

ANNUAL REPORT



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

CENTRAL AMERICA

This Annual Report is intended for reporting on the Federation's Annual Appeals only.

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Appeal No. 01.19/2002; Appeal Target: CHF 3,890,674 revised to CHF 2,896,416; Appeal coverage: 104.1%

Overall analysis of the programme w

National Societies were called on to respond to many small and medium scale disaster events during 2002, and during the hurricane season Central America was affected by hurricanes Isidore and Kenna. Some disasters such as drought which began to take its toll in 2001 and earlier, continued throughout 2002. A number of disaster response operations following flooding in mid year and in the wake of hurricanes at the end of the year, were successfully implemented in coordination with the Pan American Disaster Response Unit (PADRU). Disaster preparedness initiatives were on-going as regional and national intervention teams were strengthened, and further alliances were built. Work continued on the community based disaster preparedness (CBDP) model, with a view to harmonizing approaches and building on best practices. In the area of health, a pilot project in HIV/AIDS related stigma was launched in Honduras in June and at the end of the year, over 441 people had taken part in awareness-raising sessions in 12 branches involved in the project. As a result of the pilot project, the Honduran Red Cross has become known as one of the main institutions working actively in the field of HIV/AIDS prevention and anti-discrimination and reduction of stigma. In October 2002, the production of an educational video which deals with the theme of discrimination and stigma in relation to HIV/AIDS was begun; this will be used in various fora to raise awareness and promote behaviour change.

In the field of organizational development, a major change process was undertaken in June within the Nicaraguan Red Cross, involving the entire spectrum of National Society personnel and volunteers. The National Society is progressing towards revision of the Statutes and in December, the national board approved the new strategic plan 2003-2007. Although there have been significant achievements by the Guatemalan Red Cross in 2002, including revised Statutes and an approved National Development Plan, given an ongoing leadership crisis, there has been a focus on initiatives to resolve and diffuse the crisis through facilitation provided by the regional organizational development delegate and involving a senior member of Secretariat staff.

The period leading up to the relocation of the delegation to Panama in the last quarter of the year proved difficult, as local staff members were made redundant, affecting morale and human resource capacity. Much of the time of the head of the regional delegation was devoted to resolving issues

relating to the move to Panama which took place in early December 2002. The structure of Federation support for Central America in 2003 will be through a regional delegation in Panama covering both Central America and the Caribbean, a country delegation in Guatemala, Federation presence in Honduras until June 2003 and in Nicaragua until December 2003.

Objectives, Achievements and Constraints w

Disaster Response w

Achievements

Members of national intervention teams (NITs) in Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras and Panama launched response operations after the occurrence of flooding. In the case of Costa Rica and Panama, the National Societies were called on to respond to major floods three times during the year. CHF 80,000 from the Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF) was provided to the Costa Rican Red Cross and the Red Cross Society of Panama following flooding in late 2002. An appeal was launched for this operation, but received negligible support. The water and sanitation delegate assigned to the Pan American Disaster Response Unit was deployed to Costa Rica to support the operation for a week.

The Red Cross Society of Panama continued to work with the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) to provide humanitarian assistance to persons displaced by the ongoing conflict in Colombia.

The regional agreement for mutual support continued to be disseminated and applied in terms of the sharing of human and material resources. For example, the Nicaraguan Red Cross donated 1,000 blankets from its relief stocks to the Red Cross Society of Panama during the flooding in the first half of the year.

The drought operation which was launched in 2001 after the region, in particular El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua, was affected by a third consecutive period of irregular and insufficient rain, continued in 2002. This operation provided relief supplies, seeds, fertilizers, training in agricultural diversification, disaster preparedness as well as health promotion to 63,000 (originally 59,136) individuals. The operation, also supported through bilateral activities implemented by the American, German, Netherlands and Spanish Red Cross Societies, engaged some 200 staff and volunteers and led to the creation of strategic alliances with key actors, enhanced the image of the National Societies, and ensured greater participation of the branches and affected communities. A final report on this operation is ready for publication and will soon be available on the web (www.ifrc.org).

The Mexican Red Cross, supported by the regional delegation, PADRU, the American Red Cross, the Spanish Red Cross and local and international agencies in the country, was engaged in two major operations following the passage of hurricanes Isidore and Kenna during the latter half of the year. CHF 88,000 from the DREF was released to support the Isidore operation. These operations strengthened links between the Mexican Red Cross, the Federation regional communications delegate, PADRU, the regional delegation, the Secretariat, PNSs and external agencies.

