

## ***NORTH AFRICA: BUILDING CAPACITIES***

23 January 2001

*appeal no. 01.68/2000*

*situation report no. 2*

*period covered: 1 July - 31 December 2000*

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*The Federation representative in North Africa has now been stationed in the region for one year. Significant progress has been achieved since positive relations have been developed with the National Societies in the region and understanding has been built as regards the Societies' capacities and priorities. Major undertakings in the region included the staging of the second MENA conference in Cairo, the sub regional first aid workshop and holding of General Assemblies of the Algerian and Moroccan Red Crescent Societies. The Federation office is now well established. However, a focus of attention remains the conclusion of a status agreement with the Tunisian authorities. Funding for core costs and for programme support is urgently sought for 2001.*

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### ***The context***

At the end of 1999, a decision was made to place a Federation representative in North Africa, covering Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia, Libya and Egypt. Her function was to represent the Federation and to enhance contacts with these Societies with a view to developing programmes and projects jointly. It was recognised that the Secretariat had little information on the needs and capacities of North African Societies, mainly because the region had not benefited from a Federation delegation.

In accordance with the regional assistance strategy framework for 2000-2001, the Federation will assist North African National Societies to build their capacities in an integrated way, focusing on two main areas: disaster preparedness and institutional and resource development. A regional disaster preparedness programme, together with tailor made national disaster preparedness strategies, was

foreseen to help National Societies to address different types of emergencies at regional, national and local level. This activity will be closely co-ordinated with the Societies' first-aid and health programmes. Strengthening the Red Crescent organisations at national as well as regional and local levels, including their human and financial resources, was defined as a prerequisite for the successful implementation of service programmes. As a first step, basic data on the Societies and good working relations were to be established to allow for appropriate planning.

At the end of the first year, the building of contacts with National Societies of North Africa is well underway. Each Society has been visited, some several times, and regional co-operation has begun. As priorities and plans are being worked out with the Societies, a much clearer vision of their needs and capacities is emerging, leading to some adjustments in the assistance strategy. The Societies have welcomed the Federation initiative to be present in the region. The Federation representation in Tunis now has a well-functioning office in place, but needs further support to serve the Societies as planned.

## ***Latest events***

North Africa does not often reach the headlines in the world media. The exception is Algeria, where violence continues to take a heavy toll. During the holy month of Ramadhan alone an estimated 200 persons - mostly civilians but also members of security forces as well as islamists - were killed. The whole population suffers either directly or indirectly. The programmes carried out by the Algerian Red Crescent, such as first aid services, occupational centres for women victims of violence, summer camps for children and food distributions, therefore respond to a real need. In neighbouring Morocco, this year has seen an opening towards more democracy with reforms initiated by the new king Mohamed VI. However, recently this country has experienced confrontations between the police and unauthorised demonstrators, and the unsolved question of the Western Sahara continues to create tensions. Both Morocco and Egypt have large rural populations whose health and social needs are significant. In particular, women are at a disadvantage as regards access to training and services. For this reason, the Red Crescent Societies have focused many of their activities on women. With the lifting of the UN embargo, Libya is reinforcing its role on the world scene. The re-establishment of air traffic has also facilitated contacts with the Libyan Red Crescent, and promises a more active role in the region. Tunisia has enjoyed a long period of relative stability and economic growth. It has been under some criticism with regard to its human rights record, in which context it should be noted that the Tunisian Red Crescent was given a presidential human rights award on the anniversary of the UN human rights declaration.

The escalation of violence between Palestine and Israel has also affected the North African countries. The governments used the humanitarian assistance to Palestine as a way of channelling strong public emotions, and the Red Crescent Societies were the privileged partners in these operations.

## ***Red Cross/Red Crescent action***

### **Federation Office in Tunis •**

At the close of the year, the Federation representation in North Africa has an operational office located in Tunis in the same building as the ICRC regional delegation for Maghreb.

The building of contacts with National Societies is under way. The Federation representative has carried out introductory visits to all five National Societies of the sub-region - to Tunisia (host country) in January, to Morocco and Egypt in February, to Algeria in early April, and to Libya in October - all together with the head of the MENA Department. A follow-up visit to Algeria was carried out at the end of May, and another visit to Algeria by the office administrator together with a desk officer from Geneva took place in October, for the purpose of designing projects to support the ARCS work centres

for women. A follow-up visit was also made to Morocco in connection with the Society's General Assembly in October. The Federation representative together with the regional disaster preparedness delegate from Amman carried out a planning visit in Egypt in early December to initiate a pilot project of the regional disaster preparedness programme.

