

Appeal 2001-2002



International Federation
of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

Pan-American Disaster Response Unit

(Appeal 01.25/2001)

Click on figures to go to budget

In CHF

1. Disaster Preparedness	1,672,000
Total	1,672,000

Pan-American Disaster Response Unit (PADRU)

Background and progress to date

Devastating incidents marked 1998 as the worst year in history for natural disasters in the Americas: 1999 was to be little better. Predictions for the future are for recurring and probably more damaging scenarios. The after effects of Hurricanes “Mitch” and “George” in 1998 were followed by the earthquake in Colombia, numerous floods, seismic eruptions and earthquakes in Ecuador, Nicaragua and Mexico, forest fires in Bolivia, flooding in Brazil, Hurricanes “Floyd” and “Lenny” in the Caribbean and the USA and finally in December 1999 the deadly landslides and flooding in Venezuela that cost up to 30,000 lives.

In 2000 several significant situations arose that gave the Federation the opportunity to test a disaster response pilot scheme in Central America and the Caribbean. A number of hurricane alerts and minor response requests from National Societies culminating in the serious impact of Hurricane Keith on Belize demonstrated the justification and effectiveness of the new approach.

Post Mitch/George analysis in many different agency reports showed that a “prevention, preparedness, response” culture was virtually non-existent. National governments were ill-prepared to deal with catastrophic events, multiple responders and substantive international intervention. Entering the new millennium, the huge loss of life and the damage to both basic infrastructures and national economies, along with the inevitability of reoccurrence, energized a new awareness. Governments and donors, the UN, the Red Cross and other humanitarian agencies were dramatically reminded of the frightening and increasing vulnerability of many Latin American and Caribbean countries to natural disasters.

During the last year the Federation has been addressing the need to review and reinforce its disaster response capability. A number of Red Cross documents specifically address this issue. The *Seville Agreement, Strategy 2010, the Principles and Rules for Disaster Relief, the Code of Conduct* and in the case

of the Americas, *The Santo Domingo Declaration*, all identify disaster response and preparation as critical areas for attention and call on the Secretariat to address the need for better coordination and more timely and effective assistance to all National Societies. In the meantime, as part of the Secretariat “change process initiative”, a new division for disaster management and coordination (DMC) has been created to strengthen this component of the Secretariat’s structure. Ongoing training for regional intervention teams and most recently the well executed response and relief operation in Belize are part of the ongoing process.

Anticipating the changes and following recommendations from internal reports, assessments, reviews and the lessons learned from major operations, the Americas Department took the initiative in March 2000 to strengthen the disaster response and preparedness services available to the National Societies and regional delegations by appointing a senior officer for pan-American disaster response coordination to be based in the region. The terms of reference for the officer included analysis of all response resources available in the region and creating a Federation focal point for coordination, capacity building and response; at the same time respecting and reflecting strategies emerging from the Secretariat change process, as well as integrating those existing services and support mechanisms such as the FACT and ERU teams. A working paper was produced on a pan-American disaster response strategy.

The working paper and the solution team process in Geneva led to the concept of a mechanism to create a strategic pan-American focal point for disaster response. The Pan-American Disaster Responses Unit was designed to bring together the Federation disaster response resources available within the Americas. Fundamental considerations were:

- To avoid creating a parallel structure or activity within the new regional or Secretariat structures, be it human resources, funding, projects or activities.
- The need to “link and match” PADRU activities to existing regional programmes such as disaster preparedness, institutional development and health, all of which contribute to disaster response, particularly in community-based and National Society capacity building programmes. This should be in such a way as to enhance and reinforce and not duplicate these long term programmes.
- PADRU must be a resource providing an added value service and a feeling of “ownership” to all Societies as well as the regional delegations to which it will be integrated as a unit similar to the existing Federation regional finance units.
- The PADRU reporting and accountability lines should reflect those developed to ensure maximum coordination and business methodology between the new divisions of the Secretariat.
- Administratively, the unit will report to the head of regional delegation in Guatemala as this will be the location of the regional finance unit. Its activities in any given region will, however, require accountability to the respective head of regional delegation.
- A regional evaluation and monitoring mechanism would be valuable including the heads of regional delegations, the head of PADRU as well as a representative of both National Societies from the region and a PNS.
- There is an existing pool of experience and resources which can be built on.