The Guatemalan Red Cross also responded to major flooding and landslides in the third quarter of the year. Training in telecommunications was conducted for twenty staff and volunteers of the Salvadorean Red Cross Society, further developing a telecommunications project for the National Society.

Constraints

The absence of funds specifically earmarked for disaster response in the budgets of the regional delegation and PADRU negatively impacted on the operations. This situation was discussed with the regional department in the Secretariat and will be improved in 2003.

The reporting skills of National Society staff were seen to be quite limited in some cases, leading to inadequate or no reporting in some cases. The head of the newly created regional reporting unit will facilitate training for National Societies (beginning with a workshop in Panama during the first quarter of 2003) to improve this area of future operations.

Disaster Preparedness w

Objective 1: To finalize and evaluate an integrated CDBP model; to implement and consolidate an integrated approach to community based disaster preparedness and risk management.

Achievements

A review of the CDBP programme, mainly facilitated by National Society personnel, was carried out during the first half of the year, generating key recommendations for the future of the programme. A meeting was held in Guatemala to present the initial results of the review to the disaster preparedness directors of the region, with the participation of the DP delegates and representatives of the French, German, Italian, and Netherlands Red Cross Societies. Representatives of UNDP, the Latin American Faculty of Social Sciences (FLACSO) in Guatemala, the Guatemala National Disaster Reduction Coordination agency (CONRED), the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB), OFDA and Médicos Sin Fronteras (MSF) were also present.

Work on the development of a comprehensive set of training materials, incorporating the approaches used by various Participating National Societies throughout the region was also advanced. The model for the integrated programme was also developed with the support of the organizational development delegate.

Constraints

Contrary to original projections, the process leading to the implementation of the integrated approach in CDBP was not achieved. There was an underestimation of the amount of time and resources (primarily financial and human) which were required to achieve this objective. Given the other tasks of the regional delegate, sufficient time could not be dedicated to the process. In order to address this problem, the support of personnel from the American Red Cross' Central American Mitigation Initiative (CAMI) was obtained to continue the revision of the materials; and to infuse the lessons learned from their experience in this project. Some financial assistance was obtained from the Guatemala country delegation to complete this phase. The revised materials are expected to be ready by the end of the first half of 2003.

Objective 2: To strengthen disaster preparedness planning and the disaster response capacity of the National Societies in the region.

Achievements

In Costa Rica, a risk management workshop was held with financing from the United States Geological Survey Department (USGS). An agreement was signed with the National University of Costa Rica to carry out assessments of the most vulnerable communities in the country. The disaster preparedness office was restructured to include sections focusing on psychological support, health and community education, NITs, finance and administration, logistics and damage and needs assessments. Evacuation plans for the National Society's regional committees were drawn up and 48 regional contingency plans were revised. A workshop focusing on the training of 28 NIT members, two of whom were volunteers of the Red Cross Society of Panama, also took place towards the end of the year. A rehabilitation project to install an early warning system and train community members in

Orosi (an area which was affected by a deadly landslide in May) began, and will be completed during the first quarter of 2003. The response operations which were launched subsequent to the severe flooding in Limón were also supported. The disaster preparedness director contributed to the development of the strategy document on Prevention, Mitigation and CBDP for the Inter American Conference in April 2003.

NIT training was also conducted for Guatemala, Nicaragua and Panama. Personnel from Peru and Chile benefited from these workshops. NITs members were mobilized to support disaster response operations in Costa Rica, El Salvador, Honduras and Panama.

In coordination with PADRU, a refresher workshop for regional intervention teams (RITs) was held in July 2002. The aim was to ensure readiness of RITs members in the event of a large-scale emergency in the Americas. Three relief directors, ten members of National Societies in the Americas and a German Red Cross delegate participated. The regional delegation also supported the holding of a Field Assessment and Coordination Team (FACT) workshop in the second half of the year. The participation of National Societies in the region was handicapped due to limited English language skills among staff and volunteers. Nevertheless, the director general of the Red Cross Society of Panama and two staff from the regional delegation took part.

