

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

EVALUATION AND ORGANISATIONAL LEARNING

28 November, 2001

This Programme Update is intended for reporting on Annual Appeals.

Appeal No. 01.79/2001

Appeal Target: CHF 1,367,000

Programme Update No. 2; Period covered: July - December, 2001; last Programme Update (no. 1) issued 27 July, 2001

“At a Glance”

Appeal coverage: 75%

Related Appeals: N/A

Outstanding needs: CHF 338,157

Summary/Update: This programme is intended to further initiatives at the global level related to national society self-assessment, a Federation evaluation system, Movement-wide cooperation and coordination processes, and knowledge sharing platforms. In general, satisfactory progress has been achieved during the year in the objectives set under this global programme thanks to a good level of support from donors. These activities will be continued, but for next year they will be split up across three global programmes that better reflect their distinct identities.

The context

This programme was first introduced at the start of 2000, and was designed to address some of the new priority areas identified in Strategy 2010. In 2001, its particular focus was on developing evaluation and knowledge sharing systems, together with taking forward initiatives to promote national society self-assessment and enhance coordination and cooperation within the Movement, all with the aim of helping the Federation improve its overall performance and accountability.

This Programme Update covers developments in these areas during the second half of 2001, outlining what has been achieved against the set objectives and describing some of the challenges still to be met. For 2002, this global programme will take a different form, with the coordination and cooperation aspects becoming part of a larger Communications, Advocacy and Partnerships global programme, whilst the evaluation and sharing knowledge functions will become individual programmes, all of which are set out in the Federation's Appeal 2002-2003.

Objectives and achievements

Objective 1 To develop a Federation-wide system to monitor the integrity and performance of national societies and learn systematically from our collective experience.

Achievements

Strategy 2010 calls for new mechanisms to be established to ensure that International Federation Governance, supported by the Secretariat, will actively monitor and provide timely support to national societies towards achieving the *Characteristics of a Well-functioning National Society*. To support this priority, the Governing Board in November 2000 adopted national society self-assessment as an institutional tool for monitoring Societies' performance and integrity and directed the Secretariat to administer it to all Federation members in a phased manner over a period of 3 years.

The Secretariat's Monitoring and Evaluation Division tested and refined the indicators, questionnaire and methodology for this self-assessment process in early 2001. The questionnaire underwent an extensive consultation process to ensure its relevance and utility across the spectrum of national societies Federation-wide. 40 Societies from the five world regions were invited to participate in the first-phase of the self-assessment programme this year and to date, 34 questionnaires (85%) have been received.

An analytical report, *National Society Self-Assessment 2001*, was produced and presented to the Governing Board in November 2001, and will be circulated to all Federation members. Based on a cross-analysis of questionnaire responses received from the national societies by August 2001, the report highlights patterns among the national societies in key areas such as legal base; governance structure; human resources; financial reporting; integrity and image; branch monitoring mechanisms; programmes and cooperation.

An important finding in terms of national society legal base, for example, is that one-third of the 26 Societies in the sample indicated that there is no national law protecting the Red Cross and Red Crescent emblem in their country. Among those which indicated that a national law exists, two-thirds reported that enforcement of the law is unsatisfactory, and more than half indicated that they have no procedure for tracking emblem misuse. The report also highlighted qualitative information from the Societies on areas including advocacy for HIV/AIDS; problems and corrective actions in relation to integrity and image; and cooperation with national and international partners.

Separate sets of self-assessment findings have been prepared and shared meanwhile with each of the 15 Societies which participated in the pilot phase. These findings, along with further comments from the Societies and relevant delegations, facilitate the identification of priority areas by the national societies for their further attention and Federation support. In the case of the Indian Red Cross Society, for example, a plan of action was adopted by the Society to address key areas raised in their self-assessment, including the need to establish a system for monitoring branch finances and activities. With the assistance of the Secretariat departments, delegations and an external agency, the Society has recently conducted a comprehensive branch assessment exercise.

The results from the pilot and first phase of the programme have demonstrated the potential of the system to:

- contribute to baseline data on national societies for Secretariat planning;
- identify and prioritise problem areas in the governance and programmes of Societies for assistance from other members of the network;
- highlight good practices for knowledge-sharing among Societies;
- illustrate emerging patterns and trends among Federation members;
- monitor the adoption of Strategy 2010 and its expected results;
- support Societies in improving transparency and accountability, and systems for self-monitoring.