Secretariat Experiences:

- The experience of recent disasters in the Americas (as well as in other regions around the world), demonstrated the negative effect a major sudden onset emergency can have on the Secretariat’s regional departments, and their delegations’ ability and capacity to manage important ongoing long term programmes while concurrently responding to the emergencies.
- The three regional delegations tasked to cover 33 countries in the Americas, many disaster prone, were lacking a technical relief and response capacity. Critical functions such as health, logistics, water and sanitation and telecommunications, fundamental to professional response, but equally in coordination and capacity building, were virtually non existent.
- FACT and ERU teams clearly provide an essential response tool, but also need to consult, coordinate and integrate with existing regional response mechanisms to ensure maximum efficiency. In Central America and more recently the Caribbean, regional intervention teams (RIT) recruited from 14 Spanish speaking Societies, as well as those from the English and French Caribbean islands, trained to Federation standards have been

increasingly effective over the last two years as the Federation's first line of response and provide an effective foundation for FACT team support.

National Societies' Experiences:

- National Societies in the Americas are demanding improved capacity and training in disaster preparedness and response, yet at the same time, have an availability of competent staff experienced in other Red Cross work, who have great potential to fill this need.
- National Societies, particularly PNS, are demanding a high quality and speed of information exchange to plan their own response to appeals, and to answer the question always asked of them by their media and public: "What is the Red Cross doing?"
- Red Cross partners, even those who have a major bilateral consideration, expect the Federation to play a prime role in this coordination. At the same time, where substantial funds may be raised by Federation appeals, the Secretariat must be able to support, coordinate and, at times, even lead a National Society's response in implementing operations with these funds.
- Bilateral PNS are at their most active in this region. Their resources, such as emergency response units, logistic cells and other assets are considerable and hence require strong coordination to maximize the positive contribution they bring to an affected National Society's ability to react and perform.

Other Agencies:

There are other agencies and NGOs which are either already operational in a country or will arrive to assist. Many of them already, or would like, to work and coordinate with the Red Cross; among them UNDP/OCHA, PAHO, WFP, IDB, CARE, OXFAM. Opportunities for strategic regional alliances in disaster response and preparedness have not been well cultivated.

Coordination with regional structures and programmes: The PADRU will be an integrated component of the present regional structures, acting as a resource at the service of the Red Cross in the Americas - National Societies, Federation regional delegations and PNS. Critical to this is the understanding that disaster response is intimately linked to disaster preparedness and mitigation. Fast efficient disaster response can only be ensured if it is mirrored by maximizing the capacity of existing regional response mechanisms. Programmes reinforcing National Society and local disaster response capacity are best implemented through regional disaster preparedness, health and other capacity building and community programmes proposed in the 2001/2002 appeal, with technical support provided from the PADRU. The activities of the PADRU will complement and enhance those within the regional appeal programmes. However in addition, the unit will deliver, at the request of the regional delegations or National Societies, specialized technical support services such as relief, telecom, logistics and water and sanitation. Final allocation of resources to meet specific disaster response needs can and should be adjusted to reflect the funding reality of both the regional programmes and PADRU.

Funding: Funding for PADRU is based on two elements. Direct activities in support of "major" emergencies covered either by DREF or appeal funding would be included in the emergency appeal and contribute to the unit's deployment and participation in the operation. This component would be included in initial assessments and in consultation with the Secretariat and its regional delegations. PADRU core costs, long term capacity building activities, monitoring, vulnerability and risk assessment missions, "small disaster" support to regional delegations, specialized disaster response training and project workshops, travel, contribution to regional delegation services and support and other maintenance costs are included in the PADRU appeal 2001/2.

PADRU will develop and change its structure over the coming three to five years. During this period, there will be an opportunity to identify National Societies that could be able and willing to assume elements of the unit and "host" core functions.

Goal To improve Red Cross assistance to vulnerable people affected by disasters in the Americas by reinforcing the capacity of National Societies and the Secretariat to provide timely and professional disaster response services during emergencies.

Objectives and Activities planned

Objective 1 To establish, staff and train the Pan-American Disaster Response Unit, including a regional logistics cell.

