

GLOBAL PROGRAMMES: DISASTER RESPONSE

17 August 2000

*appeal no. 01.71/2000;
situation report no. 2
period covered: January - June 2000*

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The context

The global programmes of the Emergency Appeal 2000 have been designed to promote strategies, develop programmes and provide tools that would benefit all members of the Federation and the people they seek to help.

As the learning process and the development of skills are unending, the global programme for disaster response concentrates on applying standards and improving the quality of methodologies and tools, while also ensuring the adequate investment in improved monitoring and reporting to donors.

Red Cross/Red Crescent action

Emergency Response Units (ERUs) •

In January, the planning of the first logistics ERU workshop began with a meeting in Brussels with the participation of the Federation Disaster Response Staff, British Red Cross and Belgium Red Cross - Flanders. This group met a number of times and jointly organised a workshop, which was held in Belgium in June. A total of 22 people have been trained in the workshop and the logistics ERU is

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expected to be ready for deployment in the fall of 2000. Detailed ERU assessment checklists were also developed at the workshop.

Work on standardising the ERU equipment continues. In January, all national societies having telecom ERUs met with the Federation Field Support and Telecommunications Service to work on standardisation of the telecommunication equipment.

In April, the ERU review draft Terms of Reference were shared with all national societies with ERUs and later finalised. The review will be carried out by an external consultant in September. The focus of the review will be on the progress made in the ERU concept since the last review in 1997. Recommendations on future development of the ERUs will be made.

The Spanish Red Cross was visited in June by the Secretariat staff concerning the development of Spanish ERUs in the field of Basic Health Care, WatSan and Logistics. In the same month, following an earthquake, a Norwegian hospital ERU was deployed at Sumatra, Indonesia. Discussions on future utilisation of the hospital as a part of the regional DPP are underway. Discussions between the Turkish Red Crescent Society, Secretariat staff and the Norwegian and German Red Cross Societies were held also in June on co-ordination in ERU deployments in Turkey after the earthquake.

Liaison with the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) continues. In the first six months of 2000, the work of the Federation and the ERU concept have been presented at Civil and Military Co-operation (CIMIC) workshops organised by OCHA (Military and Civil Defence Unit - MCDU), and at the UN Disaster Assessment and Co-ordination (UNDAC) course.

In September, an ERU team leader course will be held in Geneva. Approximately 25 people will participate in the course. Several national societies interested in joining the ERU family have been invited to the workshop.

In relation with development of the Field Assessment and Co-ordination Teams (FACT), discussions have been held regarding the relation between FACTs and ERUs. Furthermore, the FACT workshop included a presentation on ERUs.

Field Assessment & Co-ordination Teams (FACT) •

The 1st FACT development meeting was held in Copenhagen in March 2000 and was attended by 17 Red Cross and Red Crescent Heads of International Departments. The objectives were to clarify FACT policies and procedures, to increase participation in the development of the FACT concept, to clarify roles and responsibilities of the ONS, PNS and Secretariat as well as to design the training system for FACT.

In this meeting, participants demonstrated that they really wanted this concept implemented for a wide range of practical reasons leading to faster and more effective disaster response. It was agreed that the next step forward to make the FACT operational was to start training of FACT members to create standby teams ready to be deployed before the hurricane season.

The first workshop for Field Assessment and Co-ordination Teams was held in France in June, training the first 32 FACT members. Participants in the workshop came mainly from the American, Australian, Austrian, Belgian, British, Canadian, Danish, Finnish, German, Japanese, Netherlands, Norwegian and Swedish National Societies. The FACT team represents a pool of experts from these National Societies who are mobilised and deployed when a major disaster occurs, carrying out assessments, liaising with partners, feeding back and establishing plans of action in order to facilitate the timely and professional emergency response of the Movement especially in large scale sudden onset disasters.

It was recognised at the workshop that assessment & co-ordination methodology require further consolidation within the FACT concept, hence an intranet for FACT members has been set up. The

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intranet will allow FACT members to continue to discuss and further develop the FACT concept via this discussion forum.

