

PALESTINE RED CRESCENT SOCIETY:

*8 September,
2000*

appeal no. 01.41/2000

situation report no. 1

period covered: January - June, 2000

The Primary Health Care programme of the PRCS has proved to be a great success. This community-based programme is an important element in the process of building capacity within the National Society as well as the communities involved. The PRCS is also leading the DPP process in Palestine.

The context

The Autonomous and Occupied Territories (A/OT) in the West Bank and Gaza have their political and legal origins in the Middle East conflict, i.e. the creation of the state of Israel in 1948, the ensuing Israel-Arab war from 1948-1950, and 1967. With the signing of a declaration of principles between the Israeli Government and the PLO in Oslo in 1993 (the Oslo accords), a framework for a peace-for-land deal was outlined, which was intended to culminate in a final status agreement. However, after the creation of a set of autonomous areas for the Palestinians scattered across the territories, no further significant results were achieved between 1994 and 1999, a period which saw continued Israeli expansion in the West bank.

With the arrival of a new Israeli Government in 1999, the peace process was restarted. However, the possibility of reaching a final status agreement between Israel and the Palestinians, jointly scheduled for September 2000, is a challenge requiring far reaching concessions.

Some 2.9 million Palestinians living in the A/OT, of which 65% reside in the West Bank. The population density there is 267 people per square kilometre, compared to 2,596 persons per square kilometre in Gaza. In all, the Palestinians are the single largest refugee groups in the world, totalling over 3.5 million as registered by UNWRA, living in Palestine A/OT, Jordan, Syria, and Lebanon.

Three decades of occupation and Israel's continuous direct and indirect control over life in the West Bank and Gaza have hampered the development of a social and economic fabric that could address important humanitarian needs. The limited independence enjoyed by the Palestine Authority in areas

scattered across the West Bank and Gaza makes it very difficult to create the institutions and infrastructure needed to alleviate the wide range of hardships facing Palestinians. The fragmented health care system is one example.

To respond to the humanitarian needs, the overall objective of the Federation's assistance strategy is to support the Palestine Red Crescent Society (PRCS) is to encourage the development of a community based Society providing services that respond to local priorities and needs. To achieve this aim, it is encouraging the building of a clear organisational structure and a performance-oriented approach to service delivery. Progress is intended to keep pace with the political process to reach a final status agreement, so that when this is achieved, a unified National Society is in existence and better prepared for recognition by the Movement.

The Federation's approach to its institutional development assistance is to support management and planning, branch development and communications and information. Through training and workshops, the Federation intends to focus on the development of integrated, community services in core programme areas. These priorities will reinforce PRCS efforts to meet its principal challenge: to develop, maintain and consolidate the services expected of it by the Palestine Authority and the Palestinian people in its role as the most important humanitarian organisation in the A/OT.

Latest events

The complex nature of the ongoing Israeli-Palestinian conflict defines daily life in the Palestine Autonomous and Occupied Territories. The final agreement between the Palestinians and the Israelis over core-questions of borders, Jewish settlements, water supply, refugees and the status of East-Jerusalem continue to present serious obstacles to the talks. Meanwhile, negotiations between Israel and Syria have also encountered serious constraints.

The withdrawal of Israeli troops from Lebanon has been a significant event for the peace process, particularly because it has been implemented more peacefully than anticipated.

Red Cross/Red Crescent action

The technical co-operation with the Palestine Red Crescent Society (PRCS) has focused on qualitative development of integrated projects in the areas of Primary Health Care, Community Based Special Education, Disaster Preparedness and Branch Development. The targeted issues have included policies, protocols, relevance, standards, performance and interaction with other players, governmental and non-governmental. The Federation efforts towards institutional development have increasingly focused on Branch Development, on the National Society headquarters planning and reporting procedures and on strengthening management systems and human resources required for the implementation of new projects.

The PRCS is a truly dynamic Society with an impressive range of services meeting important needs of the Palestinian local communities. The National Society is developing a community-based approach through its network of primary health care and rehabilitation centres and their nurses and social workers who are addressing vital priorities endorsed by the communities.

