication of the damage.

Infrastructure and Agriculture.

The most recent but not necessarily complete statistics put direct damage to the infrastructure and agriculture in all four countries at:

US \$ millions (Total: 3,577)

<i>Housing</i>	<i>550</i>	<i>Agriculture/Livestock/Fisheries</i>	<i>1,800</i>
<i>Health</i>	<i>440</i>	<i>Manufacturing</i>	<i>32</i>
<i>Education</i>	<i>60</i>	<i>Trade, Tourism etc.</i>	<i>80</i>
<i>Roads/Bridges etc.</i>	<i>535</i>	<i>Energy sector</i>	<i>30</i>
<i>Water & Sanitation</i>	<i>50</i>		

Effects on population:

	Honduras	Nicaragua	Guatemala	El Salvador	TOTAL
Dead	6,600	2,873	263	240	9,976
Missing	8,800	1,000	120	20	11,140
Injured	12,272	420	276	175	13,143
Sheltered	285,000	65,000	50,000	56,000	456,000
Evacuated	800,000 approx.	370,000	108,000	84,300	1,362,000
Total Affected	4,750,000	900,000 approx.	740,000 approx.	350,000	6,740,000

++ Figures are from Federation/ECLAC/OCHA and other NGO and governmental reports and Sitreps and are estimates.

During the emergency phase the National Red Cross Societies of the four affected countries (ONS), supported by the Federation and many Participating National Societies (PNS), were in the forefront of relief efforts, providing shelter and food, first aid, health services and clean water to hundreds of thousands of displaced persons. Assistance was co-ordinated with UN and government bodies.

The Federation and PNS are currently assisting the ONS in reconstruction and rehabilitation following the ending of the emergency phase. Efforts are focused on the provision of both temporary and permanent housing for the victims of Mitch; water and sanitation projects to support agricultural activities, and institutional development. The overall aim is to reduce the vulnerability of the population and give them a better chance to withstand the tropical storm season starting in May. The ONS branches and the communities are actively involved in these efforts and beneficiaries contribute through food-for-work programmes.

Latest events

As the economy in most of the affected countries worsened after the disaster, unemployment has been rising in the main cities, particularly in Honduras. Small subsistence farmers who lost their crop a few months ago have eaten the seeds they would otherwise have been planting in May. These people, who are trying to rebuild their lives, need aid from the Red Cross, especially since many NGO's have left, now that the emergency is apparently over.

The World Food Programme (WFP) and Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) originally indicated a possible need for up to a 54% (270,000 tons) increase in food imports to provide food security for the four countries for the next year. However indicators over the past month point to some easing and the Federation is considering a review of the current food strategy, and especially free food distributions.

In Honduras and Nicaragua, the governments have started to repair infrastructure such as bridges, roads, waterway and schools. However, fears of further impacts are running high within the population of the region and of special concern to the Red Cross are the early indicators that this year's hurricane season could rival that of last year; there are concerns also about the increased seismic activity around the volcano areas in Nicaragua and that already vulnerable communities will be at even more risk. In

addition power and main water supplies remain unreliable, and in Honduras fire-damage in February to the largest hydro-electricity plant has aggravated the situation.

Major Constraints

Despite early promises, the major infrastructure core funding is slow to materialise and it is hoped the Stockholm Meeting of the Consultative Group for the Reconstruction of Central America on 25 May will address this problem. This group's first meeting in Washington in February reviewed government progress on dealing with the hurricane's after-effects and assessed methodology for channelling donor resources. The second meeting, hosted by the Inter-American Development Bank and the Swedish Government, will review the country specific planning of the UN, the Red Cross and international and regional NGO agencies for the rehabilitation phase. One of the most important issues facing the governments and the Red Cross is the complexity of identifying, procuring and servicing land in order to resettle the hundreds of thousands of displaced people in new and safer dwellings. Since this is a major part of the assistance provided through the Federation and PNS, solutions are essential for this to proceed.

Closer co-operation, co-ordination and information sharing is being developed among the representatives of the ONS/PNS/Federation in the region. Regular meetings and consultations with ONS/PNS/Federation staff at both field and HQ level are helping to achieve the objectives set in the Guatemala Meeting in February -- to operate as a united force and to present the Red Cross Movement at its best in the coming years of reconstruction and rehabilitation.

