

HONDURAS: HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE

*13 November
2000*

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situation report no. 3; Revised Budget
period covered: 1 July - 30 September 2000*

The work carried out to strengthen the capacities of the Honduran Red Cross (HRC) continued. The National Society is committed to the change process and looks to the international year of the volunteer as an opportunity to promote volunteerism. Furthermore, 50 % of the rehabilitation and reconstruction projects in the wake of hurricane Mitch have now been completed and are benefiting the vulnerable population. Current efforts are focusing on the strategic planning process and in December the Honduran Red Cross will finalise the first draft of its development plan. An important initiative was the preparation of a contingency plan, in co-operation with the government, following an outbreak of dengue fever.

The budget has been revised based on a review of objectives in light of partial funding, with programme implementation focusing on institutional development and disaster preparedness.

The context

In November 1998 Honduras was devastated by hurricane Mitch, considered the worst natural disaster ever to hit the country. Gale-force winds, floods and landslides caused by torrential rain destroyed entire communities, crops, roads and bridges. The damage caused by hurricane Mitch in Honduras totalled approximately 70% of the country's gross domestic product. The total death toll was 5,657 and 8,058 people were reported missing. Around 1.5 million people were directly or indirectly affected by

the disaster. Poverty, high population growth and the deterioration of the environment further exacerbated the effects of the hurricane, creating a human disaster. Almost two years later, the country is still engaged in the long and difficult process of rehabilitation.

The challenge now facing Honduras is to reconstruct the country and, at the same time, implement structural measures to reduce the impact of any future natural disasters. The HRC is committed to playing a major role in reducing vulnerability.

Latest events

The winter began with tropical waves and depressions which affected Honduras directly and which highlighted the continuing vulnerability of the country almost two years after hurricane Mitch. Rivers overflowed as soon as the heavy rains arrived because there are no adequate dredging systems and landslides occurred. Honduras therefore continues to be highly vulnerable in the rainy season. The HRC, through OPADE (Disaster and Emergency Administration Office), works in close co-operation with official bodies, particularly with COPECO (Permanent Contingency Committee), constantly monitoring the overall situation and following up on emergency situations.

The winter brought an increase in some of the most prevalent diseases in Central America, such as dengue fever and diarrhoea. At the end of September, 680 cases of dengue fever and 19 of its more serious form, dengue haemorrhagic fever, had been reported. In spite of efforts by the health authorities to stop the spread of these diseases through IEC (information, education, communication) campaigns to bring about a permanent change in people's attitudes to food safety and hygiene and to address the problems of crowded living conditions and the lack of safe drinking water, the population remained highly vulnerable to these epidemics. In response to the dengue epidemic, the National Society prepared a contingency plan in co-ordination with the government which includes preventive information campaigns and promotion of blood donation.

Agriculture was also affected by the heavy rains. Over 11,000 *manzanas* (1 *manzana* = 69.9 acres) of crops were lost in the southern part of the country, leading to an increase in the number of people without sufficient food in Honduras.

In August the northern part of the country was affected by drought, which also contributed to a further increase in the number of people without sufficient food. In order to alleviate the situation, the HRC, in co-operation with the Spanish Red Cross, provided humanitarian aid at the Talupanes indigenous reservation, distributing seeds. As part of the food security project being carried out in the north of the country, 99 agricultural packages were handed out to beneficiaries, who received training in farming practices, management and post-harvest storage.

Red Cross/Red Crescent action

During the quarter, the Federation continued to focus its work on the priority areas of disaster preparedness and institutional development. The delegation team together with the NS continued its work in facilitating the process of co-operation within the Movement. The regular meetings between the HRC, the Federation and the Participating National Societies (PNSs) have been resumed. As a result, a number of areas have been identified for future action, for example, volunteer motivation, as 2001 is the International Year of Volunteers, and joint analysis of different ways to promote branch development. Working groups will be set up to follow up on these and other initiatives. In the context of the CAS, all PNSs have defined their co-operation with the HRC in qualitative and quantitative terms.

