

PROGRAMME UPDATE



International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies
Fédération internationale des Sociétés de la Croix-Rouge et du Croissant-Rouge
Federación Internacional de Sociedades de la Cruz Roja y de la Media Luna Roja
الاتحاد الدولي لجمعيات الصليب الأحمر والهلال الأحمر

CENTRAL AMERICA

10 August 2001

This Programme Update is intended for reporting on Annual Appeals.

Appeal No. 01.26/2001

Appeal Target 3,951,408 (revised 9 August to CHF 3,156,099)

Programme Update No. 1 Period covered: 1 January - 30 June 2001

“At a Glance”

Appeal coverage: 85.6%

Related Appeals: 01.25/2001 Pan-American Disaster Response Unit; 01.27/2001 Guatemala; 01.28/2001 Honduras; 01.29/2001 Nicaragua

Outstanding needs: CHF 455,631

Update: Regional programmes in Central America progressed well during the first half of the year. However, the earthquake in El Salvador resulted in the diversion of resources to aid the victims of the disaster. Experience from the earthquake illustrated the value of a coordinated regional strategy, with the Pan American Disaster Response Unit, regional intervention teams and regional delegation all participating in the opération. The appeal has been revised downwards to reflect actual income but the overall programme is still seeking funding.

Operational Developments:

In 1997, the regional delegation for Central America moved from Costa Rica to Guatemala in order to reinforce support to the Guatemalan Red Cross (GRC) in a comprehensive post-conflict rehabilitation process. As a result of Hurricane Mitch in late 1998, Federation relief operations were set up in the worst-affected countries, and country delegation/offices remain in Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua and El Salvador.

A regional finance unit (RFU) was set up at the end of the year 2000, covering both the Central American and Caribbean regions and was operational by the beginning of 2001. This is an important step towards closer support in the area of financial management for both delegations and national societies in the regions.

An efficient response to the earthquake in El Salvador and a well coordinated appeal, reflecting long term development needs showed the importance of the support of the regional delegation as well as successful coordination with the Pan American Disaster Response Unit (PADRU). The setting up of this unit is a major contribution towards improved response capacity in the region.

The Mitch rehabilitation process is now coming to a close and the focus will, to a greater extent, be on long term development projects aiming at strengthening the capacities of the National Societies and local communities, with particular focus on strengthening of regional disaster response and preparedness mechanisms.

Institutional and Resource Development

Objectives: *The regional programme for institutional and resource development aims to strengthen the capacity of the national Red Cross societies to carry out their mandate in humanitarian relief, rehabilitation and development. The programme focuses on five key areas: governance and management; strategy and programme development; human resources development; financial resource development; and communication and information.*

An on-going series of training workshops focusing on national society governance and management were planned jointly with the ICRC and have been taking place at individual national society level since last year, involving personnel from headquarters and branches. Over the reporting period, the regional delegation has continued to provide support to the change process which is taking place within the Guatemalan Red Cross; work on revision of the GRC Statutes has been initiated and will continue during the second half of the year.

The CAPI 2 document has been translated into Spanish, and organisational development delegates have jointly revised and adapted some key sections.

The regional delegation participated actively in two reviews: the external review of major operations in the Americas (hurricanes Mitch and Georges, landslides in Venezuela), presented officially in Geneva in December 2000. This has been translated into Spanish and shared with all national societies and PNS in the region. Its contents have been discussed on various occasions, and relevant recommendations will, where feasible, be approved and implemented.

A global review on (re-)construction of housing and public infrastructure following disasters drew on recent experiences in the region over the last 10-15 years, including hurricane Mitch and earthquake disasters in El Salvador and Mexico. It is anticipated that such a review will provide valuable contributions to the development of clearer Federation guidelines and policies in this area.

In the international year of volunteering, the forum for communication and development proposed the undertaking of a study of volunteering in the Red Cross, the development of volunteers and the implementation of an internal strategy for the recognition of volunteers. The Ecuadorian Red Cross was appointed as focal point for volunteer issues. Furthermore, the regional delegation provided technical support to the Guatemalan national commission on volunteering in the definition of its mission, vision, strategic objectives and plan of action.