Red Cross Action General

Relief Report Summary to 16th March 1999

The Red Cross partners in the region have increasingly moved into post-emergency assistance, and a start has been made in most countries on early resettlement, reconstruction and rehabilitation. In

CONSOLIDATED DISTRIBUTION REPORT/ REPORTE DE DISTRIBUCIONES CONSOLIDADO									
Period from: / Periodo del:		1 Nov./98			to / al: 16th March /99				
Report No. Reporte No.	Date: Fecha:	No. of Benef. (Families): No. de Benef. (Familias):	U. Kg.	Distributed relief supplies / Suministros distribuidos:					
				Pqte.Fam. Alimentos (Food Pkg.)	Sets de Cocina (Kitchen Set)	Sets de Higiene (Hygiene Set)	Conten. Agua (Jerrycans.)	Ropa/ Frazadas (Blankets/Cloth.)	Otros * (Other *)
Honduras	1 Nov 98	11,325	Unidad	16,361	7,761	17993	3,976	286,720	13,360
Report 03/99	1 Mar.99	986,238	Kg.	910,935	11,253	7,840	1840	-	-
Nicaragua	1 Nov./98	37,910	Unidad	35,900	14,020	35,499	18,160	34,815	3,260
Report No. 01/99	20 Jan./99	2,925,032	Kg.	2,445,684	66,397	201,690	21,690	35,055	154,038
Guatemala	1 Nov./98	17,865	Unidad	16,129	6,603	6,176	-	15,556	-
Report 03/99	30 Mar/99	696,696	Kg.	553,158	27,613	2,492	-	80,335	4,731
El Salvador **	1 Nov./98	23,340	Unidad	-	5,365	1,300	-	17,008	23,210
Report No. 01/99	16 Mar /99	409,172	Kg.	285,749	32,116	11,791	-	102,048	6,935
TOTAL	Benef. (Fams.)	90,440	Unidad	68,390	33,749	60,968	22,136	354,099	39,830
DISTRIBUIDO:	Kg.:	5,017,138	Kg.	4,195,526	137,379	223,813	23,530	217,438	165,704

Nicaragua and Honduras, however, efforts continue to address pockets of ongoing emergency needs with food, relief supplies and essential water and sanitation projects. Food for distributions and food for work projects continues to be supplied to the Federation Appeal by WFP (Nicaragua), and the American and Spanish RC.

Emphasis has been on house construction. Sites have been identified, where ongoing community activities and food for work projects are under way. Rehabilitation of clinics and schools is also being undertaken by the PNS in some areas. Food and essential relief items have been distributed in remote areas missed earlier on. Water and sanitation activities of the Federation Wat/San Emergency Response

Units (ERU) have been either completed or handed over to the management of the ONS. Recently completed missions by the Federation Wat/San Regional Delegate in consultation with PNS delegates have identified a need for longer term work, particularly in Community Based DPP. The Canadian Red Cross and others have also been involved in assessing sectoral activity opportunities in this field.

The results of a Health Survey, carried out by the CDC under American Red Cross contract, were presented at the Guatemala Meeting. A Federation Internal Audit Mission to the region reviewed procedures and management in the field and Geneva. Its recommendations to improve or strengthen work are being implemented.

ONS / PNS Co-operation Meeting on Rehabilitation: Guatemala City, 23 February 1999

As the long-term consequences of Hurricane Mitch emerged it became clear that a Red Cross strategy to meet the reconstruction and rehabilitation needs in the four countries must be prioritised. Increasing demands, difficult to refuse, were being made on the ONS by government and affected populations alike. Recognising the importance of the combined roles of the ONS, the many PNS who were assisting through bilateral programmes and the Federation as an “Architect of Co-operation”, a meeting was convened in Guatemala City to review and assess the future direction of Red Cross action. It was attended by representatives of the four ONS, the Federation Secretariat and Delegations in the region, the American, Spanish, British, Canadian, German, French, Belgian and Netherlands National Societies, and the ICRC Regional Delegation, plus the EU Liaison Bureau, CDC, and other local representatives. The future objectives identified included: establishing guidelines for ONS/PNS/Secretariat co-operative action for the coming five years and seeking a role in rehabilitation and reconstruction. The meeting also worked on a timetable for a Regional Red Cross Plan of Action for Rehabilitation & Reconstruction to be presented at the meeting of the Consultative Group organised by the Inter-American Bank and the Government of Sweden in Stockholm, 25-28 May.

