

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 REGION

8 July 2003

Appeal No. 01.50/2003; Appeal Target: CHF 3,875,324

Programme Update No. 01; Period covered: January to May, 2003

The Federation's mission is to improve the lives of vulnerable people by mobilizing the power of humanity. It is the world's largest humanitarian organization and its millions of volunteers are active in over 180 countries.

For more information: www.ifrc.org

In Brief

Appeal coverage: 74.5 %; See attached Contributions List for details or the Federation's website at: http://www.ifrc.org/cgi/pdf_appeals.pl?annual03/1-2-3%20-%20ap015003.pdf

Outstanding needs: CHF 988,755

Related Emergency or Annual Appeals: See the Federation's website www.ifrc.org under "where we work."

Programme Summary: Much progress has been made in the area of HIV/AIDS, as reflected in the CORI evaluation of its plan of action. National Societies, who in the past had not addressed the topic, are making the decision to explore this area of programming and are becoming more committed as they discover first hand the needs of those living with the disease. Disaster management activities carried out during this reporting period resulted in increased coordination and sharing of information between and among National Societies. There was also an increase in the disaster management capacity of National Societies and communities. Increased coordination with key partners and actors also resulted during this reporting period.

Support to the Federation's Regional Delegation increased during the period (financial, technical and in kind) with significant support from the Norwegian Red Cross, Swedish Red Cross, British Red Cross and DFID.

Operational developments

The consolidation of two regional delegations was undertaken with a high degree of success, with minor delays caused by the rehabilitation and remodelling of the Panama Regional Delegation to transform two single family dwellings into practical office space. Some time has been needed in the consolidation of the new delegation, hiring local staff and starting the process of induction and training for the staff. The result will be a stronger more developed regional delegation, but at the cost of some capacity for operations in the early months of 2003.

The Sub-regional offices in the Caribbean continued their routines without interruptions, but with some reduction in staff in the Dominican Republic. There were some break downs in the follow up to some of the Caribbean projects due to the move and to the changing of the Regional Health Delegate.

In March 2003, the advances of this plan of action within National Societies was evaluated and found that: "since the last Inter-American Conference in 1999, the majority of the National Societies in Latin America and the

Caribbean have advanced in most of the areas included in the Plan of Action. Progress is particularly noteworthy in areas such as disaster response, HIV/AIDS related initiatives and governance and management. In other areas, the progress made is less tangible, as in financial resource development and the development of long-term nation-wide programmes in areas such as HIV/AIDS and community based disaster preparedness.”

In April 2003, 35 National Societies of America agreed during the XVII Inter-American Conference to the “The Santiago de Chile Commitment,” which detailed the objectives in health, disaster preparedness and response, and National Society capacity building to be included in a plan of action for the Conference. The conference recognised that Health indicators in Latin America have generally improved, but increasing disparities exist between the countries of the region, and between different population groups within each country. In the area of disasters the last decade saw, large-scale natural disasters, often related to climatic change, greatly affecting the development in the poorest countries in the Americas. These events are compounded by daily, “invisible” and human created disasters, in particular armed violence, which cumulatively result in losses far greater than those arising from the more visible causes. The challenges to raise National Society capacity in the areas of community volunteer networks, more representative volunteer groups, youth programming, communication, links with those living with HIV and resource mobilisation were identified as priority areas.

Support to the Regional Delegation increased during the period (financial, technical and in kind) with significant support from the Norwegian Red Cross, Swedish Red Cross, British Red Cross and DFID.

1. Health and Care

Goal: Efficient, responsive, and focused programmes that contribute to reducing vulnerability are implemented by the National Societies in the region.

Objective: The National Societies of the region are contributing to a significant improvement of health conditions and are empowering vulnerable groups and communities to reduce vulnerability to ill health and disease.

This quarter saw staff changes within the health programme with the placement of a new regional health delegate in Panama (supported by Norwegian and Swedish Red Cross) and the arrival of a health delegate in El Salvador to support the newly formed community health department as it develops further sustainable partnerships.

During the evaluation of the CORI plan of action, the following was found regarding HIV / AIDS: “There has been a scaling up of HIV/AIDS programmes and, in particular, the launching of campaigns against stigma and discrimination. At the same time, new projects have been initiated in communities, linked to disaster preparedness activities or to the Integrated Management of Childhood Illnesses (IMCI) strategy. A stronger focus on water and sanitation activities has been adopted as a consequence of relief and rehabilitation operations.”

Objective 1: Red Cross / Red Crescent partnerships in health have been developed and strengthened, and the capacities of National Society health departments in Central America have been reinforced in line with Strategy 2010.

A meeting of health experts from National Societies from the Americas region was held in Washington in February to finalise the Americas Health Strategy to be presented in Santiago de Chile. There were representatives from PAHO, PNS, ONS and the Federation. This meeting was also an opportunity to deepen the links with PAHO and its new director. The PNS and Federation staff also looked at ways of having better coordination and standardization in approach in the region.

A health meeting for National Society health directors from Central America and the Caribbean was held in Panama between the 28th of February and the 2nd of March. The meeting focused on finalising the Americas Health Strategy to be submitted as part of the Inter Americas conference in Santiago de Chile. In addition one day was devoted to

exploring the Organisational Development (OD) challenges faced by National Societies of the region and was facilitated by the Regional OD delegate.

The mapping of National Societies in health through the completion of a questionnaire was completed during the quarter with the data analyzed by the Geneva health department and the results discussed during the preparation for the Americas Health Strategy.

In order to increase the mechanisms for interchange of experience in health and care and to raise awareness of health programming to non health National Society personnel, the health bulletin continued to be produced on a bi-monthly basis with increasing commitment from National Societies to provide articles. The complete series of bulletins started in March 2002, and is now available in both English and Spanish on both the Federation's main and regional websites.

As a follow up to the health experts meeting in Washington, a meeting was held in Panama from 5-9 April for PNS and Federation health delegates. The aim was to improve coordination between different PNS supported projects in the region and to develop the foundation for a coordinated regional support strategy in health. It was decided during the meeting to make this meeting a regular event and link to regional technical meetings for operating National Societies partners. The next meeting will take place in Nicaragua in June, and will focus on an agreed strategy in community health and will be supported by the PNS working in health.