The regional delegation for Central America has been instrumental in proposing BTC-trained candidates from the region for missions during emergency operations such as the earthquake in El Salvador and the recent quake in Peru. Today, around half of the delegates working in Central America have been recruited from the region.

The forum for communication and development which took place in Panama between 19 and 23 February reviewed the use of the emblem, particularly in resource development activities. The Guatemalan Red Cross has begun to successfully generate revenue through the sale of first aid courses.

In addition, the marketing survey carried out, focusing on the GRC image, will result in the definition of a resource development strategy for the National Society.

As regards communication and information, with the support of the governance and management structure at local and national level, each National Society involved in the initiative to build capacity in communications has identified three branches to be included in the project.

A workshop was held in El Salvador in February on the management of the web page. The National Societies of Costa Rica, El Salvador and Panama are now managing their own web pages and the Nicaraguan Red Cross will be given the necessary training in the near future.

As a part of the general support to the development of the communication skills of selected national societies, a long distance education project is developing in three countries: Nicaragua, Panama, and Costa Rica. At present, there are 53 participants in Nicaragua, 30 in Costa Rica and 35 in Panama. Due to the earthquake in El Salvador, participants were not able to attend during this period. The groups in the three countries are focusing on a general module: general communication and a second module specialising in communication and fund-raising, communication and development and disaster communication.

Information material for the programme is being developed on the following subjects: globalization and disasters, forgotten disasters, the role of the news media and humanitarian organisations in disasters and information in times of disaster.

In February, a two day seminar was organised to evaluate the first semester of the communication and information project. The most significant achievements emphasised were: a general strengthening of the communication offices, greater interest in communications on the part of presidents and senior managers; availability of staff/volunteers in the branches to collaborate with the communications departments in the headquarters, production of materials by the branches and, in some cases, development of the Internet. In general, the communication offices in the branches have been strengthened and a communication channel between the branches and the headquarters has been established.

Disaster Response

On 13 January, El Salvador was struck by a major earthquake which devastated large areas of the country (see separate situation reports for more details). The early participation of the regional delegation in the disaster and, in particular, the mobilisation of trained responders from the region contributed to an effective and rapid response, which has reinforced the Salvadorean Red Cross Society's response capacity.

The Pan-American Disaster Response Unit (PADRU) and the Regional Intervention Teams (RITS) took on a prominent role in the earthquake response. Moreover, from the first day of the earthquake, the regional delegation sent delegates to the field and supported the coordination of the disaster response from Guatemala. From 13 to 15 January, the regional web page was dedicated to the latest news concerning the disaster and from 13 to 20 January, the regional information delegate worked directly in El Salvador.

A team from the regional delegation made valuable contributions to the appeal document. Particular emphasis was placed on ensuring that the emergency appeal reflected the long term programming and development priorities of the Salvadorean Red Cross Society and the Federation.

The Federation Secretary General visited El Salvador, Nicaragua and Guatemala, focusing on reconstruction and rehabilitation. He participated in on-going discussions on the issue with National Societies, PNSs and other organisations working in the area.

Disaster Preparedness

Objective: *The regional disaster preparedness programme encompasses four broad areas: community based disaster preparedness, strengthening of national society capacity for disaster response, strengthening of coordination and strengthening of networking and strategic alliances for disaster response and preparedness. All disaster preparedness activities, especially those related to strengthening institutional response capacity, will be carried out in co-ordination with and supported by PADRU.*

In the region there were continuing discussions concerning the integration of strategy and plans of action. The orientation in the region is clearly moving towards greater integration with a team approach to the development of programming and greater standardisation of training and materials, rather than a strictly geographical approach.

Work on the revision of the community based disaster preparedness (CBDP) methodology and materials during the period ensures consensus building around the direction of disaster preparedness programmes. An evaluation of the impact of the CBDP projects in communities hit by earthquakes will be completed in July, prior to the regional meeting on CBDP.

Both a regional evaluation of the CIDA community based disaster preparedness programme and a country based evaluation (Guatemala), took place in January. Due to the earthquake in El Salvador and the need for community facilitators to continue their operational role in the emergency phase, Guatemala and Costa Rica only participated, but information from the country evaluation in El Salvador was included in written form.