During this period, work was resumed to finalise the delegation's plan of action. This process, due to be completed in November, will result in the formulation of precise plans, specifying expected results, time frames and qualitative and quantitative indicators in all Federation supported programmes.

Disaster Preparedness •

In anticipation of emergency situations that may arise with the arrival of winter, all relief workers from HRC branch units are on alert to take fast, effective action, if required. The HRC Disaster and Emergency Administration Office (OPADE) has closely monitored all emergency situations which have occurred during this period, maintaining the information network permanently active and issuing technical reports on the situation. This first trial of the HRC's new disaster preparedness structure highlighted the need to draw on specialists in disaster information management and to ensure connection to the internet. It is hoped that OPADE will be considered as a reference point in disaster management at national level. With the support of the Federation, work has continued on constructing a database containing information on available human and material resources both at National Society headquarters and at the branches. The database is due to be completed in November 2000.

A *Winter 2000 Disaster Response Strategy Workshop* was attended by representatives from 32 branches. Through the workshop, the Federation provided the National Society with support in formulating and revising its contingency plans at headquarters and branch levels, with a view to identifying, preparing for and coping with disasters which may occur in communities throughout the country.

The HRC, with the support of the Federation and PNSs, continued the Community Education Programme which consists of projects at three levels: healthy homes, disaster preparedness and temporary shelter management which are progressing well in the selected communities.

During the quarter, the National Society with support from the Federation team, formulated the first *Family Emergency Plan* campaign in the region. Carried out by OPADE with the support of the Federation as well as the PNSs, the campaign is aimed at encouraging Honduran families, focusing particularly on the most vulnerable populations, to formulate their own family emergency plan. On the basis of an assessment of the impact of the first campaign, there are plans to prepare another campaign for 2001 and to share the experience with other National Societies in the region.

Disaster Response •

Housing

The HRC continued the construction of houses for families made homeless by hurricane Mitch. To date, 1,691 homes have been completed and handed over to their new owners. The HRC signed a second agreement with the International Organization for Migration for the construction of a further 500 houses.

Macro shelters

During the first half of 2000 a large number of families moved from the macro shelters to new homes. It is hoped that this process will continue as planned and that all the families will have moved into their new homes by the end of next year. The macro shelter management handbook is currently being completed. A team of voluntary relief workers has been set up, formed by members of the community, who with the support of the HRC, will be responsible for dealing with emergencies at macro shelter sites. In addition to technical support and follow up, the Federation is financially supporting the HRC in its management of three of the macro shelters, with funding from the Japanese Red Cross Society.

Construction and rehabilitation of schools

To date, the HRC has completed 71 school and kindergarten projects. HRC youth, in co-operation with Spanish Red Cross youth, is implementing a *Bridges of Solidarity* project aimed at schools in the capital and in the north of the country.

Water/sanitation

Most of the Red Cross house building projects include the construction of water and sanitation systems. Community education focuses on promoting the rational use and management of water, hygiene and urban solid waste management, in addition to other health and environment-related considerations. The aim of the health component is to prevent the spread of disease and to raise awareness of potential health problems.

The projects carried out by the HRC through the Federation, with funding from the Japanese Red Cross Society, included the construction of a water supply system in Talanga, which has now been completed, serving 400 families in the community. Thanks to this project, the incidents of waterborne diseases such as diarrhoea and skin diseases are expected to decrease significantly. In addition, the inhabitants will no longer have to walk several kilometres each day to fetch water.

Health

The HRC has decided to set up a health and community assistance department which will serve as the focal point for all co-operation activities in the areas of health and social welfare and for the co-ordination of other activities and programmes, such as the blood bank. It will provide effective liaison with the Ministry of Health and the Pan-American Health Organization (PAHO).

In view of the increase in the number of cases of dengue fever, HRC youth has mobilized its brigades in the most vulnerable areas. As part of the tropical diseases project, these young people raise awareness among the population of the risks involved in not taking the necessary preventive measures to check the spread of the disease.

In the department of Comayagua the new annex was inaugurated for the pre-hospital service module, which will be on permanent standby to deal with any emergencies occurring there and in the surrounding area.