The community health department of the Salvadorian Red Cross, formed after the 2001 earthquakes, continues to develop partnerships with both PAHO and the Ministry of Health. The capacity of the department to supervise and evaluate PNS supported projects has led to a real coordination of projects by the Salvadorian Red Cross. The production of new proposals for PRAC, the Shoken fund amongst others has led to the beginnings a diversification away from emergency funds. Health planning now has a standardised approach based on the Federation's Project Planning Process (PPP) methodology.

In Honduras the vacant position of health director will soon be filled and financed for the coming three years by the Canadian Red Cross. The Honduran Red Cross health team also will receive two new members to strengthen its community health department, financed from the PRAC project. The challenge for the new health director will be to link all components of the health team and develop the lessons learned from the various projects into longer-term opportunities for financing and partnership.

Objective 2: The response of National Societies in Central America to the HIV/AIDS epidemic has been refined and scaled up in the areas of prevention, care and the fight against stigma and discrimination.

Much progress has been made in the area of HIV/AIDS, as reflected in the CORI evaluation of its plan of action. Traditionally conservative National Societies are making the decision to explore this area of programming with varying levels of anxiety, but are becoming more committed as they discover first hand the needs of those living with the disease.

In Guatemala, El Salvador and Honduras, national societies are taking part or are members of the National HIV / AIDS commissions. This has increased the profile of National Societies within their Ministries of Health and with PAHO. In some cases such as with the International Congress focusing on HIV / AIDS discrimination held in Honduras in April, the Honduran Red Cross was not only invited to contribute to the process, but played a leading role in the development of the congress.

In Guatemala, Panama, El Salvador, Honduras and Nicaragua, the National Societies have developed closer links with organisations working with / representing persons with HIV and AIDS. In Honduras as part of the preparation for the Anti Stigma video campaign, six members of the Regional HIV AIDS networks (REDLA + and APSIDA) have joined the Honduran Red Cross in early 2003 and are assisting in approving the development of its health programming. It became apparent that there would need to be changes in the peer youth education project, due to the raising of expectations in areas that the Red Cross was not planned to fulfil. In addition the changing of the HIV / AIDS coordinator in 2002 was to some extent influenced by feedback from these networks.

In Guatemala, the Federation coordinated through the Technical Commission of the Guatemalan Red Cross the HIV/AIDS Proposal partnered by the German Red Cross (GRC), ARC, and the Spanish Red Cross (SRC). A HIV program coordinator was confirmed in February by the GRC. The program coordinator started in early March. The Ministry of Education was approached about using HIV educational materials in schools.

The Salvadorian Red Cross has produced a puppet theatre focusing on anti stigma. The work is called "Although you are positive I am still your friend." A first showing was made to various organisations including: UNICEF, UNAIDS, FUNDASIDA, MOH, MINED, and representatives of PLWA, in addition to members of the board of SRC and PNS representatives. This initiative has increased the relations with the Ministry of health in the area of HIV / AIDS and positions the Society better to access global funds.

Also in El Salvador the first phase of the Italian Red Cross / El Salvadorian Red Cross HIV/SIDA project was finished, and an external evaluation of the programme was carried out by OPS. There are plans to begin the Second Phase in six more branches with a possibility of an extension of three more in the East of the country.

In Panama a meeting was held with the Panamanian Red Cross Health Manager and discussed plans to initiate a HIV/AIDS programme for the benefit of the indigenous Kuna population. Follow-up meetings are arranged for early May to explore ways where the Federation can assist on programmatic issues.

As a direct consequence of contacts made within the Antigua health meeting at the beginning of 2002, the Panamanian Red Cross has joined together with PAHO and the MoH to plan and implement a safe blood donation campaign. The regional health delegate assisted the Panamanian Red Cross in some of these meetings to provide technical support.

In Nicaragua, the Italian Red Cross is continuing with its HIV/AIDS project in Jalapa and has obtained an extension (time still to be define). A first year internal evaluation was concluded in March.

Objective 3: High quality integrated health interventions with the participation of Ministries of Health, partners and vulnerable communities are being implemented by the National Societies.

Influenced by the preparation for the Inter Americas Conference and developments in community health departments, all new Red Cross community health projects in the MICH countries have included the IMCI module defined by and implemented in conjunction with their Ministries of Health. It is now well accepted that IMCI alone does not provide all the components needed for a community health intervention, but is a vital area to Red Cross community health program development.

The Red Cross proposals to the PRAC appeal of the EU have been successful in Nicaragua and Honduras. The projects were formulated with facilitation from the Federation and will be implemented by the National Societies with support from a consortium of PNS (Italian, Spanish, and Dutch Red Cross). The projects are in preparation for the implementation phase at the present time.

In El Salvador the health promotion module for volunteers has been completed and is presently being authorised by the Ministry of Health and PAHO. The Salvadorian Red Cross health department is presently formulating a community health project to be financed by the American Red Cross. The Canadian Red Cross health project has been formulated in partnership with the Federation and the Salvadorian Red Cross and is in line with the NDP and health strategy of the National Society.

The Salvadorian Red Cross received the approval to begin the Empress Shoken Fund project in the Department of Santa Ana and received interim approval to bid for a project on primary health care from MSPAS with funds from the Inter-American Development Bank.

In Guatemala, a presentation package (report and CD-rom) on the completion of the IMCI process in four branches has been produced in Guatemala. Initial reports show very good results, which could be replicated elsewhere. The

presentations were well received by the visiting Swedish RC desk officer. The draft agreement with the MoH re: IMCI is pending signature in the Ministry.



Red Cross Community Health Promoters



Training of Red Cross Volunteer Health Promoters

Objective 4: The Federation's response capacity in Central America in the area of emergency health has been increased.

In preparation for the Inter Americas Conference, the Regional Health delegate and the PADRU WATSAN delegate have been working on the document to be used within the conference in the area of emergency health.