The Honduran Red Cross drafted a revised policy for disaster preparedness, based on research relating to good practice in other National Societies/regions. The “familia prevenida” or “prepared family” campaign was re-launched in 17 branches using revised training materials, funded by the Federation and PNS. Four preparatory workshops were held to revise the national disaster plan, with the participation of branch presidents and volunteers. Fifty staff and volunteers were trained in two SPHERE workshops, and the country delegation has been involved in an interagency group which has been working with the government to disseminate the code of conduct and minimum standards.

In El Salvador, a workshop took place focusing on the analysis of previous experiences with a view to revising the national relief plan; 20 members of the Salvadorean Red Cross Society, two members of the Guatemalan Red Cross and two members of the Honduran Red Cross took part.

In Nicaragua, an external audit of the OFDA-financed programme in temporary housing and community education in disaster preparedness was completed over the reporting period. The branches of Jinotega and Matagalpa continue to implement projects in community based disaster preparedness, with their own funding. As part of the change process which began during the second half of the year, the sections relating to disaster preparedness and response of the National Society’s Strategic and Development plans were revised. Discussions also took place regarding the need to revise the disaster plan, and will be part of the focus in 2003.

In coordination with the regional communications delegate and supported by PADRU, presentations relating to different aspects of disaster preparedness and response were made to staff and volunteers of the Mexican Red Cross at its annual convention. Disaster operations in response to two hurricanes were also supported. Technical assistance was provided to the Mexican Red Cross in the development of a concept paper for the revitalization of the CBDP programme in vulnerable communities, beginning with those which face a permanent threat from the Popocateptl and Fuego de Colima volcanoes. This was presented to ECHO for funding, however it was not successful, as Mexico was not considered as a priority country. Efforts will be continued to fund-raise both within and outside of Mexico in order to implement this project. A work plan was developed as part of the continued development of the disaster response department. Among the activities are the revision of the disaster response plan (3000 Series), establishment of a national emergency operations centre (EOC), development of a diploma course in disaster management in coordination with one of the main universities, and the training of staff and volunteers in logistics. Greater understanding of the approach of the Secretariat has resulted from these activities. The National Society has also been involved in the development of the strategy paper on response preparedness and disaster response for

the Inter American Conference, and actively participated in the meeting of the disasters subcommission which was held in Panama in November. This process was also used to further outline the direction of its disaster programme in 2003.

The Red Cross Society of Panama undertook disaster response operations after flooding in May and December. Difficulties have been experienced in the receipt of operational reports from the National Society. Plans are being made to provide training in reporting in 2003 in order improve this critical area.

A Better Programming Initiative (BPI) trainer of trainers' workshop was held for ten participants from Central and South America in February. The Guatemalan and Honduran Red Cross and the Red Cross Society of Panama were represented. Plans of action for implementing the project were developed by participants. The focus was not on treating BPI as a separate topic; but rather to explore ways to integrate the methodology into the ongoing and planned activities of the National Societies. Due to factors such as the change in personnel and the workload of persons trained, implementation has not met the targets.

Compilation of inventories of warehouses and relief supplies was carried out by the Salvadorean Red Cross Society and has begun in the Guatemalan and Honduran Red Cross Societies.

Constraints

In spite of the advances made during the reporting period, difficulties such as insufficient funds for the implementation of programming resulted in difficulties for the delegation vis-a-vis both operating and participating National Societies. Given the number of tasks which form part of the workload of the delegation, its human resource capacity is very limited.

Despite the role of PADRU, tasks remain for the attention of the regional delegation in the event of disasters; these consumed much of the time of the delegate and her assistant during the hurricane season.

There were limitations to the activities in National Societies which were not recipients of funding as 'Mitch countries'. While fund-raising nationally and from non-traditional means have offset this shortfall, sometimes the National Societies expressed frustration at not being eligible for support to carry out certain activities. This situation also caused a financial imbalance.

There still exists a bias towards the traditional view of relief and related activities to be the main focus of the National Societies within the region. This posture is also fueled by the generation of funding following a disaster event and the fact that funding for longer term programming is still limited. While efforts have been made to broaden the scope, more work is still needed, as well as the will to commit support to longer-term programmes.

Objective 3: To contribute actively to the development and dissemination of new ideas and research in the field of disasters and in the development of strategic alliances.

Achievements

Two research projects were carried out during the year. The first focused on coordination in disasters in the Guatemalan context. The results of this study were presented to the National Society and the country and regional delegations during the second half of the year, and have been compiled for future reference.