In 2002, the self-assessment questionnaire and process will be further revised based on lessons and feedback from participants this year. It will be administered to a further 60 national societies (12 from each world region).

Objective 2 To develop and implement an evaluation system to support Secretariat efforts to improve the effectiveness of its humanitarian work and strengthen shared accountability and learning from the outcomes.

Achievements

The evaluation function in the Federation has continued to develop. This reflects the Federation's requirement for a function that emphasises a balance between accountability and learning, where evaluation and related analytical functions can provide high quality support to the Federation's activities. Throughout 2001, key milestones that have made a significant contribution to the achievement of this aim have been:

- Following intensive consultation, an evaluation operational framework has been prepared. This framework sets out the rationale, objectives, linkages and potential impact of evaluation and related analytical functions;
- A tracer study has been implemented by the Evaluation Department to provide evidence based information and to inform the development of the operational framework. The study highlighted variances in product quality, consultant quality and weaknesses in the formal management follow-up systems and identified an optimum approach to corrective action;
- The need for a more systematic approach to resource mobilisation generated the development of a register of consultants. The availability of such a register will contribute significantly to the evaluation function by identifying specific areas of expertise that more closely match the Federation's requirements and expectations;
- Technical input to all appropriate areas of Federation activity has been provided through a help desk. To date, this facility has provided support to national societies, geographical departments, Knowledge Sharing Division, PNS and other beneficiaries;
- The Evaluation Department has continued to develop internal and external links. Significant support has been provided to the knowledge sharing function through active participation in "quickplace web site" activities. It also satisfied its obligations to the international arena through its active participation in the ALNAP evaluation practitioners network and continuing support to research within the academic community.

Early consultation with departments has contributed to an agreed evaluation workplan for 2002. An ambitious programme of strategic evaluations has been planned including evaluations of PDR, HIV/AIDS, the Chernobyl humanitarian programme, advocacy and disaster management. This intensive programme of activity will continue to be supported concurrently by the related functions that have been outlined above.

Objective 3 To produce high quality inclusive cooperation assistance strategies (CAS) with national societies receiving assistance from external partners, with the full participation of all stakeholders (participating national societies, the ICRC, and the Federation).

Achievements

A two-day CAS workshop was held in mid-June 2001, bringing together representatives from all stakeholder groups involved in CAS processes - national societies (including those participating in the programmes of sister Societies), ICRC and Federation Secretariat staff from both Geneva and delegations. The workshop focused on CAS as a process for building effective, strong and durable partnerships. The priority next steps in CAS development during 2001 were identified and progress was made in developing the outline for some of the tools and training materials that need to be developed. The workshop provided an opportunity for a range of practitioners involved in developing CAS around the world to share their approaches, experience and enthusiasm for CAS. This resulted in a knowledge-sharing report of the workshop presenting case examples of good/not so good practice in CAS which was shared widely.

Two key developments resulted from the workshop. The first was a strong recommendation (as well as from a number of other sources) that many national societies felt unable to work within CAS that were defined as *assistance* strategies; they felt the name emphasised the aspect of top-down outside assistance rather than all Movement actors working together on an equal cooperative basis. They strongly recommended that another, better name be found for the strategies, whilst retaining the CAS acronym which was beginning to have strong recognition within the Movement. CAS was therefore renamed "Cooperation Agreement Strategy" and this decision was communicated prior to the General Assembly. One important aspect of adopting the new terminology is that it can be applied flexibly for both country and regional / sub-regional contexts - when it makes sense to have a CAS at a country level (e.g. in countries with high numbers of partners, often

post-disasters such as Mozambique, Cambodia), as well as in other situations to facilitate CAS at the sub-regional (e.g. Central Asia) or regional (e.g. Caribbean) level for maximum effectiveness.

A second development was the creation of a CAS web site (<http://quickplace.ifrc.org/cas>); a central place where information, latest developments and emerging experience related to the CAS process can be shared. Now available for anyone who wishes to have read material, it is intended to become an active site in which those involved with the CAS process can put up material and initiate and/or join in dialogue groups. The site already contains a considerable amount of material related to CAS and general Movement cooperation issues, as well as links to other relevant web sites. The web site gives details of where new generation CAS are being worked on and updated information is posted regularly.