Recommendations included : the need to strengthen the management of the existing Mitch operations; the need to augment the capacity of the volunteer base of the ONS; greater emphasis on the development and reinforcement of Branches and on strengthening fund raising activities. Participants also committed themselves to produce clear and concrete Country Rehabilitation Plans with identified objectives, geared to the ONS's capacity, and able to be evaluated and assessed for quality and progress.

Red Cross Country Summaries & Programmes

Honduras

- **Relief distributions**

Still in the aftermath of the emergency phase, the Federation and PNS are distributing food throughout the country, chiefly to communities in more inaccessible areas that were previously undetected or nearly impossible to get to. In March the first ever Red Cross distribution by canoe was successfully carried out along the Rio Coco river by the HRC/Federation, followed by a second, American Red Cross, action along the Mosquito Coast. The Red Cross distributed in total about 600 food rations, provided by the American RC. The remainder of the food stored in warehouses will go to food-for-work programmes for projects focused on the reconstruction and rehabilitation of communities.

- **Macro-Shelters**

The government handed over three large shelters, built by the International Organisation for Migration, to the Honduran Red Cross to administer. These macro-shelters will be the temporary homes for the next 12 months for 1,500 of the 3,500 identified homeless families in Tegucigalpa. With the support of the Federation and the PNSs, the HRC is providing support to the shelter managers, controlling the influx of people from outside the shelters, organising local night-watchmen, controlling fire hazards and inspecting water, sanitation, health and hygiene conditions. The American Red Cross has provided over 1,500 food packages for the families living in the Macro-Shelters. (A similar amount was distributed to other shelters throughout the city.)

The HRC is the channel for all outside assistance, in co-ordination with UNICEF and the Ministry of Education. Schools and crèches are being built and mothers are being trained in nutrition. A doctor will check the children's

health and ensure they receive vitamins and vaccinations. To improve business opportunities in the shelters, the administrators have approached the organisation HOPE that provides micro-credits for small enterprises. IHNFA and APSIDE (Mexican RC) have provided psychological and sociological assistance. The Federation and the Spanish RC both have a strong presence in the shelters. The Spanish RC team consisted of an educator, a child psychologist and a social worker.

While the need for such shelters as a mid term solution, until permanent housing is built, is recognised, concerns are mounting regarding the overall living conditions, overcrowding and immigration. This is being reviewed by the HRC and the Federation.

Housing - rehabilitation / reconstruction

Three Federation projects are now under way. In Sabana Grande, besides the construction and rehabilitation of housing, road widening and the installation of water tanks are being carried out in food-for-work programmes. The road repairs in Tempisque have been completed and the town has regained access to the outside world. All the projects of San Francisco de la Paz recently received materials and the warehouses are in good shape. The HRC has been offered land for 1,000 houses about 20 km outside Tegucigalpa but further research will have to be done to find out if this option is viable.

The German RC has completed the first 25 houses in Choluteca. The programme, comprising three different types of house, will eventually benefit 500 families in the province. Materials are bought locally from small suppliers, which minimises transportation costs and reactivates the local economy. Additional roofing materials were offered by the German Government through the GRC to approximately 650 families. Local craftsmen are hired to supervise construction.

The American RC and the Netherlands RC are currently identifying reconstruction and rehabilitation activities in co-ordination with the HRC. The Spanish RC is defining projects to rehabilitate schools, houses and a shelter. The Federation Delegation is a member of the Tegucigalpa Housing Reconstruction Committee.

- Water & Sanitation

The Federation Regional Water & Sanitation delegate has completed a wat/san plan to ensure a co-ordinated approach in the region. The American RC will support the German RC with wat/san for 325 houses in Choluteca. The Austrian RC ERU has been assessing, constructing and rehabilitating three projects for drinking water which will benefit over 600 people.