Health •

Important links have been established with the Australian and German Red Cross Societies concerning Primary Health Care (PHC) within the Community Outreach Programmes targeting vulnerable groups, including girls, adolescents and the elderly. The priority health needs have been identified in partnership with target communities.

The Community Based Preventive and Promotional Health programme has been implemented in all 20 PHC centres in the Palestine Autonomous and Occupied Territories. The PRCS PHC Department has also started the implementation of the Women and Children Health Pilot Project in 8 target areas: 5 in the West Bank and 3 in Gaza. A special Nursing at Home project is also underway. The activities in Health Education (HE), Community Based First Aid (CBFA) and in "micro-projects" are running well in all PHC centres. Health Education including dental health prevention is the core activity of the PHC community outreach programmes and is carried out in schools in all areas where the PRCS is present. The HE programme for kindergartens and other beneficiaries in local communities are also running according to the schedule.

Capacity Building •

A vulnerability and capacity assessment (VCA) was initiated in June and should be finalised in August 2000.

For this process, 7 focus groups, conducted by social workers, and facilitated by task force members, had been implemented in the West Bank. All workshops (a total of 12) were planned to be completed by 25 July. Focus groups in the Gaza Strip are scheduled for August. For cultural considerations towards gender issues, a special focus group was comprised of women alone at one of the villages. The social workers attended 2 training sessions in focus group management prior to actual implementation.

A total of 21 interviews conducted by the task force covered representatives from a number of ministries, local NGOs, international organisations working in Palestine, in addition to research centres and academic institutions. Interviews continued until the end of June. A one-day training session on how to conduct interviews was conducted with the participation of all task force members.

In terms of secondary data collection, literature available on the subject is being compiled including studies, research, maps, environmental assessments and educational material produced by different sources. The search also includes the Internet, local and regional sites.

During the reporting period, the steering committee held four meetings in which the design and feedback on the VCA and methodology was provided. The committee enjoys the full support of the ministry of health as well as the civil defence authorities.

Outstanding needs

The Federation intends to expand its support to the PRCS through country and regional programmes such as Health and Disaster Preparedness since they considered areas of high importance for the PRCS. Stronger support is needed for these programmes as well as for the Federation Office in the PRCS Headquarters in Al-Bireh.

External relations - Government/UN/NGOs/Media

The PRCS and its programmes have been presented to a wide range of regional and local stakeholders. Regular contacts have been held with a number of National Societies.

Contributions

See Annex 1 for details. Please note that in addition to the donors listed, there are a number of direct contributions to the field for which Pledge Management Notes (PMN's) do not exist; therefore the contributions list does not reflect this support to the programme.

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Palestine RCS						ANNEX 1
APPEAL No. 01.41/2000		PLEDGES RECEIVED				15/09/00
DONOR	CATEGORY	QUANTITY	UNIT	VALUE CHF	DATE	COMMENT
CASH						
REQUESTED IN APPEAL CHF ----->				2,078,000		TOTAL COVERAGE 54.3%
Balance carried forward from 1999				4,912		
NORWEGIAN - GOVT/RC		4,100,000	NOK	811,698	27/01/00	INST. DEV. 80 % GOVT.20% RC
NORWEGIAN - GOVT/RC		1,176,470	NOK	222,586	08.08.00	COMMUNITY BASED SPECIAL EDUCATION PROGRAMME
SUB/TOTAL RECEIVED IN CASH				1,039,196	CHF	50.0%
KIND AND SERVICES (INCLUDING PERSONNEL)						
DONOR	CATEGORY	QUANTITY	UNIT	VALUE CHF	DATE	COMMENT
Norw ay	Delegate(s)			60,123		
Sw eden	Delegate(s)			29,897		
SUB/TOTAL RECEIVED IN KIND/SERVICES				90,020	CHF	4.3%
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:						
PPS000, PPS001, PPS002, PPS003, PPS160, PPS007						