The forthcoming "Water in Emergencies" course held jointly by PADRU and OXFAM in April is an important step in obtaining National Society commitment to develop this important area of programming and partnership. The new regional health delegate has skills in the field of WATSAN, and has shown interest to support PADRU initiatives in this field within Health Departments and National Societies.

In Guatemala, the future of the technical water unit is being reviewed. The GRC presented their priorities for this year. The PNS and the Federation are looking at what can be supported (with a strong emphasis on obtaining support from the Spanish Red Cross). The water engineer's contract has not been renewed and the GRC may look for a different profile of Human Resource to take the unit forward in the future. The GRC facilitated a well attended event to promote international water day. The GRC stand was the best of the event and included the distribution of a leaflet covering GRC activities. Two stories covering WATSAN / health / disaster preparedness (DP) were written for presentation in Chile.

Impact

- An Americas Health Strategy has been formulated by National Societies and adopted at the Inter Americas Conference.
- More Red Cross health programming in line with 2010 is being implemented within National Societies, particularly in regard to HIV / AIDS.
- Increasing project proposal writing abilities as a result of more professional health departments (PRAC proposal / Shoken fund).
- Red Cross health manuals formulated in Guatemala, Honduras and El Salvador.
- The first steps initiated in moving to a standardization and approach in the four main areas agreed in the Americas strategy.
- Increasing partnerships with Ministries of Health, PAHO, NGOs, donors and organisations representing vulnerable groups.
- National Societies taking a role in the National HIV / AIDS Commissions.
- An integrated approach to HIV / AIDS with a strong link between youth and health departments being built.

- Opportunities for longer-term National Society funding through community health and HIV/AIDS programming becoming more of possibility with Global Funds and health reform.
- The role of the social volunteer being established in countries such as El Salvador and Honduras due to new types of health programming.
- Preventative health training and campaigns in conjunction with MoH and rural communities occurring in all Mitch countries.

Constraints

The Inter Americas Conference has been one of the main focuses of 2002/early 2003. This has provided the opportunity to socialise and agree on a Health Strategy. This has reduced the time available for the regional health delegate to visit specific national societies and provide direct technical support in planning.

The reduction of health delegates in the region (following post Mitch programmes) has reduced the technical capacities of projects with the National Societies. A stronger component of capacity building in national society health departments and strong links between national societies, MoH, PAHO and others continue to need to be developed. The Federation is called upon to ensure this but has reduced resources to do this.

The development of the social volunteer and volunteer management issues still needs to be strengthened in order to facilitate the further development of sustainable health programming at branch and community level.

Coordination

Increased coordination with networks and groups representing people with HIV/AIDS is seen as national societies commence upon pilot projects. In the case of Honduras volunteers with HIV/AIDS have been recruited through these meetings and are providing a continuing contribution as the national societies scale up in these areas.

Progress on the PAHO agreement has been slow. On the one hand, at the Level of Washington the agreement has been further cemented with the health experts meeting, the Americas health and disaster Strategy and the Inter Americas Conference. At the country level there has been little dissemination of the agreement within PAHO offices and with the change over of staff this continues to prove a challenge. National Societies need to continue to develop this opportunity with PAHO and this should be reflected in the future plans of action of CORI.

In order to socially mobilize communities and improve the life of vulnerable populations, Ministries of Health need to empower communities through collaboration with volunteer groups. The Red Cross network and its volunteers provide a hope for Central American governments presently facing economic problems, drought and social issues an opportunity to increase health indicators through joint programmes and campaigns. The traditional ties existing between National Societies and Ministries of Health (blood bank, first aid etc.) have been further strengthened through community health projects, emergency campaigns (dengue 2002) and in combating the HIV pandemic.

2. Disaster Management

Goal: Efficient, responsive, and focused programmes that contribute to reducing vulnerability are implemented by the National Societies in the region.

Introduction

The Disaster Preparedness Programme began the year with its major focus being on the revision of the materials for the Community Based Programme, and preparations for the Inter American Conference. At the same time, issues relating to ongoing disaster operations and programmes are being dealt with, as well as those disasters that have occurred thereafter. The financial state of the programme is not yet assured, and has affected the implementation of some activities. Nonetheless, progress has been recorded in some key areas, resulting in some satisfaction with the work done during the reporting period.

Progress / Achievements

Objective 1: To continue the process of strengthening the disaster preparedness and response capacity of the National Societies and the Regional Delegation.

Support has been provided to the Costa Rican Red Cross' Disaster Preparedness Department, as follow up to the NIT training which was held in December, as well as the work with the implementation of the early warning system in Orosi, the area which was affected by the fatal landslide in May 2002. The National Society also received support in the development of the guidelines for Household Plans (Plan Familiar), as well as issues related to cooperation with private sector and governmental and international agencies (including UNICEF and PAHO).

The Salvadorian Red Cross developed Terms of Reference for the revision of its 3000 Series (Disaster Preparedness and Response Procedural Manual) document. The Regional Delegation has facilitated the sharing of 3000 Series documents of other national societies with the Salvadorian Red Cross.

Technical support for the revision of the 3000 Series document was also provided to the Mexican Red Cross. The process will be completed during the course of this year. The Regional Delegation has also worked with PADRU to define the support of the Secretariat, geared towards the strengthening of the logistics and response capacity. This will continue during the remainder of the year.

A meeting was held in February with the Honduran Red Cross to discuss their priorities and the support needed from the Regional Delegation, as part of the hand-over process with the outgoing disaster preparedness delegate. During this period, the National Society received direct support for the implementation of Better Programming Initiatives (BPI) with the placement of a consultant who began a four-month assignment with the Regional Delegation last November in Honduras, to follow up on the progress made after the Training of Trainers workshop in Quito in March 2002; and to support the National Society's BPI focal point. Work on the strengthening of the response capacity of the National Society saw the development and equipping (with essential stocks of items such as boots, shovels, generators and buckets) of five decentralised warehouses, which will allow for a more efficient response. The disaster plan of the National Society has also been finalised.

