

PAPUA NEW GUINEA: HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE

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The Federation has identified two main approaches to support the strategy of the Papua New Guinea Red Cross Society (PNGRCS) in the forthcoming period: to support the insitutional development of the National Society; and to strengthen its capacity to run effective programmes in the area of disaster preparedness, health and social welfare.

The Context

Largely due to its mineral wealth, Papua New Guinea (PNG) is considered a country with a reasonably high income. Other social indicators such as income distribution, life expectancy, infant mortality and literacy rates are comparable, however, with some of the poorest countries in the world: Papua New Guinea has the lowest life expectancy in the South Pacific and the highest infant mortality rate.

Although 80% of the population still live a subsistence existence in isolated rural areas, the increase in the market sale of crops, the exploitation of the vast timber reserves and the booming mining industry are introducing migration to towns, environmental damage, land claims and local resentment and violence. In urban areas, social problems have worsened and violent crime is widespread.

On Bougainville island, the nine year secessionist conflict, formally settled by a peace accord in 1997, and prolonged isolation from the outside world have taken a serious toll on a severely ravaged and traumatised population. It has left behind a divided political infrastructure, ill-equipped to deal with meeting the most basic health needs. Only recently has the island seen hopeful signs of political stability

and peace, sufficient to enable the local authorities, the PNG government and its development partners to move in with small scale rehabilitation projects.

Papua New Guinea suffers from highly destructive natural disasters including volcanic eruption, earthquakes, floods, tsunamis and drought. In the last few years, two volcanoes overlooking Rabaul erupted, destroying the town and displacing 60,000 people. Three thousand people were killed in the Aitape tsunami in 1997, and parts of the Highlands were badly affected in mid 1997 to April 1998 by drought resulting from El Nino.

The Papua New Guinea Red Cross Society is very small, with only a few hundred members and branches in seven provinces. After concentrating from 1991 to 1998 almost entirely on disaster relief operations, dominated by assistance on Bougainville, the National Society is now switching its priorities to providing support to, and building programmes in, branches which have been left on their own for many years. The process began with the adoption of national development plans in 1998 and the incorporation of development oriented programmes into the Aitape tsunami operation in 1998.

The Federation support at the moment includes management procedures, improved financial management, a human resource development programme, stronger branches, increased public awareness, more diversified income sources, expanded relations with external organisations, preparation of the National Disaster Preparedness Plan, improved water and sanitation and health services in Bougainville and extended training for community based volunteers in disaster preparedness and health.

Latest events

The overall political situation in Papua New Guinea is stable with regular Parliament sessions. In the last 3 months, the local currency became stronger but the prices in the market did not decrease. There were no disasters in the 6 month reporting period. The security situation in the country remains a source of concern for both the citizens of the country and the expat community. The number of car hijacking cases, armed robberies, rapes and murders continues to be high. There are no available statistics to document the above, though and many claim that more than 80% of the crime goes unreported. One of the main reasons for the high crime rate is high unemployment coupled with more rural population migrating to urban areas.

The proposed autonomy plan for Bougainville was unanimously rejected by Bougainville leaders during political negotiations at Hutjena, Buka Island on the 6- 8 March, 2000. Subsequent political negotiations conducted at Loloata Island (near Port Moresby) from 17-23 March found middle ground and the Loloata Agreement was signed. This was the first time the National Government was prepared to consider a referendum on independence. However, the agreement does not guarantee a referendum on independence.

The legal Bougainville Interim Provincial Government was sworn in on 30 March 2000. The Bougainville Peoples Congress (BPC) will have a consultancy role to the Bougainville Interim Provincial Government (BPIG). The adjustments will be made in the Papua New Guinea constitution to provide grounds for an autonomous Bougainville Government.

The much awaited meeting between the two parties took place in Port Moresby in May, with discussions focusing on issues related to the establishment of an autonomous government in Bougainville and the time table for the referendum. It was decided to allow the Bougainville negotiators to present their point of view to the parliament and to establish an office in Port Moresby for the preparation of Loloata Agreement implementation process.

More and more shops are being set up in Arawa and more goods are available in these shops. There is an increase in the economic activity in Buka, as well. However, there remains a lack of security and law and order.

Red Cross/Red Crescent action

Institutional Development Programme •

The PNGRCS post disaster relief component remains the lead force in institutional development and capacity building. Its nation-wide network covering seven provincial branches comprises 250 members/volunteers. The PNGRCS Council and branch level meetings have discussed the ways to recruit and mobilise more volunteers and plans have been made to establish more branches within this year.

The Annual General Meeting in March 2000 saw some changes of members in the Council and the Executive Committee. The previous Deputy National Chairperson is now the Chairperson. Two committees have been set up, namely the Resource Development Committee and the Planning and Development Committee. Work on setting up procedures, rules and regulations related to fund-raising activities has begun.