The activities to achieve this objective are:

- Establish the PADRU, consisting of an immediate staffing of three specialist delegates (senior officer, relief, logistics) and an administrative assistant. The unit will subsequently be expanded as required, with delegates possibly based in different regional delegations in the Americas - head, two relief delegates, logistics, water and sanitation and telecom specialists - plus five or six local staff. A training delegate in finance/admin/human resources may be required for a short mission.
- Resource the PADRU with a modest office/control centre including materials and supplies, emergency response kits, IT and telecom material and equipment.
- Establish, as a component of the PADRU, a fully resourced pan-American regional logistic cell, based in Panama, with the acceptance and support of the Panamanian Red Cross Society.
- Complete a detailed plan of action and standard operational procedures for the PADRU in both English and Spanish.
- Ensure all PADRU delegates attend a minimum of one advanced training course in their discipline each year

Objective 2 As a resource of the regional delegations, to coordinate, and when necessary, participate in a rapid, expert Federation disaster response at the request of a National Society in the Americas facing a situation beyond its capacity.

The PADRU will provide resources in relief, logistics, health, telecom, information, finance and water and sanitation, at all times respecting and applying the SPHERE standards and incorporating existing Federation disaster response resources such as FACT and ERU teams. The PADRU will be governed by the Secretariat agreements on divisional responsibility for disaster response. This would mean directly supporting the regional delegations in all but exceptional emergencies when the responsibility for leading the action may be delegated to the unit. PADRU would then become accountable to the DMC for the duration of that specific operation only.

The activities to achieve this objective are:

- Establish with National Societies in the region and PNS where ever possible pre-disaster agreements or memoranda of understanding to define the roles and responsibilities of partners in disaster response.
- Provide rapid assistance to National Societies to meet the primary consequences of a disaster and also provide assistance in the prevention of secondary effects such as epidemics, injuries.
- Coordinate the deployment and management of RIT/FACT/ERU units in the field, in consultation with the Secretariat in Geneva.
- In consultation with the Secretariat logistics department in Geneva, provide decentralized logistics functions in support of emergency relief operations.
- In coordination with the regional delegations, maintain close liaison with National Societies in the Americas, especially in the areas of disaster preparedness/early warning and training.
- Provide support to National Societies affected by disasters, and coordinate first assessments, information bulletins, situation reports, speedy production of preliminary and full appeals and develop with the society and partners plans of action for the implementation of an emergency operation.
- Where appropriate, facilitate the delivery of funds and donations, and monitoring and reporting during the initial phases of an operation.

Objective 3 To develop and deliver a disaster response training and capacity building function.

The activities to achieve this objective are:

- In coordination with the regional delegations, support additional identification and training of RIT members in all regions.
- Complete in consultation with the regional disaster preparedness delegates, risk/vulnerability assessment missions in the top 20 high risk countries in the Americas, with plans and recommendations embedded in the regional and country assistance strategies.
- Coordinate and monitor, in consultation with the regional delegation in Guatemala, the implementation of the Central American regional communications and telecom network proposal.
- Identify within regional planning where National Societies may require specialised disaster response assistance and support to develop their relief departments, contingency and national disaster plans.

- Participate in effective implementation of regional and country disaster preparedness and institutional development projects and programmes through a strong cooperative relationship with regional delegates.
- Each year, carry out two specialized regional logistics training workshop for National Society staff in logistics, procurement, transport, warehousing and systems management.
- Carry out six specialized disaster response workshops each year in logistics, telecom, water and sanitation and relief.
- Complete two SPHERE training workshops each year (one in English and one in Spanish).
- Provide specialized disaster response technical expertise and participate in regional projects that address local capacity building in disaster preparedness, health, information and finance capacity building and community-based projects as detailed in regional and country assistance strategies and appeal programmes.

Objective 4 To enhance monitoring, reporting and coordination in disaster situations in the Americas.

The activities to achieve this objective are:

- Ensure accurate and rapid production of assessment, appeal documents and meaningful operations reports.
- Provide disaster response information, planning, coordination, liaison and communications resources and capacity to National Societies, the Secretariat in Geneva, donors and external agencies.
- Provide a focal point for coordination of external assistance (bilateral/UN/NGO).
- Coordinate with the regional delegation, the Secretariat and National Society information departments as regards the continuous monitoring of information sources/early warning systems.

Objective 5 To strengthen relationships with internal and external partners.