- Health

While areas of poor nutrition still remain, conditions are now much better and the food supply has improved with aid assistance. Some concerns have been raised regarding malaria, cholera and dengue and other parasitic diseases. Drinking water supplies are improving but remain a source of concern, to be addressed by the Wat/San projects. Health Awareness and in particular the reinforcement of community health services in the shelters has become an increasingly important area for the Federation.

- Capacity building and training

A new Project Team has been created in HRC as the Honduran counterpart to Federation and PNS activities, enabling the HRC to conduct and co-ordinate its projects more effectively with its Red Cross partners and local communities nation-wide.

The Spanish RC has identified a HRC branch that has been able to find its own financial resources and has significantly augmented its staff of paramedic volunteers. The Spanish RC wants to share its strategy with other branches in the region.

The Federation organised an Emergency Warehousing Management Course attended by 34 HRC volunteers and another on volunteer participation in shelter recreational activities.

Nicaragua:

Relief: In Nicaragua the NRCS and the Federation have a contract with the WFP that it will provide some 12,000 metric tonnes of food for NRCS distributions and food for work programmes. The food distribution activities were also supported by American RC food, and an additional 839 tonnes of food was distributed by Spanish RC during the period up to the end of February. French RC distributed several tons of food and relief supplies. Over 7,000 families have been assisted by all these food distributions. The Belgian RC completed a distribution of seeds and tools, assisting 1,890 families with over 153 tonnes of supplies. The British RC agricultural project is underway (see below) and will assist over 10,600 families.

Rehabilitation & Construction: Programmes to date include housing and school reconstruction or rehabilitation projects. Among planned projects are those of the Spanish RC (300 houses & 13 schools), Belgian RC, French RC (350 units), Netherlands and Austrian RC (150). While progress is being made, technical difficulties range from approvals, title, wood cutting and transport permits and customs clearances. The Federation and the American RC will co-operate on a \$ US 1.6m OFDA/USAID contract to construct temporary accommodation for some 4,000 families. The NRCS will participate in supply and technical support.

Water & Sanitation: The German-led Peruvian RC ERU teams successfully completed their missions and the Peru ERU was returned to that country. The Spanish RC installed 66 filtration units and continue to evaluate new projects in the Madrid region. A new Federation Wat/San delegate took up his post and will give particular attention to services in the planned OFDA funded temporary shelter projects.

Health: The American RC is leading the assessment of health needs and has agreed to fund soap, toilet paper and other basic essentials over the coming months. The rehabilitation of health centres commenced in late March. The production of health and sanitation leaflets was undertaken by the Spanish RC. The delegation is reviewing future health activities in consultation with the Regional health delegate as part of the overall country plan preparation.

Capacity Building & Institutional Development: The NRCS is reviewing ongoing commitments for the future through the Rehabilitation Country Plan. Regular meetings are held with all PNS involved in Nicaragua. The Federation is increasingly involved with the ONS in the support and co-ordination of work on the identification of suitable sites for reconstruction. It is currently working on a Status Agreement Draft for Nicaraguan government support.

Guatemala :

Relief: The Federation and the Spanish and American RC have been supporting the GRCS in the distribution of food and relief supplies. The Spanish RC has been active mostly in Izabel Department, the American RC in Zacapa, Chiquimula, Juitapa, Jalapa, Santa Rosa and El Progreso and the Federation in Santa Rosa, Baja Verapaz and Alta Verapaz. By the end of April the American RC still had to deliver 562 tons to 4,000 families. The needs have diminished over the period and it is anticipated that as of this month there will be no need for food distributions except for any emerging vulnerable groups or possibly for food for work projects. By this time some 7,700 families will have been assisted.

The Agricultural Support Programme is underway and will be completed this month; some 5,000 families are targeted for assistance. The Spanish RC has targeted an additional 608 families for agricultural assistance. With the start of the school year the number of volunteers has dropped and the GRCS is reviewing with the delegation how to reinforce this sector.

Health and Water & Sanitation The American RC is reviewing potential support to the health sector and to water & sanitation projects. GRCS Health Brigades were able to visit communities in Sayaché.

