

# **PAPUA NEW GUINEA**

## **EMERGENCY RELIEF, REHABILITATION, DISASTER PREPAREDNESS AND RESPONSE AND CAPACITY BUILDING**

CHF 5,808,000  
275,000 beneficiaries

Programme no 01.35/99

### The Context

The Federation has been supporting the Papua New Guinea Red Cross (PNG Red Cross) since 1993, specifically in relief operations on the island of Bougainville and more recently during the drought on the mainland and after the Aitape tidal wave in July 1998. In September 1998 the Federation increased its presence in PNG in order to provide more comprehensive support to the National Society. The Aitape post-disaster programme will be an important part of the process of increasing the operational capacity of the PNG Red Cross, which will also be enhanced through a continuation of the current institutional development process.

### The Operations

The success of the relief operations has not yet been matched by a significant strengthening of the institutional capacity of the PNG Red Cross, which is still limited at both HQ and branch levels. The PNG Red Cross, with the technical support of the Federation, has initiated an institutional development process which will use the present relief operations to build up a human resources structure as well as programmes for the communities.

In 1999, the Federation will continue the implementation of the Bougainville relief/rehabilitation programme which will contribute to the peace process by providing basic humanitarian services to communities throughout the island.

The Aitape post-disaster programme will have an impact in the affected areas as well as contributing to the entire PNG Red Cross disaster preparedness and response capacities in the years to come.

### Objectives of the Operations

Core strategies for both the PNG Red Cross and the Federation follow the general guidelines of the Beijing Declaration and the Regional Targets and Objectives as set down in the Suva

Regional ONS Meeting in June 1998. In addition, specific priorities for the PNG Red Cross and the Federation for the next three years are:

- To increase the Society's operational and institutional capacity as well as programme delivery to communities at both headquarters and branch levels
- To gradually decrease the Federation's permanent presence in PNG and increasingly utilise the services of the Federation Regional Delegations of Suva and Kuala Lumpur as well as regional resources
- To increase the training of the Society's human resources and disseminate the Red Cross principles and activities.

Specifically, objectives for 1999 will be to assess the medical/health situation and provide support to the PNG Red Cross both on the main island and Bougainville; to respond to the needs of the community and Red Cross beneficiaries through health and training projects; and to support the institutional/capacity building of the National Society and its disaster preparedness activities, in particular through the Aitape post-disaster programme.

#### Plan of Action

##### PNG Country-wide Programme

In 1999, the Federation will intensify its efforts to assist the PNG Red Cross improve its service delivery to the population. The following projects will be implemented.

##### Institutional & Programme Development and Capacity Building

This project was initiated in 1998 by the PNG Red Cross with the support of the Federation. A Federation institutional development delegate has been assisting the Society since August 1998 in various projects and activities related to development of its capacity in human resources, and the development and management of community programmes, including blood and HIV/AIDS awareness and first aid.

Already, new personnel have been employed by the national society and training opportunities put into place. Workshops and training in governance and executive functions have been developed as part of the capacity building process.

##### Community Based Self Reliance (CBSR)

In 1999, the PNG Red Cross will start activities related to Community Based Self Reliance. First aid training, disaster preparedness, water and sanitation and AIDS prevention will be the main activity areas.

##### Bougainville Island Programme

The Federation/PNG Red Cross activities on Bougainville will remain dependent on the political and security situation on the island. The projects and activities planned presume ongoing progress towards a lasting peace, and a steady reduction of emergency operations as carried out in 1996/97 and to a lesser degree in 1998. With the peace process well under way, opportunities for relief to development activities are promising. The Health Education services still require financial and technical external support. This is a suitable role for the Red Cross to play in the coming year and projects have been designed accordingly.

Where necessary training and education elements of the 1998 programme will continue, retaining their emphasis on Water & Sanitation, and Health Worker/Aid Post staff training. The establishment of related traditional CBSR projects and of a "Red Cross branch" structure on the island are planned.