Discussions were held with the Guatemalan and Spanish Red Cross regarding the implementation of the DIPECHO project in the Atlantic region. Some difficulties were being experienced with the CONRED (national emergency coordination organisation), but should be sorted shortly. It is not anticipated to have an impact on the implementation of the project.

The Nicaraguan Red Cross is in the process of developing of its disaster plan. The Regional Delegation has been supporting with advice as this process develops.

A joint project between the Guatemalan Red Cross, the Federation and Design Without Borders, to develop standardized temporary shelters suitable to be adapted in the rehabilitation phase into permanent structures continues. The project is currently focusing on the completion of the shelter prototype, and will produce the procedural manual by August of this year.

The Regional Delegation coordinated the participation of a representative of the Panamanian Red Cross in a workshop on Local Risk Management, convened by UNDP and CEPREDENAC, the Disaster Prevention Coordinating body for Central America.

Better Programming Initiatives (BPI) initiatives: A BPI workshop was convened in Honduras February 22-23. A plan for follow up to the workshop was also developed, and included an analysis of the Ciudad de España project

using this methodology. This analysis was carried out during late March beginning of April. This was very well received by the Spanish Red Cross and the Honduran Red Cross.

Inter American Conference: Beginning late last year, and continuing to the Conference itself, the Regional Delegation supported the work of the Disaster Sub-commission, including following up with National Societies to obtain their responses to the mapping questionnaire. The Mexican and Costa Rican Red Cross Societies which were responsible for preparing documentation for the Conference were also supported. Additionally, technical support was provided to the Costa Rican and Nicaraguan Red Cross for the preparation of their presentations for the Working Groups dealing with Prevention, Mitigation and Community Based Disaster Preparedness and Rehabilitation, Reconstruction and Development, respectively. The Regional disaster management delegate coordinated the second Disasters Working Group during the Conference, as well as provided general support to the Secretariat team during the Conference.

During the conference, a meeting was held with Disaster Preparedness and Response personnel of the National Societies within the sub-region, in order to continue to develop the links between them; discuss their upcoming activities, the support which each one can provide to the other and the support required from the Federation. Preparation for the upcoming hurricane season, and other emergencies was also discussed.

Disaster operations / Coordination with PADRU

Operation	Remarks
Mexico	In collaboration with PADRU, the Regional Delegation coordinated the support for the response to the earthquake which struck Colima state in February.
Costa Rica / Panama	The various aspects of the operations for the flooding in Limon and Valle la Estrella (Costa Rica) and Chiriqui and Bocas del Toro (Panama) were followed up.
Guatemala	The Delegation monitored the situation after the eruption of the Volcan del Fuego.
El Salvador	Close contact maintained with the El Salvador Delegation as part of the monitoring of the situation which resulted from social unrests in the capital.
Costa Rica	<p>Flooding in Talamanca</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Liaised with the National Society during this event. • Liaised with PADRU regarding the possibility of the mobilisation of a water and sanitation unit for the operation. <p>This was subsequently deemed to be not necessary, as a local solution was found.</p>
Drought Operation	The operation was finalized during this reporting period, and the final report prepared.

In addition to the above, the Delegation participated in February meeting of Disaster Preparedness Delegates and PADRU, to discuss matters relating to close coordination with both entities; as well as to share work plans and identify activities for support and coordination.

Objective 2: An integrated community based disaster preparedness programme model, complete with tools and guidelines, is implemented.

Work continued on the revision of the programme's materials during this reporting period. With the financial support of the Guatemala country delegation, the meeting for the revision of the updated modules for the Disaster Prevention Manual in the 'Es Mejor Prevenir' series was convened in April. This saw the participation of personnel from some key National Societies from the sub-region, as well the American and Spanish and Netherlands Red Cross Societies which are engaged in this activity. The Delegate from the Lima Regional Delegation also participated in the meeting. Emanating from this event, a timeline for the next steps in the process was identified, as well as possible pilot projects within Central and South America. The corrected version has since been shared with all National Societies, and delegation offices, as well as Geneva. Arrangements are being made for the insertion of illustrations, and for its printing.

The 'Familia Prevenida' campaign which began in 2002 in Honduras continued, with approximately 4,200 persons benefiting from its implementation in 18 branches. The 2002-2003 campaign was developed with a revised

methodology, based on three (3) visits to target households. During the first visit, Red Cross volunteers developed a baseline on each family involved in the campaign. The second visit focused on the development of household plans; with the third visit used to evaluate the impact of the intervention. A community simulation exercise, operationalising all household plans completed the process.



Disaster Simulation, Nicaragua



Disaster Risk Mapping, El Salvador

Impact

- The activities carried out during this reporting period resulted in increased coordination and sharing of information between and among National Societies. There was also an increase in the disaster management capacity of National Societies and communities. Increased coordination with key partners and actors also resulted during this reporting period.
- The preparatory process of the InterAmerican Conference and the event itself, led to increased networking within and outside of the Movement; as well as an agreement on the key focus areas of disaster management programmes within the region, at least for the next four years.
- Response activities continue to prevent and alleviate the suffering of those affected by disaster events; whilst continuing to increase the image and respect for the components of the Movement. This has also led to increased expectations on the part of the local population and governments.
- Increased coordination between and among technical delegates was also evident during this period.

Constraints

The main constraint faced by the programme is the lack of funds. In addition to its impact on the implementation of the programme, it has delayed the hiring of a project officer to support the programme.

Coordination

In February, discussions were held with a representative of the International Resources Group in Honduras who is working on a consultancy with the World Bank on the development of disaster preparedness training materials for schools. During the discussions it was revealed that the representative had participated in a number of evaluations of, as well as reconstruction projects themselves, and could provide documentation of lessons learned in this area, which could be useful for the work being done in preparation for the Inter American Conference, as well as the future work of the Red Cross in this area. The Delegation has since received copies of these materials in electronic format, which will be incorporated into the intranet within the coming month.