Capacity Building and Human Development The Federation continues to provide support to the GRCS Health Brigades, although further funding is badly needed in order to maintain this and other human development

projects. Support is also needed for the development in the branches of 439 health promoters and 97 Traditional Birth Attendants covering 73 communities.

El Salvador:

Relief: The Federation and the Spanish RC continue to work closely together in supporting the SRCS. While relief food distributions continue these were being decreased, with all goals in the Transitional Appeal having been met by March. Details of total relief and food distributions are in the summary table. The American RC has agreed to assist with further relief as needed. The Spanish RC is providing the Society with a water tanker, a minibus and a pick up truck to reinforce its logistic capacity. The German RC provided over 3,000 Hygiene and Kitchen sets for distribution in Ususutan, San Miguel and La Union, and is looking into the possibility of mini projects in these areas.

Water & sanitation. and Health Projects to be included in the Country Plan are being identified. In the meantime concerns regarding the outbreak of cholera are being taken seriously: the addition of a water tanker from the Spanish RC will increase the Society's capacity to deliver clean water. In addition the SRCS has stepped up its health awareness campaigns.

Capacity Building. With the assistance of the Spanish RC and support from the Federation a number of activities have been reinforced. A new projects office has been opened with a new finance assistant to improve donor reporting. The National Youth Group Office will reopen with Federation help and a new bus donated by the Spanish RC will be available to transport volunteers to areas of operations. Additional donated equipment has strengthened the radio network.

Agricultural Support Programme (ASP)

A British Red Cross CHF 4 million Seeds & Tools project commenced in late March. It is managed by a British RC delegate, seconded to the Federation Regional Delegation and supported by an agricultural consultant and the logistics and relief delegates in the field. The complex process of identifying and registering beneficiaries, finding suitable seed and fertiliser stock and managing the logistics and administration has developed in to a sound well targeted and highly relevant programme. Its objective is to assist in the provision of essential tools, fertiliser and seeds to farmers who have lost their capacity to cope with the planting season for the next harvest. In addition it will act as a mitigation measure, assisting many households and communities to rebuild their livelihood and reducing food aid dependency. Approximately 26,000 families in all four countries were initially targeted with an assistance package of beans and maize seed and fertiliser and the distributions are almost complete in El Salvador and in Guatemala. In Honduras and Nicaragua progress has been slower due to local complications, now overcome. A professional evaluation of progress and the effects of the project will be carried out through the British Red Cross and the Federation Delegations involved. A post operation workshop will assess and evaluate the overall effectiveness of the project and review lessons learned.

Other Red Cross Developments

There has been significant reinforcement or consolidation within the Federation delegations in an attempt to provide optimum service for the future but avoid duplicating positions or functions that can easily be provided through the PNS offices in each country. A logistician has been placed in both Nicaragua and Honduras to support operations including the agricultural programme. In addition these delegations now have a wat/san delegate to develop the strategies that are in place and will emerge from the Country Plans. In Honduras a new HoD has arrived on a one year posting along with a Finance & Administration delegate. The Reporting and Information roles in Honduras have now been combined into a single position. In Guatemala and the Regional Delegation, Reporting delegates and a Relief delegate have strengthened this operational aspect.

* Regional Health & Relief Workshops: Taking advantage of the collective Red Cross experiences during the recent disasters in the region like "Mitch", "George" and the Colombian Earthquake a Relief Process and Systems workshop is planned in Colombia in early July. The objectives: to share experiences and lessons, to reinforce the existing core of ONS and relief delegates who can be made instantly available to respond to future disasters in the region, in particular for this year's hurricane

season, and finally to ensure that institutional experience and lessons are recorded and disseminated for future operations. In May a regional health workshop will be held in Nicaragua to continue the ongoing process of strengthening the regional health network and to identify a health strategy for the Rehabilitation phase of the country plans for Central America.

* In February an Evaluation and assessment meeting on Mitch and George was held in the Dominican Republic in which the Federation, the ONS and PNS partners discussed the recent hurricane responses.

* Following the Guatemala Meeting the newly appointed Desk Officer for Mitch visited all the Mitch countries to review the future Federation activities. It is planned that the desk will visit the field for two to three weeks each quarter, in order to strengthen and maintain the working relationship between the field, the Secretariat and the PNS network.