These visits have allowed for discussions with the Societies' leaders on priorities for Federation support, and will lead to more concrete plans as well as to certain adjustments to the Federation assistance strategy for North Africa. The most advanced plans were produced with the Algerian Red Crescent, but due to changes in the leadership of the Society it will be necessary to revisit these plans and possibly to re-establish priorities.

During the second half of the year the Federation representative participated in a number of regional events. She co-facilitated a volunteering seminar for Western, Central and North African Societies in Dakar in early July. At the end of July she organised and co-facilitated a North African first aid workshop in Tunis, together with the regional health delegate from Amman. Furthermore, she co-ordinated the participation of North African Societies in the Pan African Conference in Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso, in September, and will be following-up the implementation of the resolutions of the conference as well as the preparations for the following one, to be held in Algeria in 2004. The Federation representative also attended the third planning meeting for MENA heads of delegations in Amman in September.

#### **Sub-regional First Aid Workshop •**

With financial support from the Netherlands Red Cross, the Federation office in Tunis was able to host a sub-regional workshop on first aid for the five National Societies of North Africa on 17-20 July. Three representatives from each Society were invited: one from management level, one instructor and one youth representative. The Societies responded with enthusiasm, resulting in full participation from all Societies. The objective of the workshop was to link the North African first aid programmes with Strategy 2010, to make the first aid policy more concrete, to promote regional exchange of expertise, and to create a basis for future regional co-operation and networking. At the request of the participants, the workshop will be followed up by a working group of technical persons from each Society with a view to promoting exchange of materials and harmonising approaches in first aid throughout the sub-region. The workshop promoted concrete co-operation and exchange between the Societies.

#### **Second MENA Conference •**

The Egyptian Red Crescent hosted the second MENA Conference, held in Cairo from 3 - 8 June. It was attended by all 17 Societies from the MENA region and 11 PNS. The Conference focused on reviewing current activities of the Societies in the region in the context of Strategy 2010 and came up with recommendations as follows:

- to enhance co-operation, co-ordination and bilateral assistance within the region;
- to encourage PNS initiatives to support MENA National Societies (NS), recognising NS priorities and donor visibility;
- to draw up procedures for implementing Strategy 2010 in the region;
- to co-ordinate assistance by MENA within and outside the region;
- to work through websites to share knowledge and create networks of expertise;
- to enhance confidence building through Federation appeals and reports;
- to call on MENA department to support NS capacity building and development programmes;
- to ensure that women and youth have clear and specific roles in disaster preparedness and health and care;
- to provide technical support to the NS to draft national disaster preparedness plans.

#### **Volunteering workshop for Western, Central and North Africa •**

This workshop was originally scheduled to take place in Tunis, but later the decision was taken that it would be held in Dakar from 2 - 7 July. The workshop aimed to study the problems facing each region regarding volunteering. The purpose is to develop tools and best practices to recruit, retain, manage and develop volunteering in Societies, which currently are seeing numbers of volunteers fall, or which have difficulties in establishing volunteer based activities at community level. As the latter is a key element of Federation Strategy 2010, and a cause of concern in various North African Societies, representatives of the Tunisian and Algerian Societies attended together with the Federation representative for North Africa, who co-facilitated the workshop.

#### **North African Societies in the Pan African Conference •**

The 5th Pan African Conference was convened in Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso, from 21 to 25 September 2000, with delegates from 52 African National Societies, including all five North African Societies. Both Algeria and Libya sent two representatives and Egypt, Morocco and Tunisia each sent one. All took an active part in the conference deliberations.

The Conference focused on two key issues: The African Red Cross Red Crescent Health Initiative (ARCHI), and Food Security. The North African representatives met to discuss the special sub-regional focus and follow-up of the commitments. They were unanimous about their importance also for North Africa, putting a special emphasis on prevention and health education as well as training of volunteers. The Societies agreed that they should engage themselves actively in prevention of HIV/AIDS and not wait until the situation becomes worse. The Conference unanimously decided to accept the Algerian Red Crescent offer to host the next Pan African Conference, to be held in 2004. This will be a good opportunity for North Africa to raise its profile on the continent, and it will also motivate the Societies of the sub-region to ensure the follow-up of commitments.

#### **Algerian Red Crescent •**

During the first half of the year the Federation representative had put special emphasis on working with the Algerian Red Crescent (ARCS) with a view to supporting this Society effectively, given that it is operating in an environment of violence and great needs. A number of visits and meetings took place in order to establish a list of priorities and a plan of action together with the ARCS. However, following changes in the leadership of the ARCS during the summer, it will be necessary to re-establish priorities and plans.