The activities to achieve this objective are:

- Attend, and where possible participate, in all important external and internal disaster response and preparedness seminars and conferences.
- Ensure a minimum of six “strategic alliance” meetings per year with external agencies and institutions.
- Maintain, in consultation with desk officers, a close cooperative relationships with major bilateral and donor National Society field representatives through appropriate level meetings and forums.

Expected results

- The overall effectiveness of the Federation’s disaster response at regional and national level will be measurably strengthened through quicker more targeted and professional service delivery to National Societies. In addition a significant number of “pre-disaster” agreements will have been signed.
- During 2001/2002 National Society disaster response capacity will have been strengthened through training and field experience through disaster preparedness and response workshops and response deployment in coordination with FACT/ERU and PNS support.
- The RIT teams in the region, including the Caribbean, will have received specialised training, ensuring a higher level of professional competence in disaster response activities such as logistics, telecom, health and water and sanitation.
- Through a process of selection and encouragement, the percentage of women receiving disaster response training both at National Society and community level will have substantially increased and participation of female members in relief and response teams both within National Societies and the RIT will have doubled.
- A total of the top 20 most vulnerable countries will have a disaster vulnerability risk assessment plan of action completed.
- At least three significant “non-Red Cross” strategic alliances will have been established.
- A detailed plan of action for PADRU and an pan-American disaster response standard operating procedures manual in English, Spanish and French will have been produced.
- A pan-American logistics manual in all three regional languages will have been completed.
- Regional delegations will have a significant amount of disaster response workload removed to allow them to concentrate on primary long term projects.
- Enhanced donor and PNS cooperation and financial, human resource and technical support for the PADRU.

Indicators

- Rapid, appropriate and well coordinated, monitoring and reporting of onset disasters and timely 24 hour response to National Society requests for assistance.
- A 20% increase in the number of operationally ready and trained RIT members in each region.

- Achievement of at least 90% of the stated training objectives noted.
- Disaster response, development and contingency plans for both delegations and National Societies will be in place.

Critical assumptions

- Political and social stability in the region allows progress on the development of the unit.
- Active participation in the design and application of regional and country assistance strategies by the National Societies in the region and the PNS.
- An integrated, transparent and collaborative disaster response and coordination policy by all Red Cross partners.
- Success in negotiating and signing status agreements, memoranda of understanding, pre-disaster agreements and other mutual assistance instruments to facilitate action.
- A larger and more effective DREF funding vehicle will be in place.
- A successful transition of the separation of the activities of DROC to the new matrix structure and methodology particularly between the programme coordination and disaster management and coordination divisions.

Monitoring and Evaluation arrangements

- Periodic internal and external evaluations of the PADRU progress, relevance and performance are planned.
- A Federation internal audit department management mission is proposed for mid-2001 to evaluate and comment on progress.
- National Societies from the region and PNS will report, through existing statutory and regional meetings and forums, on the value and effectiveness of the service delivery of the PADRU.
- The Federation Secretariat will assess the added value and effectiveness of the unit's performance through the evaluation process.
- A PADRU steering committee will provide up to a quarterly check and balance on the direction, effectiveness and add on value of the unit's activities.
- Standard quarterly and annual management and financial reports will be completed.

[return to top](#)

Appeal 2001		
DELEGATION: AMERICAS REGIONAL (PADRU)		
PROGRAMME	DP	TOTAL
Shelter & construction	0	0
Clothing & textiles	0	0
Food & seeds	0	0
Water	0	0
Medical & first aid	0	0
Teaching materials	0	0
Utensils & tools	0	0
Other relief supplies	0	0
Sub total supplies	0	0
Land & Buildings	0	0
Vehicles	169,400	169,400
Computers & telecom	35,593	35,593
Medical equipment	0	0
Other capital expenses	85,254	85,254
Sub total capital	290,247	290,247
Programme management	112,743	112,743
Technical services	33,749	33,749
Professional services	37,428	37,428
Sub total programme support	183,920	183,920
Transport & storage	31,806	31,806
Personnel (delegates & expatriates)	663,799	663,799
Personnel (local staff)	102,305	102,305
Sub total personnel	766,103	766,103
Travel & related expenses	80,992	80,992
Information expenses	0	0
Expert fees	0	0
Admin. - general expenses	76,286	76,286
Training workshops / seminars	242,646	242,646
Sub total travel, training, general exp.	399,924	399,924
Total budget	1,672,000	1,672,000