#### Community First Aid Training

On Bougainville specifically (but also in many other parts of PNG) access to health services close to villages is reduced, mostly because of a lack of government funding or support. The project will provide first aid training at the community/village level, prioritising especially vulnerable communities, and covering basic first aid, family hygiene and nutrition, dental health, home and occupational disability support, a safe water supply and disaster preparedness.

#### Obstetric revision for nurses & traditional birth attendant training

Obstetric care on Bougainville has been greatly reduced by the conflict. This project will improve maternal care by introducing short term supplementary training to upgrade the obstetric skills of health extension officers (HEO), midwives, aid post orderlies and traditional village TBAs.

#### Medical equipment / minor equipment maintenance

Much of the equipment in Health centres and Aid Posts is either unusable or in poor condition. This project will provide ancillary support and training in the servicing and repair of minor medical equipment in health facilities. Since the supply of such equipment is part of the ongoing Health Support services of the Red Cross and other agencies and the improvement of clinic management was a major component of 1998 programmes, this project represents a logical and practical adjunction to these programmes. Training will protect the earlier investment as well as prolong the useful life of the equipment.

#### Tuberculosis & Leprosy officer training

The identification and treatment of TB and leprosy has been minimal during the crisis because of restricted movement and access to drugs. Treatment was disrupted, records lost, and crowded facilities increased the risk of spreading infection. Disability from leprosy can be quickly reduced through prompt treatment, education and aids. This project will provide short term support and training to the Health Department to facilitate the deployment of a field worker in each of the six regions. They will undertake case-finding and contact tracing, to minimise the spread of disease and disability.

#### Mental Health

Many Bougainvillians have been exposed to great stress, experiencing or witnessing violence and brutality. Many are still affected by the events, as are people elsewhere in PNG. This

programme, which will be country wide, will introduce Child & Youth Trauma counselling by providing health management and awareness skills to health workers and teachers and families of children and young people, including combatants affected by conditions during the crisis.

#### Safe village water supplies

Community rural water supplies are likely to remain vulnerable, as in many parts of PNG. Continuing the 1998 programme, this project will identify vulnerable villages, review contamination and supply problems, and upgrade collection, hygiene and storage procedures.

#### Production and sale of Bougainville crafts

The Bougainville economy has been devastated by the conflict. Crafts, once a major community earner, are slowly re-emerging but people lack start-up funds, and transport and shipping costs to viable markets are high. This project is meant to encourage the re-establishment of village based craft industry, notably the production of basket ware and furniture, that was flourishing before the crisis. Part of the Red Cross community development plan and particularly directed at women, it will help facilitate regional production. Through existing contacts the PNG Red Cross will create and supply retail outlets on the mainland.

#### Aitape Tsunami Post Disaster Programme

The tsunami which struck the area around the Sissano Lagoon near Aitape, Sandaun Province on 17 July 1998 left total devastation in its wake. Besides an official death toll of 2,182, it left 9,199 homeless and grieving survivors.

The response, local and world-wide, was rapid and overwhelming. PNG Red Cross, supported by the International Federation, provided effective and appropriate assistance during the emergency phase of the operation and has maintained a Red Cross presence in Aitape ever since.

The 1999 phase of the operation will provide medium to long term assistance to those affected by the disaster and seek to optimise the utilisation of the substantial donor funds still available through the Federation Appeal and PNG Red Cross.

#### The post disaster programme

The post-disaster programme is composed of seven projects, designed to support the tsunami survivors and to strengthen the disaster preparedness infrastructure and capacity of the PNG Red Cross. It will last for 18 months. The first steps were taken in September 1998, when the Federation/PNG Red Cross set up an operational base in Aitape to support the implementation of the projects.

#### Water and sanitation

Resettlement of the affected communities is now proceeding. Sites identified are inland from their original villages on the coast, and are mainly situated in traditional garden areas. The main project activities will be: well and latrine construction, water & sanitation in host communities, training of community volunteers. It is planned to construct a basic Ventilated Improved Pit (VIP) latrine for each family unit. VIP latrines are widely used throughout the world and are an accepted standard for the Sandaun Provincial government. The total population reached by this project will be 4,300 persons in three settlements.

