

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

Lao PDR

26 July 2001

Appeal No: 01.44/2001

Appeal Target: CHF 877,157

Program Update No: 1 Period covered: 1 January - 30 June 2001

"At a Glance"

Appeal coverage: 109.5%

Outstanding needs: None

Related Appeals: Lao PDR: Floods, No. 27/00

Update: The Lao Red Cross made modest progress in disaster preparedness, the promotion of non-remunerated blood donation and the safe use of blood and the development of its management capacities, despite the constraints imposed by the completion of an important flood relief operation and the lack of a Federation representative -- a post that will be filled as of July.

Operational Developments

The main external developments in the reporting period were the Government's seventh party congress (March 2001) and a donor meeting coordinated by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) where considerable funds were pledged for development in Lao PDR.

Disaster Response

The Appeal did not contain any disaster response objectives; information concerning the final phases of the flood relief operation (Emergency Appeal no. 27/2000) that began in 2000 can be found in the relevant Operations Update on the web site of the International Federation (www.ifrc.org).

Disaster Preparedness

Objective 1: To create a disaster response capability in every branch of the Lao Red Cross (LRC).

Activities & Achievements

The Floods 2000 disaster response operation, which continued in the first three months of 2001, led to extensive training of staff in participatory management practices and overall management of relief operations in six provinces and at the LRC headquarters. Volunteers were trained in the dissemination of health information at distribution points.

One LRC priority (supported by the Federation's appeal) is to restock the existing disaster preparedness (DP) warehouses. Although no purchases have been made to date, it has been agreed that DP stock for the three regional warehouses will be purchased with funding reallocated to the Appeal 2001 from the floods appeal 27/2000.

Constraints

The lack of a senior Federation representative reduced support to LRC; however, a new head of delegation (HoD) will arrive in July 2001.

Objective 2: To build a national disaster preparedness system with effective links to the state system and the regional Red Cross societies.

Activities & Achievements

A framework agreement currently in place defines the LRC role as short-term immediate response. Following discussions with the National Disaster Management Organization (NDMO), the agreement will be reviewed to reflect the development of the national society's volunteer network (increasing its capacity to respond to disasters) and the strengthening of its branch network -- both priority areas in the LRC five-year development plan.

LRC links with other regional Red Cross initiatives improved in 2001 and the regional delegation's advisory services were used more extensively. The terms of reference for the floods operation evaluation were agreed at the regional level; a Federation consultant will give support to a review of the operation in the next quarter.

Constraints

There were no significant constraints.

Health and Care

Federation support to LRC in the health sector continued to focus largely on the blood programme. Outside the annual Appeal, the regional delegation also helped LRC to coordinate participating national societies (PNS) efforts to tackle a potentially severe diarrhoea/cholera health threat.

Objective 1: To develop an effective national blood donor recruitment system.

Activities & Achievements

The target for 2001 is to ensure that 90 per cent of blood donors will be non-remunerated; during the first six months an average of 86 per cent was achieved, largely as a result of increased dissemination and more mobile collection units. Appreciation certificates were given to regular donors. Blood donor recruitment planning meetings were organized with education representatives in Bolikhamxay Province, Vientiane Province and Vientiane municipality. Over 65 representatives of schools/colleges/universities attended.

Constraints

While the number of voluntary non-remunerated donors has increased, the volume of blood collected has fallen due to the annual vacation of students, who represent a significant proportion of the donors.

Objective 2: To ensure the hygienic collection and full screening of all donated blood and its safe transition, including use of component therapy.

Activities & Achievements

A standard procedure was introduced to ensure that throughout 2001 all blood units are tested for: ABO, Rh, HIV, HBV, HCV and syphilis, and screened for antibodies. A procedure was introduced to ensure compatibility testing was performed before blood transfusion.

To increase the effectiveness of blood and blood component use, lectures on blood component therapy were introduced in the Friendship Hospital and will be extended to other hospitals.

An orientation workshop on safe blood transfusion services was organized and supported by the World Health Organization (WHO), with 39 participants from 15 provinces. A further workshop on laboratory methods and blood donor recruitment was organized by the LRC, with 12 participants from eight provinces.

Constraints

There were no significant constraints.

Objective 3: To develop capacity in administration and management.

Activities & Achievements

During the reporting period the Japanese Red Cross delegate completed his mission in Laos. The Japanese society will continue to support this LRC programme, with the Federation's delegation providing administrative support.

Constraints

There were no significant constraints

Institutional and Resource Development

Although limited by the lack of a full time Federation representative, this programme benefited from support of a Lao-based consultant and from the Federation's regional delegation. Moreover, support from the Danish Red Cross, which is present in the country, has been significant and complementary.

Objective 1: To ensure that all Lao Red Cross senior managers are equipped with the basic management skills needed to run the society.

Activities & Achievements

LRC senior and middle management participated in May in a planning workshop at headquarters, facilitated by a Federation consultant. The outputs of the workshop were:

- an Annual Work Plan (AWP) based on the national society's five-year development plan;
- guidelines to understanding the AWP; and,
- a Federation-supported institutional development plan for headquarters and the branches.

In response to the recommendations of the Federation's consultant to improve communication and formalize progress reviews, LRC is introducing regular meetings between the its departments, the resident PNS, the Federation and ICRC.

Constraints

The process has been constrained by the lack of a Federation representative.