#### *General Assembly*

The ARCS General Assembly was scheduled for 1998, and was hence two years overdue, with a planned date of 12-13 July 2000. However, on 8 July the Minister for National Solidarity decreed the suspension of the ARCS Central Committee, including its President, and established a Provisional Committee, with the responsibility of managing the NS and preparing a General Assembly within two months. The General Assembly took place on 7-8 September, in the presence of high authorities and representatives from all 48 wilayas (regional committees). Prof Abdel Kader Boukhroufa, President of the Provisional Committee, was elected President of the Society. The 12- member Central Committee was also renewed. The person who received the highest number of votes for the Committee, Mme Zemri, was later appointed Secretary General of the Society.

#### *Project planning*

Between 21-26 October the field officer from the Federation office in Tunis accompanied the desk officer of the MENA Department for a mission to Algeria to prepare an 'ouvroir' project (occupational training centres for women), to be supported by the Netherlands Red Cross, and to obtain feed back on the French Red Cross funded ouvroir project. The mission also looked into implementing a project in the field of disaster response or disaster preparedness related to the Mascara earthquake.

The mission was satisfied by the experience and work of the Algerian Red Crescent in this field, and recommended that the Netherlands Red Cross support two such projects, in Alger and in Blida, and that other PNS should be requested to support ouvroirs. The mission also visited the Anaba branch,

which was one of the recipients of the French Red Cross donation of equipment last year, and was satisfied with the choice of the beneficiary branch, although the installation of the equipment had not yet taken place. Various recommendations were made for the ARCS regarding implementation of the projects, and a Memorandum of Understanding will be signed between the Algerian Red Crescent, the Federation and the Netherlands Red Cross. It has been agreed that the Tunis office will monitor the implementation of the *ouvroir* projects.

The possibility of setting up a tent factory with the remaining funds of the Mascara earthquake was also looked into. The ARCS was requested to come up with some additional information regarding the initial proposal. The Tunis office will follow up on this.

#### *ARCS First Aid seminar 19-20 November*

A large first aid seminar, bringing together some 150 representatives from all 48 Red Crescent wilaya committees, civil defence and relevant ministries, met for two days to discuss national first aid strategy, curricula and training manuals. Eight first aid instructors who had been trained in Belgium, France and Switzerland, also shared their experiences with the wilaya representatives.

The seminar took place in the context of the ARCS first aid programme, currently supported by the ICRC and begun in 1999 through the support of the Federation regional health delegate in Amman. The ICRC agrees that first aid is in fact more of a Federation task, but due to the absence of the Federation at the time when the programme was conceived, it became one of the four programmes for which the ICRC has a development contract with the ARCS. For the purposes of the Appeal 2001 it was agreed between the two delegations in Tunis that this programme be gradually handed over from the ICRC to the Federation as funding becomes available.

#### **Egyptian Red Crescent (ERCS) •**

After the initial visit was carried out to the ERCS in February, the Society hosted the 2nd MENA Conference in June (see above). The follow-up working visit by the Federation representative, together with the regional disaster preparedness delegate from Amman, took place on 11-13 December, in order to plan for the disaster preparedness component of the sub-regional programme, with Egypt as a pilot Society for 2001.

The visit provided an excellent opportunity to learn about ERCS activities in disaster preparedness and related areas. The mission met with senior management and board members and with women and youth volunteers involved in a rehabilitation project after the earthquake of 1992, with whom two workshops were conducted. Furthermore, a visit took place to the El Nahda rehabilitation project, which can be considered as a model of participative community development which could be utilised for community-based disaster preparedness.

It is the Society's wish to pursue the vulnerability and capacity assessment (VCA) approach by piloting the process in one community in the Upper Nile area. This will allow a model to be tested with adequate supervision and proximity to Cairo for travelling purposes. The idea of extending first aid training to include issues in public and environmental health, water, sanitation and shelter was well received. Concurrently with the VCA pilot process a guidebook to support this programme will be developed. The disaster preparedness delegate will gather appropriate material in English for submission to the Secretary General so that an Arabic format can be prepared. It was agreed that a proposal for a VCA project will be drafted by the regional disaster preparedness delegate and the Federation representative in Tunis and submitted to the ERCS for consideration, and that the necessary human and material resources will be agreed on and funded prior to commencement of the project.

The correlation of ERCS successes in community development and the use of "bottom-up" VCA methods used in Palestine and Syria add weight to the possibilities of the ERCS becoming a pioneer in the North African sub region worthy of strong financial and technical support from the Federation.

