

PAKISTAN: BUILDING CAPACITIES

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2000

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period covered: 1 January - 30 June 2000

The Pakistan Red Crescent Society (PRCS) was active during the reporting period in assisting vulnerable drought victims in Balochistan and Sindh provinces. A disaster preparedness plan was drawn up at the level of the National Society and a model community based disaster preparedness training programme is ready to be piloted. Health is currently seen as a major priority and the arrival of the regional health delegate during the reporting period is an asset in this respect. Emphasis has been placed on improving communications between the headquarters and branches and on internal systems. Lack of funding has proved a considerable constraint.

The context

Pakistan is the world's second-most populous Muslim country with an estimated 140 million inhabitants, of whom 70 % live in rural areas. However, most health care is concentrated in urban areas, and rural facilities are often badly understaffed and under-equipped. Overall, expenditure on public health is less than 1 %. One quarter of new born babies have low weight and 62 % of children under five suffer from malnutrition. Approximately 45 % of the population has no access to health facilities and 30 % has no access to safe drinking water.

Independent Pakistan's history since its partition half a century ago has been dominated by three themes: tense relations with its large southern neighbour, India, especially now that both countries are nuclear powers; its regional problems; and political instability, with long periods of military rule. Political instability has had a significantly adverse impact on Pakistan's overall development, slowing down the

search for solutions to the country's many social and economic problems, including the question of land ownership and distribution.

Pakistan is vulnerable to a range of disasters. Located over some of the most active tectonic faults, it regularly experiences strong earthquake in both the arid west and the mountainous north. Extensive flooding occurs almost annually in the central India Valley and the huge Indus delta plain, causing significant damage to a predominantly agrarian society. Droughts in the arid western areas cause food shortages, while cyclones occasionally make landfall in the densely populated coastal plains of Sindh province. Two permanent threats looming over the country are increasing communal violence and the continuing conflict with India over territorial claims.

Pakistan has a well-established and effective government early warning system for river floods that helps limit loss of life and livestock. In addition, many flood-prone communities are taking preventive or preparedness measures, encouraged by a variety of organisations, including the Pakistan Red Crescent Society (PRCS). The potential of community action is increasingly being recognised in the rural context, where women's self help groups are emerging and adding to community based resources.

Latest events

The regional health delegate, who is permanently located in Islamabad, arrived in mid-May; therefore until that date, Federation support specifically for PRCS had been limited. However it is now hoped that more focused support can be given to PRCS in the four key areas of disaster response, disaster preparedness, health and the promotion of humanitarian values, within the overall goal of strengthening the capacity of the National Society.

The country remained generally quiet under ongoing military rule, although there were widespread strikes by shopkeepers and traders over the government's wish to impose a tax revenue system, and a continuing debate concerning the extent to which Pakistan is, and should be, an Islamic state. In this regard, cable television companies in the NWFP have been closed down.

The drought continued to become more serious and widespread, probably affecting around two million people mainly in the Baluchistan and Sindh provinces, with areas of the Punjab which adjoin Rajasthan in India, also becoming affected. An international appeal for assistance with food and other support was launched at the end of this reporting period.

Red Cross/Red Crescent action

Disaster Response •

Drought: Baluchistan and Sindh

Pakistan is currently in the grip of drought in two large but distinct areas in Pakistan - Baluchistan and the Thar Pakar area of Sindh. It is estimated that over two million people are affected by the drought. Pakistan Red Crescent Society branches have been involved in monitoring the situation, and keeping the authorities informed of cases of urgent need. Small-scale food distribution projects are in operation, but these are limited by the lack of resources available to local branches. In general, the branches are well respected by local government.

A Joint (Federation/National Society) Assessment Mission was completed in May, based on which appeal 17/2000 was launched.

The Appeal aims to enhance the PRCS response by:

- Expanding drought relief activities.
- Fodder relief for animals.
- Assistance in camps, particularly the provision of potable water and health care.
- Building a monitoring system.
- Capacity-building for Red Crescent branches, to prepare branches for the eventuality of increased population movements.

Disaster Preparedness •

Community-Based Disaster Preparedness

Country Assistance Strategy (CAS) objectives:

- Training in community-based disaster preparedness for Red Crescent staff, volunteers and community leaders;
- Disaster Preparedness training to achieve a gradual change in the community's attitude and increasing its self-sufficiency level;
- Compilation of a database on vulnerabilities and capacities to compensate for the lack of baseline information in the preparation of a disaster preparedness plan;
- to continue creating a higher level of public awareness on disaster preparedness;
- to continue building a positive image of PRCS in the community and strengthen the Society's membership base and support the work of the volunteer corps.

The National Society has a disaster preparedness (DP) plan and intends to undertake a training workshop in community based disaster preparedness. More focused Federation support has been planned for the National Society in the area of disaster preparedness.