Furthermore, a database with all FACT members is under preparation, which will incorporate a roster system whereby FACT trained specialists and generalists can be quickly identified for rapid deployment. To ensure that the right communications equipment is available for immediate transport with the FACT teams, a stock of Global Positioning Systems (GPSs), Laptops, printers and a Satcom Global Area Network (GAN) have been pre-positioned in the Secretariat. The next step in this process is to hold a core group of FACT members meeting in Geneva or London before autumn, to review the current status, the outcome from the training and ensure that there are enough resources to move forward. This may constitute the emergence of a FACT steering group. In addition, 3 further workshops have been tentatively planned: one in Geneva, one in the Americas and one in the Southern African region. These workshops will train FACT members from Southern Africa and the Americas, thus building a regional FACT first response capacity in disaster prone regions. The workshop in Geneva will mainly focus on leading and co-ordinating international relief.

Regional Delegate Recruitment •

The Regional Delegate Recruitment and Training Programme has received continuing support during the year 2000 from a growing range of donor National Societies. There has been an encouraging increased involvement regarding exchange of human resources by all National Societies globally, including an emerging interest from Red Crescent Societies in the Middle East and North Africa. As a result of recruitment and training efforts, 85 nationalities are now represented among Federation delegates and almost 70 National Societies are supporting the programme.

Part of the final, Phase III, of the programme, remains focused on training National Societies and Delegations in pre-BTC selection and assessment. Hence, the training for South Asia/Delhi Regional Delegation was held in Kathmandu in March and the training for MENA (second workshop), Amman Regional Delegation took place in Jeddah in May. Pacific, Fiji Regional Delegation will take place at the end of July, either in Fiji or on Cook Islands.

Four regional basic training courses have been scheduled for this year: Abidjan/Yaoundé (June), Mexico (September), Nairobi/Harare (November) and Amman (November), notably to increase the pool of Spanish and Arabic speaking delegates. The percentage of National Society/Delegation BTC candidates recommended for international missions has increased to an average of over 85%, a significant improvement compared to the past where the recommended level varied between 15-40%. The approval rates from various BTCs may be one indicator that the Regional Delegate Recruitment and Training Programme has had a positive impact on the pre-selection of candidates. The other positive indicator can be found in delegates performance evaluations after completed missions.

An International Recruitment Handbook is being produced in four languages. Its completion, pending sufficient funding from donors, will have the highest priority in the coming months.

The change process has reached a certain level of sustainability so the central programme steering and co-ordination will be phased out gradually over the remaining part of the year. By the end of the year 2000, the Regional Delegate Recruitment and Training Programme will have been fully integrated into the budget and plan of the National Societies, the Federation Regional Delegations and the Federation Secretariat in Geneva, and will thus cease as a separate programme.

Co-ordination of Bilateral Assistance •

Due to the changing nature of the Secretariat's core function within the envisaged new organisation, this programme will be reviewed during the 2nd half of the year.

Procurement and Goods Mobilisation Systems •

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Its objective is to further develop the Federation's Disaster Response systems, standards and training. In April, the first meeting between the Federation, ICRC and a number of PNS was held to discuss standardisation of relief items, equipment and procedures. The meeting was an important step in standardising the logistics systems of the Federation and ICRC.

A number of new formats have been developed: a checklist for logistics assessment; a standard reporting format for warehousing; a database for tracking of commodities is being developed.

Furthermore, the Federation actively participated in the development of the first Belgian/British logistics ERU workshop. Two workshops will be organised for the latter part of the year - Procurement and Logistics in Emergencies.

Training in Disaster Response •

Disaster Response workshops are planned for the 2nd half of the year. The ERU Team Leader Workshop will be held in Geneva in September with 25 participants. Several national societies interested in joining the ERU family have been invited to participate. The Disaster Management Workshop will be held in Geneva in December. Over 23 Federation Senior Field Managers, National Society and Secretariat staff will attend. Other regional Disaster Management Workshops are anticipated to take place later in the year.