The evaluations were useful towards agreeing on modifications, including orientation of facilitator training and programme visibility. General conclusions from the evaluation point to the need for increased facilitator training both in disaster issues and in community work methodology, the introduction of more follow up activities with communities, inclusion of additional themes towards the creation a more integrated programme, the need for increased visibility and, in some cases, administrative and financial support to facilitate the relationship between headquarters and branches.

A two day RITS/PADRU meeting was held in Antigua Guatemala in February. The focus of the meeting was further definition of the RIT/PADRU concepts as well as the definition of the relationship between the two. The major conclusions and definitions resulting from these meetings will be included on the delegation web site and will form the initial basis for integrated work in the region.

The RITs and PADRU were also presented and discussed in a meeting of the relief directors in the region. Recent experience from El Salvador was also analysed from a country and a regional perspective. The meetings resulted in concrete recommendations and the development of a work schedule for the strengthening of RITs, as well as an agreement on how to develop a regional support system.

The second regional disaster preparedness conference held in May 2001 in El Salvador focused on five themes: human resources, volunteers, gender and ethnic groups; organisational development and branch development; communication, information and strategic alliances; community based disaster preparedness; response and rescue. From each working group, recommendations were forwarded to the country delegations which, in turn, prepared country specific commitments and recommendations.

A regional workshop is planned for early September and it is expected to hold discussions focusing on the framework of a revised CBDP programme, promoting a sense of ownership both on the part of the

community and the National Society concerned. The aim is for the future Red Cross CBDP model to be recognised and adopted by other organisations.

Health and Care in the Community

***Objectives:** The regional programme for health and care aims to support the Central American Societies in the planning, implementation and evaluation of effective health programmes which target vulnerable groups. Three distinct but inter-linked projects will be supported: Golfo de Fonseca; community health and integrated management of childhood illnesses (IMCI) and HIV/AIDS peer education.*

Golfo de Fonseca

El Salvador

Until mid February the project staff were assisting the branches of La Union, Santa Rosa de Lima and San Miguel with assessment of damage due to the earthquake and distribution of assistance. In areas affected by the earthquake, there has been a revival in volunteer interest and new volunteers for Red Cross activities have come forward. With additional activities carried out by the Red Cross, for example, psychological support, there is an opportunity to recruit a new profile of volunteer.

In February, a coordinator for the project was recruited and in March a baseline study was carried out. In the 12 communities where the project will be implemented, families were surveyed according to a general questionnaire. Presently, data is being analysed and a report will follow.

In March, first aid training was carried out in both Santa Rosa and La Union to further develop the volunteer base for the project. In this way, 17 new volunteers of 52 trained, have joined the branches. In the La Union branch a youth department has been created. In addition, the branch is presently forming a group of female volunteers (damas voluntarias).

Three quotations have been received for branch rehabilitation. A memorandum of understanding for rehabilitation has been drawn up whereby the branch president will be responsible for the organisation and monitoring of rehabilitation with support from headquarters level.

Ideas for fund raising are currently under discussion. The aim is to generate sufficient funds so that new volunteers will be provided with uniforms in return for activities carried out under the project.

Nicaragua

Project preparations and revision of the budget took place at the beginning of the year. The links between the headquarters and the branch of Chinandega have been noticeably strengthened by the preparation for the project. There is a sense of ownership on the part of the health department of the Nicaraguan Red Cross and the project will forge links with the health department and boost national project coordination.

Within the project budget, there are funds to purchase a car. In discussions with the National Society, the possibility of renting a car from the National Society is being explored. With the money generated from such an initiative, the Nicaraguan Red Cross would have the possibility to maintain two cars at national level and one at the branch of Chinandega. This initiative, if successful, could demonstrate areas in which the National Society could generate internal funding through the use of current resources.

Discussions have been held at branch level to finalise the selection of communities, select project staff and to facilitate the branch management team's commitment to the project. It was decided to make amendments as regards the selected communities given difficult access from the Chinandega branch. Five field workers for the project have been selected, all are Red Cross relief workers from Chinandega. They will live in the selected municipalities and coordinate activities supervised by the national coordinator in Chinandega.