Objective 2: To ensure that the society has functioning systems and clear procedures for monitoring, finance, information, and relief goods management, and for management processes and decisions.

Activities and Achievements

A more strategic and structured approach to management and programming was adopted under the recently produced Annual Work Plan (see above). Progress will be monitored by the LRC against this plan over the next quarter.

The Netherlands Red Cross' bilateral programme has been providing support to the LRC Branch Development Unit (BDU) to finalise the headquarters and branch development plan. The BDU will coordinate integrated branch development; the technical units (health, etc.) will work through the BDU.

Constraints

No specific constraints.

Objective 3: To significantly strengthen the management and programming of the four most recently established branches, which currently receive no external assistance.

Activities & Achievements

There was no significant support through the Federation for this objective. A more integrated and coordinated approach to branch development is required before further support to branches is forthcoming.

Constraints

The need to focus on developing LRC headquarters' capacity is the main constraint to achieving this objective. The lack of a full time Federation representative was also a drawback.

Coordination and Management

Coordination and management continues to be provided through the Federation's officer based in Laos, with support from the regional delegation. Progress in both objectives outlined below has been constrained by the lack of a full time Federation representative.

Objective 1: To establish a fully inclusive country assistance strategy (CAS) which supports the national plan and strategy of the LRC and is accepted by all partners.

Activities & Achievements

A series of recommendations were produced following the two-week assignment of a Federation consultant to Laos. These recommendations, which support even closer working relationships between the components of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement in Laos, also emphasize the importance of continuing to review the current CAS.

Objective 2: To develop and implement the in-country management approaches needed to ensure the CAS is correctly implemented.

Activities & Achievements

No significant progress was made. This will be a priority for the Federation's representative when he arrives in July 2001.

Federation Delegation

The Federation's office in Laos continued to be staffed by one Lao officer who has overseen the modest activities of the organizational development, disaster preparedness and blood programmes. There were a number of support visits from the regional delegation and the regional finance unit. As of July 2001 a full-time Federation representative sponsored by the Danish Red Cross will begin work in Vientiane.

Monitoring & Evaluation

Monitoring against the Appeal 2001 has largely been carried out by the Federation's officer in Vientiane, with support from the regional delegation and Bangkok-based technical units. The regional delegation also contracted a Laos-based consultant to assist with planning (including the drafting of the national society's annual plan) and reporting. Financial monitoring has been done by the regional finance unit.

The regional disaster management team worked with the Lao officer and the LRC to monitor the conclusion of the 2000 floods operation and to develop the necessary framework for an evaluation. A review of the floods operation will take place in July.

Lessons Learned

The recruitment of a representative has taken longer than expected. However, the Danish Red Cross, which plays a considerable role in organizational development in Laos through its bilateral programme, agreed to provide funding for the post, in order to create an overall coordinating 'umbrella' under which it can work. The initiative demonstrates the value of working as a Federation.

A further lesson during this quarter was recognition that the process of developing the CAS must be an even more inclusive one.

Financial Update

Ongoing support from the Japanese Red Cross for the blood programme, a potential pledge of CHF 50,000 (following the Partnership Meeting) from the German Red Cross, as well as funds for organisational development from the Swiss Government and the reallocation of the balance of flood funds to disaster preparedness, means that the Appeal is well funded for 2001.

Outstanding needs

There are no further specific needs related to the Appeal

Conclusion

The activities of the first six months largely revolved around the start of a new phase in the blood programme, reshaping the disaster preparedness programme, closing the flood operation and recruiting a new representative of the Federation. The next six months should see: a considerable improvement in the coordination of Red Cross partners in Laos (including refining the CAS); action after initial delays in the organizational development programme; and an assessment of the 2000 flood operation.

For further details please contact:

Nick Russell, Federation Representative, Phone: +856 2121 5762; Fax: +856 2121 935; email: ifrcls01@ifrc.org or Ewa Eriksson, Federation Desk Officer, Phone: +41 22 730 4252 Fax: +41 22 733 0395; email:eriksson@ifrc.org

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

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

Peter Rees Gildea
Head a.i.
Relationship Management Department

Hiroshi Higashuira
Head
Asia & Pacific Department

Laos						ANNEX 1	
APPEAL No. 01.44/2001						PLEDGES RECEIVED	26.07.2001
DONOR	CATEGORY	QUANTITY	UNIT	VALUE CHF	DATE	COMMENT	
CASH						TOTAL COVERAGE	
REQUESTED IN APPEAL CHF ----->				877,157		109.5%	
CASH CARRIED FORWARD				36,814			
REALLOCATIONS FROM OTHER PROJECTS				294,971			
JAPANESE - RC		11,900	USD	19,933	10.01.01	ADDITIONAL CONTRIBUTION FOR COST OF T-SHIRTS	
JAPANESE - RC				456,190	17.04.01	BLOOD PROGRAMME/DELEGATION COST	
JAPANESE - RC				2,464	17.04.01	PSC	
SWITZERLAND GVT				150,000	12.07.2001	ID PROGRAMME	
SUB/TOTAL RECEIVED IN CASH				960,372	CHF	109.5%	
KIND AND SERVICES (INCLUDING PERSONNEL)							
DONOR	CATEGORY	QUANTITY	UNIT	VALUE CHF	DATE	COMMENT	
SUB/TOTAL RECEIVED IN KIND/SERVICES				0	CHF	0.0%	