The second project entitled "Design Without Borders" was carried out through the Norwegian Institute "Norsk Form" and the Rafael Landívar University in Guatemala. This project (which will continue until at least the end of the first half of 2003) aims to develop a prototype for a temporary

shelter with the potential to be transformed into permanent housing thereafter. To guide its development, the project has used the experiences of the National Societies in Honduras and El Salvador which established macro shelters after hurricane Mitch and the 2001 earthquake. A presentation of the findings of the project was made in August, and was attended by staff from the Guatemalan Red Cross, a representative of the CONRED, and personnel from the Rafael Landívar University. Discussions on the progress of the project and the required output were held in October with the project coordinator and representatives of the funders.

The regional and country delegations supported the CONRED and other actors in Guatemala in the convening of a risk management forum which was held in October.

A student who is reading for a Master's degree in dispute resolution at the University of Victoria in Canada started a four-month assignment with the regional delegation, with focus on the Better Programming Initiative. At least one case study on the application of the BPI methodology in the work of National Societies within the region will be developed during the period of assignment. The student will also support aspects relating to the implementation of the project. With the relocation of the delegation, and the advances which were made in Honduras with this project, discussions were held with the Honduran delegation regarding her relocation there in 2003.

Constraints

Whilst these projects are useful, there were limitations regarding possible input from the regional delegation to support and follow up their development, given resource constraints. Furthermore, programme staff were required to allocate time to these projects, which detracted from other areas of programming. For the future, the decision to undertake these projects will only be made after a thorough cost-benefit analysis has been done in order to ensure that neither the delegation nor the researcher will be overextended during the process.

With the departure of the previous regional disaster preparedness delegate who was the global focal point for BPI within the region, this direct support and follow up for this programme has been limited. Despite the continued presence of the delegate within the region, his main duties do not allow him to devote the time that would be required. The unavailability of two (one no longer working for the National Society and the other having left the region) of the four persons who were trained at the training of trainers' workshop, has also diminished capacity to carry out the plan of action which was developed after the training.

Humanitarian Values w

Objective 1: To support the promotion of the Red Cross principles internally and externally.

Significant progress has been achieved in the National Societies of the region with respect to consolidation of existing dissemination programmes through their extension and as a priority activity at all levels.

In the Honduran Red Cross, as part of the development process undertaken by the National Society, the training department undertook a revision of the training curriculum for volunteers and technical staff. Major changes were made which include special training for governance and the addition of training sessions in such priority areas as search and rescue, tracing, violence in youth, HIV/AIDS-related stigma and the better programming initiative. A basic induction course was designed for new volunteers based on the essential areas of Strategy 2010 and which is obligatory for all persons wishing to join the National Society. This new training is currently undergoing a validation process for which a new team of 80 facilitators has been created through three training courses for instructors and training manuals have been drawn up and distributed. The Honduran Red Cross has placed emphasis on training in the Better Programming Initiative to evaluate the impact of

humanitarian assistance programmes in post conflict situations. Two workshops were held with the participation of 32 volunteers who are managing projects.

In order to ensure training of volunteers in principles and values, the National Society held a national workshop for the training of disseminators with the participation of 19 volunteers who are responsible for training and promoting principles and values in the branches. The document “six tasks for the seven principles” was disseminated with the branch Presidents and those responsible for training of volunteers, in order to begin its practical application through training days and workshops at branch level.

At the request of the ICRC, the government issued a new policy regarding the protection of the emblem, for which the Honduran Red Cross created a special commission responsible for following up the introduction of this new legislation.

Constraints

The humanitarian values programme benefited from little funding in 2002. In the appeal for 2003, efforts have been made to define the programme and its components more clearly. To date, activities relating to humanitarian values have mostly focused on Red Cross youth.

Objective 2: To develop and support Red Cross advocacy initiatives

Launched on 8 May, Red Cross Day, by the Honduran Red Cross, the “Deja tu huella” or “leave your hand print” campaign continued throughout the year, raising awareness in relation to HIV/AIDS. A total of 50,000 people have been involved in the campaign which took place in 15 communities and which benefited from the support of the President of the Republic and the First Lady of the country. Activities were coordinated with institutions such as “Amor y Vida” or “Love and Life”, an NGO which provides assistance to children affected by the virus, the association of persons living with HIV/AIDS, ASOHNAPSIDA, the Health Secretariat, the Education Secretariat, the REDCA association which works with self-support groups and the National Autonomous University of Honduras. The national campaign focusing on non-discrimination was promoted by the majority of the Honduran Red Cross branches and has received much support from Red Cross youth volunteers who participated actively in the organization of activities. In the same way, people living with HIV/AIDS have provided considerable support and their participation has contributed significantly to awareness- raising in different parts of the country.