Discussions were held with the institutional development delegate from Spanish Red Cross regarding branch development. There are possibilities for support to branch initiatives. A monthly meeting together with the Spanish Red Cross has been planned to coordinate the branch development aspects of the projects.

Honduras:

Major institutional decisions have been made within the Honduran Red Cross. The formation of a health department is in the final stages, and in the medium term there is the prospect of the Honduran Red Cross taking a more central role in the planning and implementation of health projects.

The Swiss Red Cross has set up projects which presently cover reinforcement of branch capacities within the Gulf of Fonseca region. With the support of the American Red Cross, disaster preparedness activities in the Gulf of Fonseca area are also covered.

As of April 2001, Golfo de Fonseca funds are supporting the Federation delegation in Honduras to provide the required technical input in order to make the National Society's newly institutionalised health team a success. Job descriptions are being presently formulated and suitable candidates identified.

The National Societies appear keen to implement community-based projects, although there is a need to define and institutionalise a strategy. For the branches, the funds allocated for institutional development provide an opportunity to repair the branches, recruit volunteers and to look at cost recovery initiatives.

It is clear that the flexibility of the project and the participation of the branch is a new concept for the branch staff. In the coming months, further discussions will be required to assist the branch to develop a vision and strategy for their future development.

The HIV/AIDS youth peer education project is reported on under the humanitarian values section.

Humanitarian Values

Objectives: In line with Strategy 2010, the Federation is seeking a more proactive role in the promotion of humanitarian values and the fundamental principles, supporting the development of programmes which influence behaviour in the community.

In 2001-2 the focus is on supporting the development of school brigades, thereby promoting the participation of young people in humanitarian activities, and on piloting peace-building projects as part of community-based preparedness activities.

The Federation provides technical assistance to help national societies in strengthening their youth networks through national youth leadership training, school recruitment programmes in community service activities, and youth fund-raising activities.

At the beginning of the year, a focus on two areas of community work: school brigades and education and prevention of HIV/AIDS, was decided upon.

The regional school brigades project has been implemented in the seven countries in the region with financial support from the Spanish Red Cross (in Honduras), the ICRC (in Mexico), American Red Cross (in Nicaragua and El Salvador) and the Federation (El Salvador and Panama). The aim is to form 15 school brigades in each country. Over the reporting period, 21 new educators were trained to support the regional school brigades, and 22 new educators in support of the HIV/AIDS project. In a regional workshop in Tegucigalpa, Honduras in March, the regional guide for school brigades was revised and a fourth manual for the training of youth was presented.

With the participation of 22 volunteers from the region, a regional workshop for facilitators in the field of HIV/AIDS was held. The methodology is oriented towards youth from 12 to 17 years.

Quarterly information leaflets have been produced in Costa Rica, Honduras, El Salvador and Panama. A proposal for the regional response of the youth in Americas region I has been drawn up and a regional guide for school security revised and edited.

A work plan for the regional network has been drawn up by the youth directors, with emphasis on the following aspects: organisation and structure, up-dating of regulations, projects and activities, training of volunteers and youth leaders, fund-raising, international cooperation, implementation of the youth policy and strategic planning. New coordinators for the regional network have been selected and topics such as the production of leaflets, a virtual data base, virtual (chat) meetings, editing of personal guides, image campaigns for the regional network, the international year of the volunteer, have been discussed. To improve communication between the youth directors and to help the regional network to function, it was decided to continue virtual chat meetings every second week. As a result, the majority of national societies in the region are now participating in these meetings on a regular basis.

Peace Building Initiatives

The regional disaster preparedness delegate participated in a training of trainers' peace building workshop in Geneva. Peace building is seen as part of the regional plan of action to strengthen response and to incorporate the culture of peace into CBDP programming. The better programming initiative (BPI) will be reinforced in the region through BPI workshops, most probably El Salvador this year, and through promotion of the approach with the delegations, PNS and National Societies in the region.