As part of the HRC national blood programme, 80% of the project to extend the San Pedro de Sula blood bank has been completed, with the support of the Italian Red Cross. A viability study was also carried out on setting up a blood bank at La Ceiba in the north of the country. The Italian Red Cross is also carrying out a regional project to promote voluntary blood donation which will be implemented in Honduras.

Institutional development •

In accordance with the institutional development programme aimed at strengthening the capacities of the Honduran Red Cross, strategic planning workshops have been held in all departments of the National Society. Sectoral plans are essential for the drawing up of the HRC national development plan. The first draft of the development plan, a fundamental part of the ongoing process of strategic planning, is due to be completed in December 2000.

Both the Federation and the PNSs work closely with the branches to strengthen their capacities to identify, formulate, carry out and evaluate community projects, so that volunteers acquire valuable experience in their management. There are plans to formulate an institutional development methodology for all the HRC branches. The process is being led by the Federation in close co-ordination with the HRC, and several National Societies (those of the United States, Canada, Spain and the Netherlands) are involved in the implementation.

Under the direction of the HRC and with the support of the Federation, an institutional video is being produced and is due to be presented in November. This will provide the HRC with an effective dissemination tool for its activities and it will be useful in supporting fund-raising and volunteer engagement.

Taking into account that next year is the International Year of Volunteers, a committee has been set up to assist the HRC in strengthening its volunteer recruitment programme. There are plans to formulate a volunteer training/recruitment plan, to appoint a co-ordinator and to revise the internal organisation of volunteer groups.

Outstanding needs

Contributions have been received from the Danish Red Cross, the Japanese Red Cross, the New Zealand Red Cross, the Norwegian Red Cross and the Spanish Red Cross. Furthermore, the Swedish Red Cross and the Netherlands Red Cross contributed to the review of major operations in the Americas: Hurricane Mitch, Hurricane Georges and floods in Venezuela. The report is available from the Americas department on request. Following the budget revision, the appeal coverage stands at 96.8%. Additional contributions are required to cover the shortfall in order to boost support for administration and co-ordination.

External relations - Government/UN/NGOs/Media

In accordance with the process of developing partnerships for National Society activities, institutional relations have been established with the *Universidad Tecnológica Centroamericana* (UNITEC) to explore the possibility of a strategic co-operation partnership for formal and informal education and for technical assistance required in HRC programmes.

The Delegation together with the NS plans to make an official presentation of its team and its work to all governmental bodies and international missions, NGOs and the United Nations agencies before the end of the year.

Contributions

See Annex 1 for details.

Conclusion

The HRC is fully committed at all levels to the process of change required to develop a strong, well-functioning National Society with programmes that are effective in addressing the country's vulnerabilities. The process undertaken to strengthen the HRC's disaster response capacity, co-ordinated through OPADE, is already showing results. Focusing attention on the recruitment, retention and motivation of volunteers is the next step that the National Society needs to take towards strengthening its capacity to deal with emergency situations.

Action taken by the HRC, in close co-operation with the PNSs, is centred on the reconstruction and rehabilitation process and on areas such as health, institutional development of branches and support for

the disaster preparedness process at branch level. It is estimated that around 50% of reconstruction and rehabilitation projects have now been completed.

The Federation delegation together with the NS is working to analyse future medium-term co-operation perspectives with a view to determining which HRC priority sectors require most promotion among new donors and strategic partners. The tools the Delegation has at its disposal to achieve this (CAS, RAS, sectoral plans, Strategy 2010) and those to be developed in the near future (development plan, Delegation plan of action) are key elements which will help the HRC in its co-operation process.

Since August, the Federation Delegation in Honduras has been reporting directly to the Regional Delegation in Guatemala. Since September, the Delegation has a new HoD who is, at the same time, regional representative of the Italian Red Cross and head of the Federation delegation in Honduras.