The table below illustrates workshops that have been organised for both the Council members and staff covering topics related to governance, management, finance/administration and modalities for programme implementation:

Date	Field	Targets reached					Total
		Volunteers			Staff		
		Council	ExCo.	BIF	NS	FLS	
12- 13 Feb	Governance & Management		5		1		6
7 April	Modalities on Programme Implementation				8	3	11
27 - 28 April	Finance & Administration				11	3	14
20 - 21 May	Governance & Management	14		2	9		25

ExCo = Executive Committee BIF = Branch in Formation FLS = Federation Local Staff

Governance has began the concept of monitoring as a tool for following up proposals developed and accepted during meetings. Currently, governance seem to be playing a more active role and they seem to have a better understanding of their role and the issues of primary importance to the Society.

Counterparts have been identified and the working modalities drafted. The importance of the promotion of fundamental principles and humanitarian values have been emphasised in all training programmes.

The immediate Federation plans include efforts a) to implement the ID activities from the Country Assistance Strategy (CAS), 2000-2001; b) to support the National Society in branch development, training, recruitment and mobilization of volunteers.

The main problem faced by the National Society is a high turnover of key staff in the Finance and Administration Department over the last few years. Finding a solution to overcome this problem is the top priority of the management.

Community Based Self Reliance Programme (CBSR) •

The PNGRCS involvement in the CBSR concept goes back to 1994 and to the 6th Programme Meeting of the Pacific Red Cross Societies which established a series of priorities for the Pacific Region.

In order to improve the situation of the most vulnerable in disaster-prone communities, the PNGRCS like many other National Societies implements the CBSR as an integrated programme involving Community Based First Aid (CBFA), Health Awareness (HA) and Community Based Disaster Preparedness (CBDP). After a prolonged delay, the programme was launched on 22 May 2000 and immediately followed by training.

CBSR Component 1- Community Based First Aid/Health Awareness and Training of Trainers (CBFA/HA/TOT)

The Australian Red Cross First Aid Resource person conducted a workshop in Port Moresby from 17 May to 29 June. Community Based First Aid Instructors, Assistant Instructors and First Aiders were promoted after the workshop.

Below are the statistics of this workshop:

Field of Training	Duration	No. Trained		Skilled human resource developed		
				Accreditation		
				Instructors	Assistant Instructors	Non-Instructors
CBFA/HA /TOT	22 May - 02 Jun	Group 1	19	10	6	3 First Aiders
	05 Jun - 16 Jun	Group II	18	13	4	1 First Aider
CBFA/HC & CBFA/TOT Human Resource			37	23	10	4

HIV/AIDS

Launching of a HIV/AIDS programme is planned for December 2000 to coincide with the World HIV/AIDS Day.

CBSR Component 2 - Community Based Disaster Preparedness & Training of Trainers (CBDP & TOT)

This workshop was attended by volunteers and staff from the National Society headquarters and branches as well as by four participants from Bougainville and two from the Solomon Islands Red Cross Society. Expected participants from Kiribati could not attend due to disruption of flights as a result of the Fiji crisis.

Below are the statistics of this training:

Field of Training	Duration	No. Trained		Skilled human resource developed		
				Accreditation		
				Facilitator	Assistant Facilitator	Non-Facilitator
CBDP&TOT	19 Jun – 30 Jun	Group 1	19	10	6	0
	03 Jul - 14 Jul	Group II	16	Waiting training conclusion		
CBDP&TOT Human Resource				10	10	4

The CBSR programme will be extended also to the remote Vanimo and Sanduan provinces through workshops planned to take place from August through November 2000.

Further activities within the CBSR include a) preparation of the National Disaster Preparedness Plan; b) drafting of the CBSR plan of action ensuring effective implementation at field level and the programme sustainability; c) CBDP&TOT training of the second group of volunteers/staff ; d) further field dissemination and identification of CBSR priorities in other high-risk areas; e) support to training at community level in the districts of Vanimo, Aitape and Wewack.

Blood Transfusion Service •

The blood transfusion service is a partnership between the PNGRCS and the Government based on the Memorandum of Understanding between the two parties. Several blood donation campaigns have been organised in the first half of 2000.

Assistance to disabled •

The programme is divided into two parts - special education centre and the outreach services. The Red Cross involvement dates back to the pre-independence days. The outreach disability service has been recently extended to New Ireland and Milne Bay branches.

Fundraising •

The most prominent fund-raising activity is the Miss PNG Red Cross Quest which raises the largest amount of money in support of various programmes not funded by external donors. These funds form the largest part of the core budget. However, there are plans to diversify fund-raising activities.

Bougainville Health Programme •

The International Federation facilitated 16 sessions of community health education and awareness raising at Arawa High School and Arawa Health Centre in the Central District. A total of 700 people attended these sessions. The participants included teachers, students, health workers, ante natal patients and other women. Similar sessions were held in 32 villages for another 4,700 participants during the same period.