Delegates Handbook Revision •

Work on an addendum to the present Handbook for Delegates started in the last quarter of 1999. This update is not a major restructuring of the handbook as many parts of the present manual are still relevant, but it is rather a process of identifying outdated sections needing revision, as well as giving an opportunity to restructure certain areas and add new information to others. Major aspects covered by this addendum are: Strategy 2010 (core areas and country and regional strategies), the new Federation Constitution, the new Secretariat organigram, the Seville Agreement, new Federation policies, Finance, Reporting, Rules and regulations for field personnel (local staff), SPHERE, Logistics, and Information Systems and Telecommunications.

The production of the addendum was scheduled for April 2000. It has been stalled, however, due to very limited financial response to the appeal and staff involvement in Strategy 2010 working groups and restructuring of the Secretariat. Printing is now scheduled for the end of the third quarter of 2000.

Depending on the availability of funds, a major revision of the Handbook will be done as well as its promotion on the Internet and/or on CD-ROM. Having the Handbook on the internet/intranet should enable more regular updates of the different sections and ensure a much wider audience.

Field Reporting Formats •

The first phase in establishing standard field reporting formats is currently underway. This phase includes gathering various existing reporting standards in order to develop generic formats. The second phase will be to produce a set of operational standard reporting formats that respond to reporting needs in disaster situations and correspond better to overall donor reporting requirements.

Telecommunications and information systems •

No funding has been received for this component of the programme and therefore nothing has been done related to the original objectives.

Refugee and IDP work •

There is an increased awareness amongst National Societies as to the wider refugee and displacement issues. The review of the Federation refugee policy is partly complete, 74 individual societies having been consulted as well as ICRC and peer organisations such as UNHCR, OSCE, IOM and various governments. An interim report has been prepared and submitted to the Federation's Disaster Relief

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Commission (DRC) for their consideration. A consultant has been identified and will begin revising "Working with Refugees and Asylum Seekers" based on the recommendations of the DRC.

The Platform for European Red Cross Co-operation on Refugees, Asylum Seekers and Migrants (PERCO) has increased its membership from 11 to 13 by the addition of Belgium and Bulgaria (first accession State member). Additionally, the National Societies from Algeria, Libya, Tunisia, Egypt, Spain, France, Italy, Greece and Malta have agreed by way of a resolution made at the Mediterranean Conference to form a similar platform, the principle subject of which will be migration.

National Society secretaries general and presidents, population movement co-ordinators and government officials from the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) and Baltic countries met at Gudauri, Georgia in May. They too expressed a wish to form a similar platform to cover pan CIS/Baltic population movement issues. The final decision as regards such a platform will be made at the Pan-European conference to be held in Kiev in January 2001.

Work has begun on a series of refugee pages on the Federation's web site. Some information is available but it is anticipated that much more will be available by the end of the year. The current pages can be visited at <http://www.ifrc.org/what/response/refugees/index.asp>.

Security Training •

The training modules are under preparation. The training will be carried out in 2001.

Humanitarian Issues Research •

The Federation has been piloting an adaptation of the "Do No Harm" Project (also known as the Local Capacities for Peace Project) under the title Better Programming Initiative (BPI). This began in 1999 with programme analyses and ten training workshops in three pilot countries: Tajikistan, Ethiopia and Bangladesh.

A key objective is to see how the relief programmes in post-conflict situations can ensure equitable distribution of relief resources by analysing the context to ensure programming is properly informed and sensitive to historic and existing divisions. A further aim is to provide the National Society/Delegation staff with a basic analytical tool to assess how the provided relief can either strengthen or undermine relationships both within, and between, communities that are affected by high levels of tension, social violence or on-going disputes following the conflict.

A dissemination strategy is being developed together with a strategy to integrate the project findings into the Federation/NS programming. The Disaster Policy Department has been working with the Harvard Collaborative for Development Action (CDA) and two Federation delegates. Follow-up has taken place in Ethiopia on the two pilot projects to look at the inter-acton between relief programming and clan violence. A detailed analysis of these projects is planned for September/October. A refresher training workshop was carried out in Bangladesh in May in the context of on-going monitoring of the programme in the Chittagong Hill Tracts. An assessment of the impact of food security programming on tensions in targeted communities is planned for Tajikistan later this year.