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Honduras		ANNEX 1	
<u>REVISED BUDGET SUMMARY</u>			
TYPE			
	<u>Initial budget</u>	<u>Revised budget</u>	<u>Variances</u>
RELIEF NEEDS			
Shelter & constructions	1,200	80,525	(79,325)
Clothing & textiles	1,645		1,645
Food & seeds			0
Water		66	(66)
Medical & first aid		623	(623)
Teaching materials		49	(49)
Utensils & tools	133,500		133,500
Other relief supplies		116	(116)
TOTAL RELIEF NEEDS	136,345	81,378	54,967
<u>CAPITAL EQUIPMENT</u>			
Land & Buildings	300,000	51,195	248,805
Vehicles		31,008	(31,008)
Computers & telecom	210,300	42,099	168,201
Office furniture & equipment		26,901	(26,901)
Other equipment	951,780	5,440	946,340
<u>PROGRAMME SUPPORT</u>			
Programme management (automatic calculation)	624,173	106,309	517,863
Technical support (automatic calculation)	186,845	31,823	155,021
Professional services (automatic calculation)	207,209	35,292	171,917
<u>TRANSPORT STORAGE & VEHICLE COSTS</u>	24,300	61,182	(36,882)
<u>PERSONNEL</u>			
Expatriate staff	1,267,400	438,815	828,585
National staff	263,200	380,827	(117,627)
Training fees		2,013	(2,013)
<u>ADMINISTRATIVE & GENERAL SERVICES</u>			
Travel & related expenses	135,150	58,068	77,082
Information expenses	41,580	23,962	17,618
Administrative & general expenses	280,020	200,689	79,331
Professional fees		(414)	414
TOTAL OPERATIONAL NEEDS	4,491,956	1,495,210	2,996,747
TOTAL APPEAL CASH, KIND, SERVICES	4,628,301	1,576,588	3,051,713
LESS AVAILABLE RESOURCES (-)		1,526,253	
NET REQUEST		50,335	

Honduras						ANNEX 1
APPEAL No. 01.19/2000		PLEDGES RECEIVED			11/13/00	
DONOR	CATEGORY	QUANTITY	UNIT	VALUE CHF	DATE	COMMENT
CASH						
REQUESTED IN APPEAL CHF ----->				1,576,588		TOTAL COVERAGE 96.8%
Balance carried forward from 1999				400,434		
Reallocation of Income				170,242		
DANISH - RC				37,869		
DANISH - RC PRIVATE DONORS				20,827		
JAPANESE - RC		25,960,000	JPY	424,576	15.08.00	WAREHOUSE, OPP, WATSAN, REHABILITATION PROJECTS, MACROALBERGUES, SUPPORT 4 BRANCHES
NETHERLANDS - RC				10,000	28.08.00	OPERATIONS REVIEW
NEW ZEALAND - RC		1,087	NZD	841	30.06.00	
NEW ZEALAND - RC		538	NZD	416	22.06.00	
NORWEGIAN - RC		228,550	NOK	43,503	26.10.00	REHABILITATION/NAT. COORDINATION
SPANISH - RC		105,000,000	ESP	250,000	07/02/99	Remaining funds (approx CHF 636.000 will be used in 2001)
SWEDISH - RC		25,000	SEK	4,753	03.07.00	REVIEW OF MAJOR OPERATIONS
SUB/TOTAL RECEIVED IN CASH				1,363,461	CHF	86.5%
KIND AND SERVICES (INCLUDING PERSONNEL)						
DONOR	CATEGORY	QUANTITY	UNIT	VALUE CHF	DATE	COMMENT
Spain	Delegate(s)			57,166		
Italy	Delegate(s)			34,990		
Great Britain	Delegate(s)			43,696		
USA	Delegate(s)			26,940		
SUB/TOTAL RECEIVED IN KIND/SERVICES				162,792	CHF	10.3%
ADDITIONAL TO APPEAL BUDGET						
DONOR	CATEGORY	QUANTITY	UNIT	VALUE CHF	DATE	COMMENT
SUB/TOTAL RECEIVED				0	CHF	
THE FOLLOWING PROJECTS ARE LINKED TO THIS APPEAL:						
PHN000, PHN506.						