### **Libyan Red Crescent (LRC) •**

During the first part of the year contacts between the Libyan Red Crescent and the Federation representative were limited. Finally, a first visit to the Libyan Red Crescent by the head of MENA department and the Federation representative for North Africa took place between 30 September and 3 October 2000. During the visit, discussions were held with the directors of departments, each explaining their work. The LRC blood centre, training centre, the polyclinic, and Benghazi Branch were visited. The following conclusions were reached:

- *Sub-regional meeting for North Africa.* The first such meeting took place in Tunis in April 2000. It was agreed that the next one be organised in Benghazi.
- *Disaster Preparedness Planning Seminar.* The LRC is planning to organise a seminar (20-21 March) and has requested Federation expertise to plan and facilitate.
- *Strategic planning expertise.* As the LRC is quite advanced in this field, it would be interesting to use this expertise in the region, for instance in training events such as institutional development or leadership courses, or in the production of Federation regional/country assistance strategies (RAS/CAS).
- *Delegate Workshop.* The LRC is planning to organise a delegate preselection workshop, in which other NS from the region could also participate. This matter will be reviewed once the Arabic version of the new international recruitment handbook is issued in early 2001.
- *Human Resources Database.* In view of various training sessions carried out by the Federation and NS, it is important to collect all information concerning those trained. The Tunis office will follow up on this initiative.
- *Exchanges and study visits.* LRC would be interested in carrying out and receiving visits to/from NS in North Africa and elsewhere in the region or beyond, in the following areas: youth, women's groups, humanitarian values, health, disaster preparedness and response.
- *Youth "North Africa Cup".* It was suggested that a competition be organised in North Africa among youth, to promote exchange and advocate for humanitarian values. LRC would be prepared to host such an event and agreed to produce a first proposal.
- *Youth Camp.* The Benghazi branch is planning to organise a youth camp in the Green Mountains for year 2001, to which youth from other NS in the region would be invited. The LRC will produce a proposal to this effect.
- *Media co-operation.* In view of the professional approach and interest of the LRC in this area, the Federation would be willing to establish co-operation with LRC once the information delegate for the Amman regional delegation has been recruited.
- *Twinning experiences between Branches.* The LRC is interested in developing this activity in light of experiences from other NS.
- *Regional/Country Assistance Strategies (R/CAS) 2001-2002.* The first strategies were produced one year ago by the Secretariat. These will now be revised together with LRC to define priorities for Federation support.
- *LRC support to Tunis Office.* The Federation office for North Africa has been financially supported mainly by contributions from North European NS (Finland, Sweden, Norway, Netherlands). A contribution from the LRC would be appreciated, as it would demonstrate support from the region.

### **Moroccan Red Crescent (MRC) •**

The Moroccan Red Crescent carried out its General Assembly on 7-8 October 2000. It was attended by the Head of MENA and the North Africa representative from the Federation. This MRC General Assembly was an important event in that it was the first for eight years, and it seems the first one in which elections of office holders were held. It was explained that the eight year pause was due to the decentralisation of the country's administrative structure, which had resulted in more regions than before, and consequently more Red Crescent regional committees to be established. The GA was well attended by all regional committees.

The most important issues on the agenda were the elections of office holders and the change of MRC Statutes. A new National Committee was unanimously elected, with Princess Lalla Malika as President. The proposal from the working group on revision of the Statutes was unanimously adopted. The previous Statutes dated from 1957. The working group used the new Federation guidelines for NS statutes in its work. However, the new version of the Statutes existed only in Arabic, but will be translated into French and forwarded to the Secretariat.

During the General Assembly the President of the MRC also announced the donation of two ambulances to the Palestine Red Crescent as a sign of solidarity. This was widely published in the Moroccan press, as was the General Assembly in general.

During this visit various pending issues were discussed. Most importantly the NS self-assessment questionnaire was finalised with some technical assistance from the Federation representative. Later in November, a working session was organised with the Assistant Secretary General of the MRC during his visit to Tunis. Discussions centred on finalising the implementation of the Empress Shôken Fund grant, new Statutes of the MRC, an offer of clothing by the company Cotton Club, completion of MRC profile and updating of the regional/country assistance strategy. It was agreed that the Federation representative will make a working visit to Morocco in early 2001.