Meeting held with UNICEF to discuss future collaboration in programmatic areas. Possible areas of cooperation include training, missions, and work in specialised areas such as Psychological Support. The report of their mission to Haiti was shared with the disaster preparedness delegate; who subsequently shared it with the regional delegation team. This has served as a good basis for the mission which was undertaken by the OD Delegate in late April. A further meeting will be held in May to continue to define the joint approach for working in Haiti.

Regular contact maintained with the regional office of World Food Programme.

Contact has also been established with CEPREDENAC, the Central American Disaster Prevention Coordinating body.

The Regional Delegation has also maintained close relations with representatives of Participating National Societies, and the regional delegation of the International Committee of the Red Cross. The links with the Lima Regional Delegation have also been strengthened, with more joint activities scheduled for later this year.

3. Organizational Development

Goal: Efficient, responsive, and focused programmes that contribute to reducing vulnerability are implemented by the National Societies in the region.

Objective: Vulnerability-focused programmes and organizational development and change, led and managed by the region's National Society's, has resulted in constantly improved service delivery to and with vulnerable people.

Progress/Achievements

Objective 1: The capacity of National Society branches in El Salvador, Guatemala, Nicaragua, and Panama to develop integrated programming is increased.

Support was given to the Guatemalan Red Cross and the Federation team in developing further existing branch development programme initiated by the American Red Cross and now managed by the Federation. A revised plan of action for 2003 was agreed upon. A visit was made to one branch covered by the project in preparation for the start of the regional Integrated Branch Development project (Esquintla - one of the five branches that will participate in the Integrated Branch Development Project). In addition the Regional OD Delegate introduced the key concepts of the Integrated Branch Development Project to two El Quiche Branch leaders who visited the Federation Delegation in Guatemala City.

The Regional organisational development delegate introduced the key concepts of the Integrated Branch Development Project (supported by Norwegian and Swedish Red Cross Societies) to the leadership of the Panamanian Red Cross. A MoU was drafted to be signed by the Regional Delegation, ICRC, and the Panamanian Red Cross, defining roles and responsibilities for the implementation of the Integrated Branch Development Project in the Darien, Panama.

The first Module of the Integrated Branch Development training (participatory learning and action (PLA) workshop) was finalised. The module is being translated into Spanish and will need to be further revised for the Darien context, where the branch level is more basic than the regional standard.

Regarding the Golfo de Fonseca Project (supported by the British Red Cross Society) in El Salvador, the board of the La Union branch changed. The Golfo de Fonseca coordinator, the HoD, and the Regional OD Delegate facilitated a branch development orientation meeting for the new board. The Golfo de Fonseca in Nicaragua, the leadership of the Chinandega branch is continuing to receive technical assistance and advice in support of their development of their strategic plan.



Branch Leadership Training, Nicaragua



Community health Volunteers, Nicaragua

Objective 2: A resource development programme, based on strategic marketing concepts, is implemented in the National Societies of El Salvador, Mexico, and Nicaragua.

N/A – This project will be a priority of the Regional OD Programme in 2004.

However, during this period, the Regional OD Delegate facilitated a one-day fundraising workshop in El Salvador in April. The workshop was for the benefit of the presidents of eight departmental branches.

Objective 3: A process of planned change – owned, directed, and carried out by the Nicaraguan Red Cross headquarters and branch levels are institutionalized.

In January the Regional OD Delegate went on a three-day mission to Nicaragua to assess the state of the change process project (supported by the Spanish Red Cross) since November 2002, when the last organization-wide planning workshop was held in Managua. The delegate interviewed more than 20 persons at headquarters, including the president, directors of national programmes, and PNS representatives in the country. Based on the information gathered, it was obvious that the change process project had stalled.

The Regional OD Delegate proposed to the National Society President, and then facilitated, a meeting to determine steps that need to be taken to re-start the project. The meeting was attended by the Society's President, Vice-President, Director General, Director of the Planning Department, the in-country representative of the Spanish Red Cross (as a representative to the meeting of all PNSs working in Nicaragua), the Federation HoD and the Regional OD Delegate.

At the meeting, the Regional OD Delegate proposed that the Nicaraguan Red Cross establish a commission that would be responsible for implementing the National Society's five-year Strategic Plan, which was approved by the national board in December 2002, and the organization's National Development Plan, which was still be drafted. It was proposed that this commission include the vice-president, the director general, some from the planning department and a secretary, with technical assistance provided by the HoD. (N.B. The Strategic Plan is a document that reflects how the National Society expects to improve the lives of vulnerable people through its national programmes – e.g., health and care in the community, humanitarian values and principles, etc., while the National Development Plan is a roadmap for strengthening the National Society so that it can become more efficient, responsive, and focused.)

At this meeting it was also suggested that the directors of national programmes (e.g., Health and Care in the Community) be responsible for determining the indicators for their activities as outlined in the Strategic Plan, instead of the director of the planning department.

A Norwegian volunteer finance consultant, recruited in December 2002 by the Regional OD Programme and placed in the Nicaraguan Red Cross finance department was busy during this reporting period developing five procedural

manuals covering such topics as control of banks, budgets, purchases, income, and assets. The lack of these manuals was highlighted last year by Nicaraguan Red Cross participants in the four organization-wide planning workshops.

With the technical assistance of the Federation delegate in Mexico, the Nicaraguan Red Cross was also revising its statutes during this reporting period.

Objective 4: An inclusive, modern, and innovative volunteer management plan is consolidated by the National Society of Honduras and strengthened in Costa Rica, Guatemala, and Nicaragua.

N/A – This project will be a priority of the Regional OD Programme in 2004.

However, during this period, the Regional OD Programme has decided as a policy to recruit local volunteers, especially professionals and university students, to not only support the programme but other regional programmes, as well. The Integrated Regional Development Project has been designed around the participation of local volunteers, not only from the Red Cross but also local NGOs and local government agencies. The Regional OD Programme has recruited a volunteer medical HIV/AIDS expert to assist the Regional Health programme.

Objective 5: The roles of governance and management are well-defined in practice by the National Societies of El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, and Nicaragua.

