

# **VIETNAM**

**CHF 2,727,000**

**Programme No. 01.27/2000**

## ***National Context***

Vietnam did not escape the effects of the Asian economic crisis, despite a healthy agricultural sector and a short-lived upsurge in foreign investment. Imports and exports were down in 1999 compared to previous years and, with the slow pace of bureaucratic reform, the economic situation seems unlikely to improve in the short term. Faced with widespread poverty – 50% of the population lives below the poverty line – increasing urbanisation, inadequate public health services and the lingering effects of war, the country's reliance on relief and development aid is expected to continue.

Vietnam's topography – a long coastline, wide river deltas and a mountainous backbone – and its situation in the typhoon centre of the Western Pacific and in the tropical monsoon zone of South East Asia make it one of the most disaster prone countries of the world. Each year 70% of the country's large (76 million) population is at risk, chiefly from water related disasters – rains, typhoons storms, flooding and flash floods – that with drought and other calamities cause widespread death and destruction and significantly limit the ability of vulnerable households to overcome poverty.

## ***Country Assistance Strategy***

The Federation will respond to the Vietnamese Red Cross's (VNRC) request for assistance in capacity building at national and provincial levels, and particularly in disaster prone provinces, in order to facilitate the realisation of programmes in its two priority service areas: disaster relief and preparedness and health and social work.

The Federation plans to support the reinforcement of VNRC's disaster response and preparedness services, putting in place the necessary systems and skills so that by 2001 the Society will be practically autonomous in at least the area of disaster preparedness. It will thus contribute to the VNRC plans for the years 2000 and 2001, which include strengthening the DP capacity of key provincial branches, developing systems for disaster preparedness and management at national, provincial and district level, and introducing a national DP training curriculum for staff and volunteers.

## ***Programme Objectives***

### ***Disaster Response***

The Federation will continue to respond to requests for international assistance.

### ***Disaster Preparedness***

The Federation will assist the Vietnam Red Cross with the development of its Human Resources at national, provincial and district levels (particularly in the most disaster prone provinces), to strengthen its infrastructure and institutional capacity to respond to disasters, and to improve its performance in risk reduction activities in these areas.

Thirty-five Provincial Trainers will be trained from 11 disaster prone provinces. They will train Red Cross staff involved in DP and relief, particularly those working in the 40 district disaster preparedness centres (DPCs) in 40 districts. Swimming, lifesaving and First Aid skills training will be provided to Red Cross staff and volunteers in six established river and sea rescue teams. Training in risk, vulnerability and capacity assessment will be provided to staff and volunteers of 4 districts each in 10 provinces. Low cost risk reduction activities will be piloted in all 21 selected provinces.

### ***Health***

A Social Work Programme, begun in 1996 and already covering 26 provinces, will be extended to another 15 provinces through basic training of resource persons who will work with communities, encouraging local initiatives and solutions to overcome difficulties. They will develop strategies, plans and practical tools to assist specific target groups (e.g. elderly, disabled, homebound, etc.). In the years 2000-2001, 20 local initiatives/small-scale community projects will be supported. A special project targeting very poor people with severe disabilities will be implemented in five provinces.

### ***Humanitarian Values***

The promotion of humanitarian values will continue to be integrated into all the National Society's programmes, notably through its training for staff and volunteers.

### ***Capacity Building***

An institutional development study in late 1999 highlighted as priorities the strengthening of the National Headquarters management capacity, the targeting of particularly vulnerable provinces, resource mobilisation and the promotion of Red Cross as a humanitarian component in Vietnam. The VNRC will be helped to strengthen its capacity at National Headquarters and in provinces which are particularly vulnerable to natural disasters through financial and material support for the NHQ, and through the launching of a basic training programme, the expansion of a branch development programme to eight branches, and the creation of a fund-raising department.