The project has been expanded this year to include West Africa and Colombia. An introductory mission to Liberia got underway at the end of June. An introductory mission is scheduled for later this year in Colombia following a series of meeting with the Colombian Red Cross. A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) is being drawn up and links are being developed with the *Adios Violencia* campaign supported by the Norwegian Red Cross Society. Support to the regionalisation of the BPI in Central America is also being explored.

World Disaster Report •

The World Disasters Report 2000 was successfully launched at the end of June. The main global launch was in London in collaboration with the British Red Cross and attracted world wide media

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attention. At the same time, National Societies and delegations in some 70 countries also hosted launches.

The theme for this year - the interplay between public health and disasters - struck a cord in many countries, particularly in Sub Saharan Africa where the disaster of HIV/AIDS is one of the most serious threats to life on the continent.

Sales figures for the 1999 Report are now in, they show that in the past year some 1,500 copies of the Report have been sold, not including all those used for the launch..

Finally, work is well under way on the 2001 Report. The 2001 Report will focus on disaster recovery. How do and should agencies work in the aftermath of disaster, particularly where there is no sense of a return to normality.

Promotion of Quality Assurance and Sphere •

"States and the Movement will support efforts to develop minimum practical standards for the delivery of humanitarian assistance, such as those elaborated in the Sphere Project." - Plan of Action 27th International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement.

The Sphere Project was launched in July 1997 by an umbrella group of the world's leading humanitarian agencies including the Federation. In November 1998, a preliminary edition of the Sphere Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Disaster Response was produced with input of over 700 individuals from over 200 organisations in over 60 countries. This was further revised based on field testing and the first edition of the manual was published earlier this year (available at www.sphereproject.org).

The focus of Sphere is on the rights-based approach to the provision of humanitarian assistance. The Minimum Standards (MS) themselves cover the core disaster response areas of water supply and sanitation, nutrition, food aid, shelter and site planning, and health services. It also includes key indicators allowing you to measure implementation.

To date, the Federation has distributed 650 copies of the manual in English, French, Spanish and Russian to National Societies and Delegations around the world together with 250 copies of the video.

Sphere has been integrated into the Basic Training Courses and Induction Courses for new delegates. A section on Sphere has also been written for inclusion in the revised Handbook for Delegates. Dissemination workshops have been held for a number of donor National Societies. The concept has been introduced to almost all staff at the Secretariat. Since May 2000, the Federation has had three trainers of trainers in Sphere.

A key element of the Federation's strategy for promotion of Sphere is to identify operations in the field where Sphere can add value as an assessment tool and for capacity building in disaster preparedness and response. The Sphere Minimum Standards have been included as part of the guidelines for the preparation of the 2001-2002 Emergency Appeal. It is the stated aim of the Federation's Regional Departments that all new emergency appeals should be explicitly guided by Sphere.

Sphere is being piloted strongly in Southern Africa where a three-day workshop took place in Osiri refugee camp in Namibia in May and a plan has been developed to roll out Sphere training throughout the region. The field school approach to disseminating Sphere has been developed as a result of a mission to Mporokoso refugee camp in Zambia. It was used there to conduct an on-site evaluation of the water-sanitation programme which was found to be above the Minimum Standards. Local staff found this encouraging and are incorporating the Sphere into their training programmes for refugee volunteers in the programme.

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Sphere has been integrated into the Basic Training Courses and Induction Courses for new delegates. A section on Sphere has also been written for inclusion in the revised Handbook for Delegates. Dissemination workshops have been held for a number of donor National Societies. The concept has been introduced to almost all staff at the Secretariat. Since May 2000, the Federation has had three trainers of trainers in Sphere.

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Sphere is being piloted strongly in Southern Africa where a three-day workshop took place in Osiri refugee camp in Namibia in May and a plan has been developed to roll out Sphere training throughout the region. The field school approach to disseminating Sphere has been developed as a result of a mission to Mporokoso refugee camp in Zambia. It was used there to conduct an on-site evaluation of the water-sanitation programme which was found to be above the Minimum Standards. Local staff found this encouraging and are incorporating the Sphere into their training programmes for refugee volunteers in the programme.

Sphere is also a strong element in the Federation's planning and preparations for this year's Atlantic hurricane season in the Caribbean and Latin America.

Contributions

See Annex 1 for details.

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