In consultation with the Director Generals of Costa Rica, Panama, and El Salvador agreed to facilitate the annual Director Generals' meeting (in San Jose, Costa Rica) in September.

Designing a two-day workshop for Director Generals on how to enter into and maintain strategic alliances, following the annual Director Generals meeting.

Objective 6: The internal and external communications capacity has been strengthened in each of the seven National Societies and increased competence is gained in professional and dependable reporting during times of disasters.

A working group meeting was held at the regional delegation to clarify the work plan for 2003, confirm budgets, complete job descriptions (El Salvador and Guatemala) and discuss the 2004 perspectives. With the advances in the long distance learning programme and the regional communicator's network, it is foreseen to write a follow up proposal for 2004 – 2005 and look for longer term local funding sources for National Societies.

The "VII Forum on Communication and Resource Development" took place in Cartagena, Colombia from February 16th till 21st February 2003. The Central American initiatives to develop the communications network (supported by the Capacity Building Fund), were shared and discussed during the meeting. It was agreed by the forum that the area of resources development and volunteer management remain areas for further development.

The communicators network were a focal point for the development and implementation of the regional 8th of May HIV stigma campaign (see health and Humanitarian values sections).

Support was given to Cuba on the establishment of a Long Distance Learning (LDL) Project. The Pilot LDL project in Central America continues with revision of the materials and an evaluation of the project is due in August 2003.

Impact

- National Societies have shown interest in starting the Integrated Branch Development model designed at the regional level.
- As a result of the fundraising workshop in El Salvador, the participating presidents of local branches realized that their lack of local, financial support from the community is due to several problems that require a more systemic approach.

- The Nicaraguan Red Cross committed itself in writing to establish a commission responsible for implementing the Strategic Plan and the National Development Plan.
- Topics that were taboo before June 2002 – e.g., the president’s centralised style, the lack of leadership at the management level at headquarters, among other sensitive topics – and could only be discussed privately among confidantes are now openly and honestly addressed within the Nicaraguan Red Cross by nearly everyone, including the president.

Constraints

Late last year the Federation’s Regional Delegation in Guatemala was faced with two major challenges: moving the delegation from Guatemala to Panama and assuming responsibility for the Caribbean. As a result, the Regional Delegation has needed several months as a consolidation period. This situation, combined with the lack of financial support from donor societies for programmes during this reporting period, has constrained the Regional OD Programme. Nevertheless, judging from conversations with several donor societies, the funding situation of the Regional OD programme should improve during the next reporting period.

Coordination

The Programme is providing support to the Regional Health Programme by assisting the Panamanian Red Cross in scaling up its HIV/AIDS programme, while assessing the implications of this step on the rest of the National Society. The OD Programme has also recruited a volunteer medical expert in HIV/AIDS to assist the Panamanian Red Cross in developing its strategic plan. The Regional OD Delegate has represented the Regional Health Delegate in two meetings of the UNAIDS HIV/AIDS Thematic Group in Panama.

The Programme assisted the Regional Humanitarian Values and Principles (HVP) Coordinator in designing the Anti Stigma Video Project. The OD Programme also provided the Regional HVP Coordinator with reports about violence in Central America produced by the European Union.

The Regional OD Programme has developed an excellent, collaborative relationship with the ICRC’s cooperation delegate and various representatives of the American Red Cross. As the focal point of contact between the Regional Delegation and the Norwegian Red Cross, the Regional OD Delegate has facilitated improved communications between the two. The Regional OD Programme also works in close consultation with the British Red Cross and the Swedish Red Cross.

Together with the HoRD and Programme Coordinator attended two meetings to address potential areas of collaboration with the IDB in Panama. The areas are being developed and a follow up meeting is expected soon. In Panama, the Regional OD Delegate has represented the Regional Delegation at monthly meetings of the UNAIDS Thematic Group Meeting. In Nicaragua, the Regional OD Delegate facilitated several meetings involving the President of the Nicaraguan Red Cross, the director of planning of the Nicaraguan Red Cross, the HoD in Nicaragua, and representatives of UNDP, UNICEF, PAHO, the Ministry of Health, the System for Disaster Mitigation, and the Inter-American Development Bank.

Humanitarian Values

Goal: Efficient, responsive, and focused programmers that contribute to reducing vulnerability are implemented by the National Societies in the region.

Objective: Humanitarian values and principles are integrated into and form the foundation of all core areas and the programming of National Societies within the region.

In the development of this program, objectives were reformulated and further defined, taking advantage of existing opportunities.

Progress/ Achievements

Objective 1: A regional HVP programme, including, strategy, sustainable infrastructure, a volunteer network and partnerships (including vulnerable groups), has been developed and is functioning.

In order to increase the support to the National Societies in the field of Humanitarian Values and Principles, a Regional Coordinator for Humanitarian Values and Principles was selected and is presently based in Honduras. He will be the main Regional focus for the development of a structured programme and establishing partnerships and opportunities in this field. Presently the Norwegian Red Cross and DFID are supporting this programme development and the formulation of the following pilot initiatives / projects.

- Fighting Stigma to those living with HIV / AIDS
- Youth Violence
- Education in schools for Human Rights

In addition better programming and planning has been supported in Honduras, in coordination with the Disaster Management Program. Sixteen volunteers were trained in the Federation's Better Programming Initiative. With these volunteers the housing project "Ciudad España" financed by the Spanish Red Cross was analyzed and documented.

Objective 2: At least three national societies in the region have developed and are implementing projects to reduce youth violence by 2007.

Using the Participative Planning Process (PPP), an analysis was made and lines of action defined to reduce youth violence in Honduras. The Honduran Red Cross together with representatives of Save the Children, the National Congress, two universities, 4 local NGO's and the Spanish, Italian and Netherlands Red Cross discussed the issue of youth violence during three workshops facilitated by the Federation. The results of these workshops were presented during the Inter American Conference and reflected in a document which defines three strategic lines of action:

- The Awareness raising strategy
- The Community strategy
- The Advocacy strategy

Projects to implement these lines of actions will be formulated shortly.