#### **Tunisian Red Crescent (TRC) •**

In early September the Federation representative met with the TRC and the ICRC to follow up on earlier discussions on co-operation and support to the TRC during the second half of 2000 and in 2001. The plans to have joint training visits to the regional branches of the TRC were postponed. It was confirmed that the first regional leadership course would be held in early February in Tunis. During the months of October and November, technical advice was provided by the Federation representative on the National Society self-assessment questionnaire, to which the members of the Federation Governing Board had committed as a pilot NS. This proved to be a series of most useful discussions, dealing with central issues of the NS governance. It was combined with initial planning for the TRC project aiming at having one first aider in each family by 2010, and with drafting an application for the Empress Shôken Fund. It was furthermore agreed that an institutional development workshop be organised for the TRC in early March, as well as a resource development analysis and training event shortly afterwards. For both of these funding has been secured through the Federation capacity building fund.

## ***Outstanding needs***

#### **Core funding for Tunis Office •**

The Tunis office is now well established and has managed to build good working contacts with the North African Societies. It is now important to ensure its continued functioning through core funding. The Finnish Red Cross has pledged to support the delegate's salary costs in 2001, but funding for other core costs needs to be identified as soon as possible.

#### **Programme costs •**

A grant has been received from the Federation Capacity Building Fund towards institutional and resource development activities, as well as for leadership training. This will prove significant, but will not cover the entire plan for 2001. There is also a perspective of receiving partial support for the disaster preparedness programme, but this will not be sufficient to carry out all plans for 2001. A pilot project has been identified but implementation can only start once funding is in place. All the other programmes of Appeal 2001 require funding.

## ***External relations - Government/UN/NGOs/Media***

#### **Contacts with the Tunisian government •**

Contacts have continued with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, which is the focal point for the Federation Status Agreement request. The process was initiated in December 1999, about one month before the Federation Representative arrived in Tunis, using the good services of the Tunisian Red Crescent. While it was expected that the process would take time, the lack of such an agreement has somewhat slowed down the setting up of the office and incurred additional expenditure. For the time being, there is a temporary arrangement through a diplomatic visa, which has made possible such necessities as rental of office space, telephone lines and a bank account. However, the status agreement will be a priority for early 2001.

#### **Contacts with the ICRC •**

Good co-operation has continued with the ICRC Maghreb delegation, which has been established in Tunis for more than ten years. The fact that the two delegations are located in the same building facilitates contacts and exchange of information. Regular meetings have been held with the HoRD of the ICRC in order to co-ordinate activities, and with the new ICRC co-operation delegate, particularly in respect of assistance to the Algerian Red Crescent. Planning meetings were held to integrate Federation and ICRC plans for 2001-2002.

## ***Contributions***

See Annex 1 for details.

Appeal coverage for the year 2000 stands at 72.6%.

## ***Conclusion***

Funding is urgently needed for core costs. There is a pledge for the delegate's salary costs and good perspectives of having some programme areas covered. However, it will be extremely difficult to work productively without the basic funding to run the office. This is essential to deliver the services expected by the North African Societies, which are beginning to have confidence in the office. These Societies have welcomed a long overdue Federation presence in the region. The office will also be of concrete help for participating National Societies which are interested in supporting projects in the region.

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<b>North Africa</b>						ANNEX 1
<b>APPEAL No. 01.68/2000</b>		<b>PLEDGES RECEIVED</b>			01/23/01	
DONOR	CATEGORY	QUANTITY	UNIT	VALUE CHF	DATE	COMMENT
<b>CASH</b>						
REQUESTED IN APPEAL CHF ----->				<b>698,000</b>		<b>TOTAL COVERAGE 72.6%</b>
Balance carried forward from 1999				<b>299,754</b>		
FRENCH - RC				10,049	02.11.00	
ITALY GOVT				35,000	03.11.00	
NORWEGIAN - RC		100,000	NOK	18,920	30.08.00	
SWEDISH - GOVT/RC		400,000	SEK	75,840	15.05.00	
UNITED ARAB EMIRATES - RC		5,000	USD	8,850	29.11.00	TUNIS FEDERATION OFFICE
<b>SUB/TOTAL RECEIVED IN CASH</b>				<b>448,413</b>	CHF	<b>64.2%</b>
<b>KIND AND SERVICES (INCLUDING PERSONNEL)</b>						
DONOR	CATEGORY	QUANTITY	UNIT	VALUE CHF	DATE	COMMENT
Finland	Delegate(s)			58,644		
<b>SUB/TOTAL RECEIVED IN KIND/SERVICES</b>				<b>58,644</b>	CHF	<b>8.4%</b>
<b>ADDITIONAL TO APPEAL BUDGET</b>						
DONOR	CATEGORY	QUANTITY	UNIT	VALUE CHF	DATE	COMMENT
<b>SUB/TOTAL RECEIVED</b>				<b>0</b>	CHF	
<b>THE FOLLOWING PROJECTS ARE LINKED TO THIS APPEAL:</b>						
P82161, P82900.						