The International Federation continued providing on the job training to the pharmacist at Arawa Health Centre thus facilitating the implementation of stock and equipment management systems at this facility.

Four out of six one-week workshops planned for “Healthy Life Styles and Safe Motherhood” were conducted at Arawa Health Centre in May, Morotona in Bana District, Turiboiru in Tele District and Oria in Wisai Districts. A total of 84 participants which included a health officer, midwives, nurses, aid post orderlies, community health workers and volunteers from the local communities attended the workshop.

Participants who attended the first workshop in Arawa have conducted safe motherhood health education in their own communities. A total of 35 sessions were conducted in 19 villages in the Central District and 1,541 participants (441 males and 1,100 females) attended the sessions.

The International Federation facilitated the training session on vacuum extraction conducted by the Peace Monitoring Group (PMG) Obstetrician for the doctor, two health officers and six midwives at Arawa Health Centre.

Sixty-eight medical kits were distributed to 25 health centres. Health centre equipment was distributed to six health centres and 24 aid posts.

Due to a serious shortage of medical supplies, the Federation has been requested by health authorities in Bougainville to continue with the provision and distribution of medical supplies. The Federation Delegation and the Provincial co-ordinator prepared a list of essential medical supplies for rural health

services in spite of the Country Assistance Strategy decisions to stop medical support. Funding was provided at the beginning of June and procurement will follow in the second half of the year.

Out of 29 solar refrigerator panels, only 5 have been installed. The Federation delegation was advised by the health authorities not to instal any more since, after a registered theft of some panels, they could not guarantee their security. The Federation warehouse was also robbed and three of the solar panels were stolen. All remaining solar refrigerators have been sent to Lae for safe keeping. The provincial health authorities have proposed the atolls for safe keeping the solar vaccine refrigerators.

Below are statistics on the Community Health Education & Awareness Raising / Medical Equipment Distribution:

Month	No of villages	No of Participants	Health Centre Equipment	Aid Post Equipment	Medical kits to Sub-Health Centre
Jan	11	1070	1	10	49
Feb	6	795	5	13	15
Mar	7	1990			1
Apr	5	419		1	3
May	15	639			
June	4	518			
Total	48	5431	6	24	68

Bougainville Water and Sanitation Programme

The Federation Water and Sanitation Team continued its monitoring activities. Additional projects were initiated during the first half of the year and so far 18 different projects have been completed. Twenty four other projects are in the process of completion. The completed projects benefit a total of 8,800 people. The number of beneficiaries will increase once the remaining projects are completed in the coming months. In addition, 58 pit latrines were completed during the first half of the year.

The team monitored the construction of latrines at Tavatava area. While monitoring the project, the team took the opportunity to raise with the communities the issue of latrine maintenance and environmental protection. Monitoring visits were also carried out in southern Bougainville. Buin, Tokaino, Laitaro, Tobago and the Wisai sub-districts were also visited. All projects in Wisai have been already completed. The Federation watsan programme will continue to support projects in central and southern Bougainville. The procurement of material and the construction at many project sites are already underway.

The watsan team conducted a workshop on basic water and sanitation hygiene and the construction of Ferro cement water tanks for 25 participants from the Arawa Carpentry and Social Development Project run by Volunteer Services Abroad (NZ).

During visits to various districts, discussions were held with the authorities and village chiefs to ensure their participation and consent with all the activities. It was decided that watsan committees will be established in the districts to advise the Federation on the selection of the assistance priorities. These committees will include community representatives as well as a Federation representative.

Below are some of the relevant statistics for the first half of the year:

Month	Projects Completed			Type of Systems				Estimated no	Projects in
	Commu -	Health	Schools	No. of	No. of	No. of	No. of		

	nity	centres / aid posts		rainwater catchment	gravity feed system	tanks	latrines	of beneficiaries	progress
Jan	1	1	3	4	1	6	38	4000	24
Feb	0	0	4	2	2	4	0	2000	21
Mar	3	2	1	3	3	6	0	2000	18
Apr	0	0	0	0	0	0	20	200	23
May	0	0	1	1	0	1	0	150	24
June	0	0	2	2	0	2	0	450	24
Total	4	3	11	12	6	19	58	8800	

Note: Estimated No. of beneficiaries only relates to completed projects and not projects under progress. A review of the Programmes in Bougainville has been completed and the report was received. Copies can be obtained from the Federation Secretariat.

Outstanding needs

Outstanding financial needs exist in Institutional Development activities and the delegation core costs.

External relations - Government/UN/NGOs/Media

Regular contacts were held in the past period with donors, UN agencies, Embassies and local authorities. The PNGRCS activities were well covered in the local media. Monthly interagency meetings and Peace Monitoring Group briefings were also attended.

Contributions

See Annex 1 for details.

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