#### Community health promotion and awareness

The disaster survivors, living in stressful conditions while recovering from the psychological and emotional effects of the tsunami, are vulnerable to any deterioration in their circumstances. It is essential to promote the importance of improving the health standards of the community to prevent any outbreaks of disease. In particular, the promotion of community health in the care centres needs to be addressed. The present conditions, although satisfactory in the short term, are nevertheless more crowded than in normal times.

The project includes a "mini project" component that allows for maximum flexibility and speed in responding to identified small scale, urgent needs. Main activities will be: improvement of community health standards, training of volunteers, rehabilitation of amputees and the seriously injured, and psycho-social needs assessment.

#### Nutrition assessment project

This project will identify appropriate nutritional strategies to enable the communities and authorities to plan for the future. Vulnerable families in need of special assistance will be identified. Main activities will be: assessment of nutritional status, training of personnel, awareness, monitoring and evaluation.

#### Community based self reliance training

The Aitape tsunami highlighted the vulnerability of coastal communities in this part of PNG and underlined the need for comprehensive community based preparedness training in disaster prone communities throughout the country. This project will use the regionally developed Red Cross CBSR training programme (incorporating community based training in Disaster Preparedness, First Aid and Health Care) to assist communities in the Aitape region and beyond. It will also use the Aitape disaster to develop a nation-wide CBSR programme for PNG Red Cross.

#### Disaster response and relief centre in Lae

After the Aitape tsunami, PNG Red Cross, Morobe Branch and the Federation were extremely fortunate that relief supplies from other operations were available and thus enabled Red Cross to fulfil its responsibilities to the disaster survivors. Had these supplies not been in the right place at the right time it would have been difficult to get relief items promptly to this inaccessible area.

The importance of having centrally located stocks of relief items is of vital importance in PNG where disasters are frequent and transport difficult. This project will set up a 350 m<sup>2</sup> warehouse which will be stocked with selected relief items. Lae is considered to be the ideal logistics centre for this warehouse, being centrally located with good access to the rest of the country by road, sea and air. In addition it is the main supply base for existing Red Cross operations.

#### National headquarters office space and storage facilities

Although Lae is the best place for a central relief warehouse, a smaller storage facility is needed in Port Moresby, since many relief supplies are channelled through the capital. The lack of suitable space became evident during the Aitape operation.

The Institutional Development Programme now underway will have a strong training component. Additional training will take place as part of the planned disaster preparedness

and CCSR capacity building. A suitable Red Cross training centre will therefore be needed for these training programmes.

#### Strengthening PNG Red Cross disaster preparedness and response capacity

One of the key limitations to the PNG Red Cross disaster preparedness and response capacity has been the lack of sufficient trained staff to respond to disasters and to implement community based training programmes in vulnerable regions. A core of suitably trained PNG Red Cross staff must be created, beginning at the national level and subsequently extending to the branches, in parallel with the Society's institutional development. The project will be implemented through staff training workshops, preparation of a DP plan and identification of branch building/community training centres.

#### Capacity

- The Operating National Society

Although the PNG Red Cross has responded well in a number of emergency situations over the past six years including the Finisterre earthquake, Rabaul volcano and the Aitape tidal wave, to name the largest ones, it still lacks trained human resources, officers and volunteers to carry out longer term programmes or sustained relief operations. In 1999, as part of the institutional development process, strategies will be designed to increase the capacity of the human resources of the National Society at national and branch levels, through all programmes and projects.

- The Federation

In 1999, the Federation will maintain a six-person delegation: three in Port Moresby and three on Bougainville.

The regional delegations of Suva and Kuala Lumpur will continue to provide technical support to the PNG Red Cross and the country delegation.

#### Co-operation

The Federation will continue to collaborate with National Societies in the region who have been supporting the Papua New Guinea humanitarian operations for many years. Contacts will be maintained with ICRC with regard to activities in Bougainville. Relations with the PNG Government, Bougainville authorities and other agencies operating in the region, including UN agencies and ECHO, are excellent and close working relations will be maintained.