During the period a number of CAS processes were progressed around the world, with a number of documents nearing completion (e.g. the CAS for Caribbean, Central Asia, Mozambique, Uganda). Some of these CAS documents have been supported editorially so that some good practice examples can be “fast tracked” to act as examples of end product.

Feedback from a number of delegations facilitating CAS processes emphasise the *process* of developing CAS, rather than just seeing CAS as documents to be produced. One of the key challenges that needs to be faced is engaging with and getting information on the longer term plans and commitments from the partners working in a particular country. A concerted effort is now planned to ensure that approaches to CAS bring value to all partners’ development cooperation activities.

Objective 4 To provide the needed information technology (IT) infrastructure and develop knowledge management systems to make the most of being a global network, in terms of sharing of knowledge and learning to improve programme quality within the Federation.

Achievements

The Federation’s Lotus Notes/Domino infrastructure was reinforced in the second half of the year. The stability of various services was improved by splitting the load across a second server. A third server was put in place to take care of ad-hoc communications requirements, e.g. with the ICRC for sharing databases related to the 27th General Assembly. Work was undertaken to test out alternative solutions for e-mail for Federation field delegations. Lotus iNotes was tested from a few locations, as well as Lotus Notes Client with replication using portable computers. Performance on iNotes has turned out unsatisfactory, mainly due to the heavier demands on resources by this new solution developed by Lotus. Lotus Notes Client appears to fit better to the field realities.

A telecommunications study looked into combining the land-lines along with satellite communications. Various major vendors in this field have been contacted, through a formal Request For Information process, and estimates of costs worked out along with identification of risks and opportunities.

The results from the survey conducted in the first half of the year among national societies on their IT infrastructure has been collated into a database. Common interests have been found mainly in the area of Internet capabilities and web-site development. Initial contacts are being established with these national societies to offer advice and set guidelines.

Progress has also been made in several aspects of intranet development. A “contacts management” system has been tested and customised to meet the requirements of various stakeholders in the organisation. Data has been imported on to this new system from several other independent databases. Training has been provided to selected users. A full roll out of the product is planned for the first half of 2002.

The new “Eventrix” system has been completed and stabilised. This system provides a on-line listing of all the major internal and external events involving the Movement or concerning the international humanitarian agenda. It was demonstrated to national societies during the last General Assembly in Geneva. This system is now widely used by the organisation to publish major events happening within the Movement across the world.

The DMIS (Disaster Management Information Systems) web-site has been completed and made available to key disaster management practitioners including all FACT team members. Based on a decision to keep this system internal to the Movement, an authentication system was put in place. This web site already has important documents and links associated with Disaster Management, and many more are planned in the coming months.

A knowledge-sharing database on “good practices” was created and demonstrated during the General Assembly, based on the standard templates set by the Knowledge Sharing Division. This database is in the phase of testing and evaluation by targeted users. Some other databases are planned on similar lines, work being done on firming up specifications. Document management and record management systems are also being evaluated for the needs of the organisation. Integration feasibility is being looked into, and budgetary evaluation made for this work to be undertaken in 2002.

Objective 5 To mobilise the Federation’s input into the building of a common strategy for the Movement through a process that builds on lessons from the field and leads to improved operational performance.

Achievements

The new Strategy for the Movement was, as scheduled, submitted to the Council of Delegates in November and unanimously approved. Leading up to its adoption there was a series of extensive discussions in three parallel Council Commissions. Issues of particular relevance emphasised during these discussions included the complementarity of the Strategy with existing policy documents such as Strategy 2010, the importance of national society integrity issues, and a focus on greater cooperation and transfer of know-how between the components of the Movement. The Federation and the ICRC have been invited to draw up plans for the implementation of the Movement strategy and requested to report on its implementation. The Secretariat part has been drawn up and included in the 2002 Appeal.

Harmonisation of Federation and ICRC processes and procedures in a variety of sectors continued during the period under review. On the technical side, progress continued to be made in the areas of logistics, telecommunications, emergency response, information technology, health and human resources. A special focus has been placed on joint planning of development cooperation with national societies.