* Reporting: A Regional Reporting delegate has been appointed for a period of three months to address the complex task of summarising the flow of donations and relief activities during the period November 1998 to May 1999. This is proving to be a difficult job since during the desperate early days of the operation the ONS/PNS and Federation systems were severely overloaded with many donations and deliveries, unrecorded, unannounced and uncontrolled. A number of improved systems of coding, tracking and recovering data have been implemented and are operating well. It is hoped that each of the bilateral PNS operating in the four countries will provide to the Federation delegations a brief monthly summary of their own activities in order to ensure that these activities are accurately included in the Federation standard reports. A consolidated Mitch Operation Monthly Sitrep will now be issued on approximately the 5th of each month.

Outstanding needs

The overall coverage for the Emergency and Transitional Appeals has been good. However in the Transitional Appeal, after adjusting for the pledge coverage for Food (WFP/Spanish & American RC) and Agricultural Support (British RC) the outstanding needs are:

- * Cash for ongoing important ONS/Delegation project funding.
- * Funding for the reinforcement of health, water, sanitation, managerial and social support in the temporary shelters and to reinforce communities to withstand additional hardships during the coming rains and hurricane season
- * Cash and materials to develop ongoing country water and sanitation programmes.
- * Funds and personnel to develop, prepare and resource a more detailed DPP Contingency Plan of Action to meet the hurricane threat this year
- * Funding for delegates for Development and DPP are still needed for Nicaragua and Honduras although candidates have been identified.
- * In Guatemala there is an urgent need for the Federation to reinforce its commitments to the ongoing Health Brigades and Health training in the human development programmes. Cash or donations are need to purchase 2 Land cruisers, 3 motorbikes and additional medical supplies for these projects, as well as operational expenses.

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External relations - Government/UN/NGOs/Media

Progress is being made with the assistance of the ONS of each of the Mitch countries on establishing Country Status Agreements with the respective governments. Visits have been made to the region by the Spanish RC president and by senior representatives of the American, Swedish, British and Swiss Red Cross to review either bilateral or ONS/Federation activities. In Honduras the Irish Head of State visited the macroalbergas and Princess Astrid, the Belgian RC president, visited distributions. Contact has been maintained with WFP, UNICEF and OCHA/UNDP, both in the field and in Geneva, in particular on elements of the Transitional Appeal progress and Regional rehabilitation planning for the future.

Contributions

See Annex 1

Conclusion

While the post-emergency phase of the operation is over there remain pockets of vulnerabilities that still require relief assistance. In the remoter regions the ONS/PNS/Federation co-ordinated activities seek to address these needs as they are identified and these activities still require financial support. In addition serious concerns remain and steps are being undertaken to ensure full awareness and response, should indicators of a serious hurricane season be well founded. The Federation wants to develop a well funded and researched DPP strategy for this period over the next weeks, in consultation and co-ordination with the main PNS and the ONS.

However, the main thrust of work is moving increasingly towards reconstruction, rehabilitation and community development activities. The increasing pressure on the Red Cross to undertake complex and far reaching work in the areas of both temporary and permanent housing, agricultural support and water and sanitation is the primary focus. Concerns remain that much of the major infrastructure funding needed to ensure real rehabilitation is still lacking.

The development and planning of the Red Cross regional strategy for the future is now under way with the formulation of the Country Rehabilitation Plans, based on proposals agreed to at the Guatemala Meeting in February and on the Federation Framework for Rehabilitation. These plans are being consolidated by the Secretariat into a Regional Red Cross Plan and will be presented by the Federation at the Stockholm Meeting. From these plans are emerging clear commitments to continue the work already underway in reconstruction of housing, water and sanitation and health projects and in DPP and community based self-reliance programmes. To achieve these objectives the ONS, with the support of their Federation, will need to strengthen their capacities and replace resources and manpower used during the crisis of last year both at their HQ and in the Branches. The Secretariat and Delegations will play a role particularly in the areas of DPP and capacity building to achieve these objectives. The concerns mentioned earlier regarding the immediate hurricane season DPP and Response needs are being addressed at the Secretariat and Delegations through a Contingency Plan that will include consultation and inputs from the bilateral PNS.

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