The proposal currently developed by the Society is to build on 4 workshops which were conducted for the police, the army, district officials and branch staff to prepare disaster plans and contingency strategies. A model for a pilot community-based training programme includes:

- Comprehensive village based plans based on pre-emergency season vulnerability assessments and hazard mapping;
- Clear responsibilities between village level volunteer action teams, local government officials, PRCS branch staff, NGOs;
- Early warning systems to alert highly vulnerable communities;
- Baseline indicators - to mitigate against the loss of life, property and assets as occurred in previous disasters and show a clear impact of preparedness measures.
- Agreeing follow-up learning and evaluation processes to help scale up future multi-institutional responses which involve the community in a participatory manner.

Health •

The Federation's involvement in the health programmes of the PRCS has been limited in the absence of a health delegate for the region. Now, with a health delegate who is based in Islamabad, health is set as a major priority. In particular, the assessment of the blood programme and the development of the health programme in Baluchistan will be immediate priorities.

Traditionally, the PRCS's health activities have included the running of blood and MCH programmes and there are plans for a community health programme in Baluchistan. Support is now needed for developing capacity at headquarters and branch levels in the planning, implementation and ongoing

management of health programmes which will make a difference to the health of vulnerable people in the community.

Community Based First Aid (CBFA) Training

Country Assistance Strategy objectives:

- to reduce death and disability due to ignorance and lack of timely first aid measures.
- to improve disaster preparedness by including this subject in CBFA training courses .
- to improve the skills of first aid trainers in PRCS.
- to increase awareness of the importance of the role of women in society.

This project is relatively new and was not included in the annual appeal 2000. Funding for the project has been provided by CIDA. PRCS was able to refurbish its current training facilities at the national headquarters by procuring essential, up-to-date audio-visual, computer and other technical equipment and material. In May, the National Society ran a community based first aid training workshop at the headquarters for around 20 volunteers. Most of those attending were female, and each of the four provincial branches was represented.

Safe Blood Programme

Country Assistance Strategy objectives:

- Education and motivation to expand the voluntary donor base in the community.
- Increased blood collection and voluntary blood donor retention.
- Full screening of all collected blood to ensure safe quality.
- Continuation and possible expansion of the preparation of blood components.
- Exploration of possibilities for cost recovery to increase sustainability of the programme.

During the reporting period, funding contributions for this programme were not received.

Baluchistan Primary Health Care Infrastructure

Country Assistance Strategy objectives:

- MCH-centres (four centres in Baluchistan)
 - a. Provision of essential primary health services in remote districts of Baluchistan. This will include health education, epidemiology/immunisation, MCH services including family planning, nutritional as well as hygiene and sanitation education, essential drug provision, basic curative services, referral services to secondary and tertiary health services;
 - b. Training and follow-up / supervision of volunteers attached to first aid posts.
- First Aid Posts (six attached to each MCH-centre)
Provision of community-based first aid and disaster preparedness services to clusters in remote parts of Baluchistan. This service will also include basic health interventions, early detection of illnesses, as well as the basic health and sanitation education.
- Mobile Clinics (one attached to each MCH-centre)
Provision of essential primary health services to the sparse population living in remote areas and/or far away from existing or newly planned static facilities. This service will also provide access to basic essential drugs, health and sanitation education, family planning, as well as important referral and transport to secondary and tertiary health services in emergencies.

The project has received a Norwegian Red Cross donation for six first aid posts.

Strengthening Reproductive and Child Health Services

Country Assistance Strategy objectives:

- Establish a community health unit at NHQ.
- Train and deploy 10 project medical officers.
- Train and deploy 60 community health workers.
- Develop a sustainable model to provide high quality reproductive and child health services to help in decreasing maternal and infant morbidity and mortality rates in the country.
- Educate and create awareness among the community on reproductive and child health care, first aid, preventive health care including HIV/AIDS, thereby improving living standards.
- Upgrade and maintain the existing 30 MCH centres of the 61 run by the Red Crescent in the country.
- Assist in institutional capacity building.

Over the reporting period, no funding contributions were received to implement activities..

Humanitarian Values •

The regional delegation continued to provide financial and technical support to the information unit of the PRCS. The salary of the PRCS information officer is currently funded by SARD and the regional information delegate is helping to develop the capacity of the unit. Support has been provided in communications planning and implementation and guidelines have been drafted for a communications strategy for the PRCS. The regional delegation has also co-organised and funded a two day information training workshop for thirty participants from PRCS provincial and district branches which dealt with practical and theoretical aspects of communications.

Capacity Building •*Institutional development*

Institutional development has taken the form of a component of the other programmes. It is planned to undertake institutional development as a separate programme within the Pakistan Red Crescent Society. The arrival of a regional institutional development delegate in the South Asia region has prompted this initiative.

The regional institutional development delegate visited the Society in April and agreed with the PRCS a set of activities which aim to move forward from the recent institutional self-analysis towards a clear capacity building plan in the areas of financial management, management and reporting systems, external relations and image building through a communications strategy, supported by the regional information delegate.

Activities have taken place to consolidate the branch and headquarters interface to improve programme effectiveness and strategic planning through workshops for staff (bringing together financial, managerial and information staff) to improve understanding of mutual roles; quarterly meetings of provincial secretaries and headquarters management to develop integrated programme development; and initiating computerisation of accounting with related training at branch and headquarters level.