In July, a joint letter was sent to all ICRC and Federation delegations, instructing the delegations to plan jointly activities in support of national society development, and providing specific guidelines in the areas of promotion of fundamental principles and humanitarian values, the re-establishment of family links and on legal base and integrity issues. Similar guidelines are in the process of being finalised with regard to disaster and conflict preparedness. Whilst the Federation retains the lead role with regard to national society development and is responsible for assisting Societies in drawing up cooperation agreement strategies (CAS), it has been recognised that the ICRC needs to participate systematically in the process, in particular in conflict prone countries and areas.

The joint planning process has been monitored through a series of structured interviews and country visits, culminating with an informal review meeting between the Federation, ICRC and selected national society managers in Bangkok in December. It is intended that based on the Bangkok review and one or two additional consultations planned for early next year, the planning process will be formalised, monitored and evaluated in the course of 2002. It is hoped that the joint planning process between the ICRC and the Federation in the framework of the next generation of CAS will act as an incentive for a more structured cooperation process attracting the full participation of bilateral donors.

Training and knowledge transfer between the two Geneva institutions and between them and national societies has also been enhanced. The national society leadership training course has been revised and piloted with selected national society leaders in November. Training on the application of the Seville Agreement both for national society staff as well as Geneva based staff of the two institutions has been intensified with 3 courses offered at the end of the year. Feedback indicates that these activities will need to be supported and in some cases carried out on a more systematic basis in the field next year.

In the area of communications and advocacy, the two Geneva institutions have also enhanced their cooperation, thereby projecting a more coherent Movement image with regard to outside constituencies. This has been particularly crucial in the post September 11th events and subsequent humanitarian action in Afghanistan, where the Movement, in spite of potentially strong outside pressures, has retained a large degree of cohesiveness and unity, not only in the operation itself but also in countries where increased intolerance and xenophobia has occurred.

Constraints

There have been no particular constraints to implementing the various activities foreseen as part of this programme during the year. In general, sufficient financial resources have been made available thanks to the generous support provided by the donors that have funded the programme. There have been some time and internal capacity limitations that have hindered progress in fully carrying out planned objectives in certain respects. However, these will be taken up in the first half of 2002 as part of the new global programmes presented in Appeal 2002 - 2003.

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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>.

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Evaluation and organisational learning						ANNEX 1
APPEAL No. 01.79/2001		PLEDGES RECEIVED				28.12.2001
DONOR	CATEGORY	QUANTITY	UNIT	VALUE CHF	DATE	COMMENT
CASH						
REQUESTED IN APPEAL CHF ----->				1'353'818		TOTAL COVERAGE 75.0%
CASH CARRIED FORWARD				279'276		
AMERICAN - RC		20'000	USD	35'000	15.06.2001	EVALUATION FUNCTION
BRITISH - GOVT (DFID GRANT)				400'000	03.02.01	PARTNERSHIP IMPLEMENTATION PLAN 2001
DANISH - RC		462'500	DKK	94'396	30.08.2001	EVALUATION & ORGANISATIONAL LEARNING
FINNISH RC		50'456	EUR	76'264	24.08.2001	EVALUATION & ORGANISATIONAL LEARNING
SWEDISH - RC		350'000	SEK	60'795	28.02.01	EVALUATION & STRATEGY, PROMOTING NS COOPERATION, KNOWLEDGE MGT SYSTEMS, STRATEGY FOR MOVEMENT
SWEDISH - GOVT		450'000	SEK	69'930	25.10.2001	EVALUATION & STRATEGY, PROMOTING NS COOPERATION, KNOWLEDGE MGT SYSTEMS, STRATEGY FOR MOVEMENT
SUB/TOTAL RECEIVED IN CASH				1'015'661	CHF	75.0%
KIND AND SERVICES (INCLUDING PERSONNEL)						
DONOR	CATEGORY	QUANTITY	UNIT	VALUE CHF	DATE	COMMENT
SUB/TOTAL RECEIVED IN KIND/SERVICES				0	CHF	0.0%
ADDITIONAL TO APPEAL BUDGET						
DONOR	CATEGORY	QUANTITY	UNIT	VALUE CHF	DATE	COMMENT
SUB/TOTAL RECEIVED				0	CHF	
THE FOLLOWING PROJECTS ARE LINKED TO THIS APPEAL:						