The lack of basic equipment such as computers (with access to Internet) and telephone has been a serious obstacle in the creation of constant communication through the youth network. Another problem is a lack of a "knowledge sharing culture".

Regional Co-operation

Objective: The programme aims to strengthen existing cooperation and to develop new partnerships and networks across the region in order to provide mutual support in relief and development. Three areas have been developed as priorities: regional recruitment of delegates; National Society cooperation and communications and information.

Dialogue continued between the delegation and the government of Guatemala regarding a formal status agreement, which would greatly facilitate the implementation of the ongoing programmes and future operations.

Relations with institutional partners such as UNDP, the WHO, the regional disaster information centre for Latin America and the Caribbean (CRID) and the Coordination Centre for the Prevention of Natural Disasters in Central America (CEPREDENAC) continue to be strengthened, especially in the area of health and disaster preparedness.

The CEPREDENAC sponsored a civico-military conference in San José which provided an important opportunity to coordinate activities with the humanitarian relief entities ("Unidades Humanitarias de Rescate") of the regional armed forces, and with others including OPS and OCHA.

The Federation's disaster preparedness approach was successfully represented at regional fora in Costa Rica and Washington. Well received interventions from the regional delegation and the New York office will serve to maintain and build upon relationships with inter-American structures.

Strategic alliances were established with the "Weather Channel" in March and are being discussed with other institutions in the private sector, including Copa Airlines and Ericsson. These alliances are intended to go beyond fund-raising, to include areas such as in-kind support, technical cooperation, training and publicity.

There has been regular contact with the UN agencies in order to support activities in relation to the International year of the Volunteer.

Co-ordination and Management

Objective: *The regional delegation is responsible for the management of Federation programming in Central America, including all aspects of strategic and operational planning, finance, administration, human recourse development and donor relations. From January 2001, financial management and reporting in the region will be strengthened with the establishment of a regional finance unit in Guatemala covering Central America and Caribbean, while a regional reporting delegate will cover the Central American programmes.*

After over three years, the HoRD finished her mission in early April. The deputy HoRD/ regional organisational development delegate has been assigned as interim HoRD and will continue in this post until 31 December 2001. At the same time, the HoD for the Guatemala country programme was assigned to El Salvador to head the operations there. This situation places an additional burden on the current regional team in Guatemala, and the implementation of some projects may be delayed as a result.

There are three “shared” delegates in the region (El Salvador - head of delegation /Spanish Red Cross team leader, Honduras - head of delegation/Italian Red Cross regional representative, regional DPP delegate/Canadian Red Cross). These delegates share responsibilities between the Federation and a PNS, greatly facilitating coordination and joint planning. This new model of working together is still to be evaluated.

From January 2001, financial management and reporting in the region were strengthened with the establishment of a regional finance unit in Guatemala covering Central America and the Caribbean and the assignment of a regional reporting delegate covering the Central American programmes.

With the recruitment of a regional health delegate (placed in Nicaragua) a process of “outposting” of certain regional delegates to countries has been initiated.

The development of the PADRU structure is yet to be finalised and will continue over the year. Nevertheless, PADRU coordinated and provided valuable technical support to the El Salvador earthquake operation, through technical delegates with specialisations in logistics, water and sanitation, telecommunications, relief and general disaster management

Outstanding needs

The recruitment of a HoRD for the Guatemala regional delegation as of January 2002 is a major priority, as is the recruitment of a qualified regional organisational development delegate. Meanwhile, the head of the Guatemala country delegation has been identified, and is expected to join the team in August.

The appeal coverage is of 85.6 percent. The health and humanitarian values programmes, in particular, have been affected as a result of lack of funding. Since a regional health delegate has been recruited, further funding for regional health projects is essential. Additional support for core costs is also sought.

For further details please contact: Olaug Bergseth, Phone : 41 22 730.45.35 ; Fax: 41 22 733 03 95; email: bergseth@ifrc.org

All International Federation Operations seek to adhere to the Code of Conduct and are committed to the Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Disaster Response (SPHERE Project) in delivering assistance to the most vulnerable.

For further information concerning Federation operations in this or other countries, please access the Federation website at <http://www.ifrc.org>.