The Federation and the ICRC have funded the innovative development and cooperation unit (DCU) that was set up as a result of the internal capacity assessment process completed early in 2000. The DCU's aim to build strategic partnerships with all provincial branches was furthered in April by the appointment of four provincial branch development and cooperation officers to continue to improve the liaison between the Branches and the headquarters.

Over the past few months, the DCU has played a leading role in developing clear monitoring and evaluation indicators; supporting the development of new financial guidelines (as agreed with the regional finance delegate during her mission to Pakistan in April 2000); and developing the institutional capacity of PRCS through strategic planning and the drawing up of a long term development plan for 2001-2003.

The DCU will also play a key role in the development of a human resource and management capacity building strategy for the Society. A mid-term review of the DCU will be carried out by the end of 2000 to agree on the level of strategic support and resourcing which the Federation and ICRC could provide since it aims to become a self-sustainable core unit of the PRCS.

The regional institutional development delegate has been asked to support the Society's need for a human resource development policy and plan (for staff and volunteers); an institutional development plan through a strategic planning exercise; and enhanced training facilities. Work has already begun on agreeing a strategic planning exercise which will have important institutional outcomes. It is hoped that such a common level of understanding of governance and management will be achieved; support will be gained for building on the strategic planning processes undertaken in the Society and for strengthening branch accountability mechanisms.

Finance Development Programme

Country Assistance Strategy objectives:

- to develop and improve the basic accounting, budgeting and financial management skills of finance staff.
- to train senior management in the importance of and the tools for finance management.
- to standardise and to strengthen the existing financial procedures and systems in the headquarters and branches.
- to install a computerised accounting function in the headquarters and branches.

The Society continues to improve its financial management systems. Specifically, training for PRCS headquarters and branch accounting staff was held which focused on technical aspects of budgeting, accounting, reporting and statutory issues. The workshop was successful in sharing experiences and knowledge within the Society, as well as learning from the different and wide experience of the facilitators (external auditors, Federation finance manager, head of the Nepal Red Cross Society finance department, and the PRCS principal accounts officer).

The Society has taken the positive decision to computerise its manual accounting system in the NHQ, and to begin to prepare its branches for computerisation. In the branches and the NHQ, PCs specifically for accounting purposes have been installed, training in basic computer functions has begun and areas of manual work which can be facilitated by electronic spreadsheets have been identified. Work has begun in the NHQ of analysing the needs of a computerised accounting system, with the aim of preparing a detailed specification.

The regional finance delegate and her team are actively involved in the finance development work in Pakistan, and undertook two visits during the reporting period.

Upgrade of Training Facility, Islamabad

Country Assistance Strategy objectives:

- to refurbish the current training facility;
- to procure essential and up-to-date audio-visual, computer and other technical equipment and material;
- to enable PRCS to carry out its training activities effectively and efficiently with increased cost effectiveness.

Although this project did not attract donor interest, objectives were met through the community based first aid programme.

Outstanding needs

Appeal coverage stands at 4.1 per cent; such a low level of funding has seriously hampered programme implementation.

External relations - Government/UN/NGOs/Media

The next level of the strategic planning process will enable the Federation to play a clearer support role, together with the ICRC, to develop a longer term agreement between all constituent parts of the Movement in the country. The current "Working Agreement" between PRCS, the Federation and the ICRC aimed at building the capacity of the PRCS is a significant attempt to minimise overlap and misunderstanding. However, the Agreement needs to be reviewed and developed into a clearer Memorandum of Understanding.

Following its work in the aftermath of the cyclone which hit the coastal areas near Karachi, the Pakistan government has increasingly involved the PRCS in its disaster preparedness initiatives. PRCS has been an active participant in the government's co-ordination meeting with all NGOs and UN organisations with a view to carrying out assessment of the drought situation in the country.

The media has also taken note of PRCS's regular activities, including its first aid training programme for police personnel. A seminar on the theme of the world disasters report was received with enthusiasm by the media in Pakistan.

The PRCS benefits from good relations with the NGO sector in the country.

Contributions

See Annex 1 for details.

Peter Rees-Gildea
Head
Relationship Management Department

Hiroshi Higashiura
Head
Asia and Pacific Department

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Pakistan						ANNEX 1
APPEAL No. 01.57/2000		PLEDGES RECEIVED				12/22/00
DONOR	CATEGORY	QUANTITY	UNIT	VALUE CHF	DATE	COMMENT
CASH						
REQUESTED IN APPEAL CHF ----->				1,249,000		TOTAL COVERAGE 4.1%
Balance carried forward from 1999				(18,072)		
BRITISH - GOVT				50,000	19.01.2000	DFID 1.4.2, 1.4.3
NORWEGIAN - RC				19,000	16.05.00	PRIMARY HEALTH CARE
SUB/TOTAL RECEIVED IN CASH				50,928	CHF	4.1%
KIND AND SERVICES (INCLUDING PERSONNEL)						
DONOR	CATEGORY	QUANTITY	UNIT	VALUE CHF	DATE	COMMENT
SUB/TOTAL RECEIVED IN KIND/SERVICES				0	CHF	0.0%
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:						
PPK000, PPK001, PPK002, PPK004, PPK160						