Objective 3: Stigma and discrimination within the Population to those living with HIV / AIDS has been reduced

A video called "Breaking the Silence" with the testimonies of people living with HIV/AIDS has been produced with the help of the Health department of the Honduran Red Cross, the Association of people living with HIV/AIDS in Honduras and other organizations working in the field of HIV/AIDS. People living with HIV/AIDS from six different cities and towns in the country were interviewed and explained their experiences with being discriminated and stigmatized because of being sero positive. The main challenge in producing the video was to obtain the permission of the people giving their stories, as they were often afraid of being subject to more discrimination and stigmatization by showing themselves in the video.

The video was distributed to all the national societies in the region, and was presented during different events taking place in the region like the National Human Right Conference in Honduras, the Inter American Conference of the Red Cross in Chile and the Regional meeting of the Associations of people living with HIV/AIDS in Guatemala. Reactions have been extremely positive and future possibilities of translation of the video in other languages (specifically English) to be able to use it in other regions will be looked into.

With Red Cross day, the 8th of May, being has been used as a platform to promote the Anti Stigma campaigns and the Honduran Red Cross organized several activities. Fourteen branches around the country are implementing the

world wide campaign: “The truth about AIDS: Pass it On!” In the capital, a forum was organized at the National University where 150 students saw the video and asked questions to the panel consisting of representatives of the Association of People living with HIV/AIDS, UNAIDS, the government, the Honduran Red Cross and the Federation. The campaign “Leave your mark in solidarity of the people living with HIV/AIDS” is ongoing. So far more than 15,000 hand and footprints were collected on banners which are displayed during HIV/AIDS.



8th of May Campaign, Tegucigalpa



Anti Stigma Video, “Breaking the Silence”

Objective 4: The project “Education for Human Rights” is being implemented in all seven of the National Societies in the Central American region.

Follow up was given to teachers active within the project by visiting schools and meetings with the Ministry of Education in order to monitor the project and identify support needs of the teachers. Support was given to the formulation of a government strategy in Humanitarian Values and Principles through the educational system. This project is lead and financed by the ICRC, with joint development with the Federation.

Impact:

- With the active participation of the Vice President of the National Congress of the Republic of Honduras in the analysis of the problem of youth violence the national society will have better advocacy possibilities in the future.
- Through the presentation of the results of the analysis of the youth violence problem in Honduras during the Inter American Conference, other national societies in the region have become interested to look into possible action in their own countries.
- The fact that the Honduran Red Cross has defined its strategy in reducing youth violence has secured funds from the Netherlands Red Cross to finance the first pilot project and possible funds from the Italian Red Cross.
- Increased partnership for the national society with organizations working on HIV/AIDS and youth violence.
- Increased number of people living with HIV/AIDS integrated as active Honduran Red Cross volunteers.
- Enthusiasm within the Honduran Red Cross to work with the produced anti stigma video “Breaking the silence.”
- Honduran Red Cross taking the lead in activities in the fight against stigma and discrimination together with other organizations.

Constraints

The installation of a Regional Coordinator for Humanitarian Values and Principles is the first step in starting to build Federation capacity with supporting the National Societies in this enormous field of action. However more human resources will be needed to be able to provide the support needed.

Although interest is growing within most of the societies, only the Honduran and the Nicaraguan national societies have defined their line of action. Much work remains to ensure the inclusion of Humanitarian Values and Principles in the programming of national societies.

Coordination

During the production of the video, cooperation started between the Honduran Red Cross and other organizations working with HIV/AIDS like: the Association of people living with HIV/AIDS in Honduras, National AIDS Forum, National Human Right Committee, UNAIDS, SIDACOM and REDLA (two local NGO's). Discussions will be held to determine future cooperation and partnership. The Honduran Red Cross also extended their network during the analysis of the youth violence problem with organizations as Save the Children and four local NGO's.

Federation Coordination

Goal: The Red Cross, working through enhanced coordination and strategic Red Cross and external partnerships, is implementing effective programmes in the four core areas, reaching the most vulnerable.

Objective: Effective coordination with strategic partners in planning and implementation of programmes has resulted in improving relevance and efficiency of activities, as well as impact on beneficiaries.

Progress/Achievements

The El Salvador CAS process has been completed. Honduras is next in completing the coordination of resources from movement partners in country to be followed later in the year by Nicaragua. The Caribbean RAS will be reviewed during the eighth bi-annual meeting to be held in Port of Spain in early summer. Much coordination with the programme's solid supporters has led to increased support and securing additional funding for the promotion of the core Principles and Humanitarian Values within Central America.

A model landmark consortium was formed among all European PNS and the Federation to collaborate in the preparation of proposals for submission to PRACC, ECHO and DIPECHO.

The networks for Communicators and Youth were re-established with key leadership positions and its Secretariat services elected among the national societies in the Region. A smooth transition from a paid regional coordinator for youth to a volunteer led network was accomplished with the Panamanian Red Cross volunteer youth coordinator leading the network. The network produced its work plan and its first annual operational budget ever.

The post-Mitch reduction continues among all movement members. Coordination with PNS and the national societies has helped avert a major and sudden shrinkage of staff with the national societies in the region. The reduction has been progressive with the national societies absorbing those positions that will provide it with resource mobilization through a sustained level of services. Only in Guatemala has the reduction in force had an impact in the operation of the national societies in its headquarters. Many PNS have left the countries of the region leaving professional local staff behind to continue to search for funding opportunities.

The harmonization program has been the most revealing success story for coordination thus far in the region. The resources of both the ICRC and the Federation have been optimized resulting in cost effective capacity building and preparedness activities for all national societies. Board training and orientations, communication forum, youth network meetings, thematic meetings on violence abatement and international humanitarian law are but a sampler of joint activities where human, financial resources have been pooled and produced the highest impact results in the coordination and cooperation regional efforts.

The exposure to external partners has induced a reflection in all national societies used to being closed and perceived as being impenetrable by NGOs other MIs, many national societies have developed plans of action to

implement the agreement with the OPS signed in May 2002. Many national societies are involved in the CCM groups that are determining the access to global funds thus guaranteeing the strengthening of their relationship with the Ministries of Health and other strategic partners.