Peter Rees-Gildea
Head a.i.
Relationship Management Department

Santiago Gil
Head
Americas Department

Appeal 2001							
GUATEMALA RD							
Revised budget 9 august 2001							
PROGRAMME	DP	Health & services	Human values	IDRD	Coord. & mgt	Regional coop.	TOTAL
Shelter & construction		27'872					27'872
Medical & first aid	1'617	39'351					40'968
Other relief supplies	21'016						21'016
Sub total supplies	22'633	67'222					89'855
Vehicles		92'222					92'222
Computers & telecom	852	11'395			23'773		36'019
Other capital expenses		7'378			21'314		28'691
Sub total capital	852	110'994			45'086		156'933
Programme management	29'113	73'689	10'397	33'909		4'263	151'370
Technical services	8'715	22'059	3'112	10'151		1'276	45'313
Professional services	9'665	24'463	3'451	11'257		1'415	50'251
Sub total programme support	47'493	120'210	16'961	55'317		6'954	246'934
Transport & storage		45'185			16'079		61'263
Personnel (delegates & expatriates)	118'056	157'052	820	231'639	380'226	4'063	891'856
Personnel (local staff)	43'153	263'123	19'018	45'513	215'071	10'083	595'962
Sub total personnel	161'209	420'175	19'838	277'152	595'297	14'146	1'487'818
Travel & related expenses	17'952	42'791	28'363	22'986	52'786	12'607	177'485
Information expenses	11'455	47'136	13'772	20'377	23'489	4'100	120'329
Expert fees	1'249		2'049	20'000	11'804		35'103
Admin. - general expenses	38'883	50'333	11'313	42'393	165'702	5'735	314'358
Training workshops / seminars	130'035	188'773	61'891	64'648		19'674	465'021
Sub total travel, training, general exp.	199'574	329'032	117'388	170'404	253'781	42'116	1'112'296
Total budget	431'761	1'092'819	154'187	502'873	910'243	63'215	3'155'099

Central America Regional Programmes						ANNEX 1
APPEAL No. 01.26/2001		PLEDGES RECEIVED			10.08.2001	
DONOR	CATEGORY	QUANTITY	UNIT	VALUE CHF	DATE	COMMENT
CASH						
REQUESTED IN APPEAL CHF ----->				3'155'099		TOTAL COVERAGE 85.6%
CASH CARRIED FORWARD						
SECRETARIAT PROG SUPPORT				433'595		
BRITISH - RC				770'994	04.01.01	GOLFO DE FONSECA
BRITISH - GOVT (DFID GRANT)				900'000	03.02.01	PARTNERSHIP IMPLEMENTATION PLAN 2001
BRITISH - RC				20'000	02.03.01	REGIONAL REPORTING DELEGATE
BRITISH - RC				63'397	01.08.2001	COUNTERPART IN RELIEF & DEVELOPMENT WORKSHOP
NORWEGIAN - GOVT/RC		150'000	NOK	28'245	30.03.2001	REGIONAL REPORTING
NORWEGIAN - GOVT/RC		778'302	NOK	148'789	15.05.2001	INSTITUTIONAL & RESOURCE DEV.
SWEDISH - GOVT		37'100	SEK	6'444	13.03.01	COORDINATION & MANAGEMENT
SWEDISH - GOVT		175'000	SEK	30'467	13.03.01	INSTITUTIONAL DEVELOPMENT
SWEDISH - GOVT		287'500	SEK	48'846	17.05.2001	INSTITUTIONAL DEVELOPMENT
SUB/TOTAL RECEIVED IN CASH				2'450'777	CHF	77.7%
KIND AND SERVICES (INCLUDING PERSONNEL)						
DONOR	CATEGORY	QUANTITY	UNIT	VALUE CHF	DATE	COMMENT
Canada	Delegate(s)			79'671		
Netherlands	Delegate(s)			59'959		
Norway	Delegate(s)			59'959		
Great Britain	Delegate(s)			50'102		
SUB/TOTAL RECEIVED IN KIND/SERVICES				249'691	CHF	7.9%