One MoU has been signed with a University in Panama and three others are under consideration in Guatemala. A mapping of existing MoUs with the universities is under way to show how these can become shared resources for all national societies. One Staff on Loan was made available by the Mexican Red Cross and an effort is being made to retain the successful regionally recruited staff to increase their range of experiences and skill package.

All PNS have benefited from the processing of visas for their delegates by the Federation. Current negotiations with Nicaragua's authorities regarding the possibility of tax rebates could leave more resources available to the national society to apply to providing humanitarian assistance and on going programmes.

Impact

- The national societies have demonstrated a great deal of improvement with improving their visibility gained by participation in strategic partnerships and alliances. Board members have been trained and have become more knowledgeable in the distinction of roles between governance and management.
- The national societies see a unified movement and receive integrated and well planned support from the ICRC and the Federation. PNS have become more interested in participating in the NDP of the national societies and have begun to coordinate their resources through CAS and Consortia efforts.
- The most vulnerable stand to gain better access to Red Cross services as the national societies increase their reach and leverage resources from different sources to extend services in their jurisdictions.

Constraints

The move of the Regional Delegation caused a lag in reinitiating all programmes. This is combined with the serious lack of funding support through the appeal during the first quarter of the year.

PNS headquarters still drive their field staff to seek for funding irrespective of the NDP in place and without disclosing their Strategic Plans and their business plans for international activities and services. Greater transparency is required from all movement members.

International Representation

Goal: A wider range of international support will be mobilized to further Federation aims at the national, regional and international level.

Objective: The Federation will have raised the awareness of Red Cross aims and activities, and will have mobilized support for Red Cross activities at national and regional level in core areas of Strategy 2010.

Progress/Achievements

The Federation has secured legal status in six countries. Benefits accorded to the Federation through this status such as, tax exemption and the ability to engage in regular business practices have been extended to PNS in several countries. A current effort in mapping of international fora and regional bodies is underway. Meeting new players for the Caribbean has started and new agreements are being revised at headquarters. The Association of Caribbean States ACS is a sample of the new MoUs being considered.

The European Union Ambassador has been visited and a constant liaison is maintained with the DIPECHO programme officer in Nicaragua. Participation in the protocol greetings to the First Lady of Panama and membership in the group of International Mission representatives have produced leads for future funding for the

national society. The meetings with the Inter American Development Bank (IDB) have yielded very constructive information around which the Integrated Branch development process is taking shape for Panama.

Marginalized groups have been given prominence in the planning in the Federation programming. Contributions to the global policy positions on Small Island States have been made.

Impact

- Greater access to global funding and the number of submissions will be good indicators of the effectiveness of the international representation. Only El Salvador is in the preparation stage of the proposal for the global funds for HIV-AIDS and community Health Interventions. Of the three national societies that submitted grant applications to the Empress Shoken fund, only El Salvador's national society was successful, which bodes well for their success in the application to global funds.
- Making the jump from income streams to income flows will be greatest advance in resource mobilization for the national societies to increase their capacity to serve the most vulnerable. Global funding and strategic partners are more reliable long term funding sources for national societies.

Constraints

Participation in international meetings is expensive and time consuming; with resources in short supply in the Regional Delegation the level of participation has been limited to the most important forums. A more proactive participation of National Societies should be secured to work in a federated way and increase Movement participation.

For further information please contact:

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

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

Central America regional

ANNEX 1

APPEAL No. 01.50/2003

PLEDGES RECEIVED

08.07.2003

DONOR	CATEGORY	QUANTITY	UNIT	VALUE CHF	DATE	COMMENT
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CASH

REQUESTED IN APPEAL CHF ----->					3'875'324	TOTAL COVERAGE 74.5%	
CASH CARRIED FORWARD				1'961'363			
BRITISH - RC		12'000	GBP	26'910	14.02.03	PROGRAM COORDINATOR	
BRITISH - GOVT/DFID (04)				19'250	24.02.03	DPP RESPONSE CAPACITY	
BRITISH - GOVT/DFID (04)				38'500	24.02.03	ORGANISATIONAL DEV.	
BRITISH - GOVT/DFID (04)				13'500	24.02.03	REGIONAL HEALTH	
BRITISH - GOVT/DFID (04)				35'000	24.02.03	HUMANITARIAN VALUES	
BRITISH - GOVT/DFID (04)				35'000	24.02.03	REGIONAL REP.	
BRITISH - GOVT/DFID (04)				26'000	24.02.03	HONDURAS HIV/AIDS	
BRITISH - GOVT/DFID (04)				71'500	24.02.03	INSTITUTIONAL DEV.	
NORWEGIAN -GOVT/RC				214'000	14.05.03	INTEGRATED BRANCH DEV., REG. ORGANISATIONAL DEV. NETWORK, GOVERNANCE & MANAGEMENT, REG. HV PROGRAMME	
SWEDISH - GOVT		700'000	SEK	112'000	21.05.03	HEALTH AND CARE	
SWEDISH - GOVT		600'000	SEK	96'000	21.05.03	ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT	
CAPACITY BUILDING FUND ALLOCATION				115'000	30.04.2003	P43002	
SUB/TOTAL RECEIVED IN CASH				2'764'023	CHF		71.3%

KIND AND SERVICES (INCLUDING PERSONNEL)

DONOR	CATEGORY	QUANTITY	UNIT	VALUE CHF	DATE	COMMENT
GERMANY	DELEGATE(S)			59'959		
GREAT BRITAIN	DELEGATE(S)			39'918		
NORWAY	DELEGATE(S)			22'669		
SUB/TOTAL RECEIVED IN KIND/SERVICES				122'546	CHF	3.2%

ADDITIONAL TO APPEAL BUDGET

DONOR	CATEGORY	QUANTITY	UNIT	VALUE CHF	DATE	COMMENT
SUB/TOTAL RECEIVED				0	CHF	