National Societies in the region, through Red Cross youth, are taking part in the regional project “Exploremeos el Derecho Humanitario” - “Let’s Explore Humanitarian Law”, an ICRC initiative which consists of the development of five educational modules through which themes such as: the humanitarian perspective, the limits of armed conflicts, rights in action, ensuring justice and how to deal with the consequences of war are introduced. In this project, youth groups will adapt the contents of the programme to be used in the youth brigades throughout the country. Over the year, national workshops were held in Guatemala and Honduras for the training of instructors who will work with the public sector; national youth directors in the region took part, together with the Federation’s regional youth consultant and the regional communications delegate in Mexico.

In Panama, on the occasion of world Red Cross day, the Red Cross Society of Panama launched the global campaign against stigma with the participation of Red Cross youth and in coordination with the health, social welfare and public relations departments of the National Society. A debate on the issue of HIV/AIDS was organized with participants from the Ministry of Health, Social Security and the School of Journalism. Members of the National Society’s youth brigades and young university students took part in the discussions which centered on stigma and discrimination and the global AIDS pandemic. In addition, instructors from the school brigades carried out an educational campaign in schools throughout the country, with HIV/AIDS and the stigmatization of people living with AIDS as the major themes.

In Honduras, in relation to the pilot project in HIV/AIDS discussed under the health and care section, work was undertaken as of October 2002 towards the production of a video entitled "Voices in the Silence", in the context of the World Campaign Against AIDS, the Truth about AIDS, Pass it On". The video is a collection of experiences relating to discrimination related to HIV/AIDS, and is intended to promote awareness-raising through use in numerous fora. The video will be accompanied by educational material which will facilitate its use and provide information on which to base discussions and debates. Over the reporting period, an initial proposal was drawn up defining the target audience, the objectives of the video, geographical coverage, the length of the video, the messages to be transmitted, personal experiences to be included and persons and institutions who would be involved in the production. A member of the association of people living with HIV/AIDS who has already worked with the Honduran Red Cross, made the necessary contacts between the Red Cross and the people and organizations with whom the project would be carried out. Bidding was launched for the production of the video and a company selected. The video was completed in mid March 2003 and further information will be provided in the first programme update on progress achieved in the initial months of the year.

Red Cross youth in El Salvador also participated actively in the national campaign against HIV/AIDS related stigma. Activities included the collection in San Salvador of 5,000 lists of names in a demonstration of solidarity for those living with AIDS. In the same way, 5,000 bookmarks were distributed with motifs of the campaign and messages of solidarity. These activities took place in the capital and in Sonsonate and San Miguel. Red Cross youth members also took part in three radio programmes on the theme of non-discrimination of people living with HIV/AIDS. A total of 450 volunteers took part in the anti-stigma campaign who each received a t-shirt with campaign motifs.

With a view to implementing a project which is under design and which aims to assist vulnerable migrants - both individuals and families - the Mexican Red Cross carried out training in first aid, search and rescue and the fundamental principles for BETA groups who are responsible for assisting migrants in the border areas of Mexico.

Constraints

The National Societies in the region have traditionally had little involvement in advocacy. The success of campaigns held in 2002 focusing on HIV/AIDS related stigma in the region have, however, raised interest and commitment in this area.

Objective 3: To support Red Cross school brigades and youth leadership training.

Red Cross school brigades form part of a well-established programme in the region, through Red Cross youth. The brigades are a means of promoting the fundamental principles and humanitarian values and form an entry point to Red Cross volunteering for young people who are in school and who, through the school brigades, become interested in volunteer work. Through the youth brigades, important topics such as disaster preparedness, HIV/AIDS prevention and stigma and discrimination are dealt with. The National Societies have benefited from a significant boost to the school brigade programme in recent years, given the considerable increase in the number of young people and children taking part.

The Mexican Red Cross organized the XXIII national youth meeting with the participation of over 500 youth volunteers. At this meeting, the initiative was taken to organize the first training workshop for 40 school brigade facilitators within the Mexican Red Cross and specializing in the theme of HIV/AIDS prevention. As a result, the ensuing project reached some 24,000 young people through the Mexican education system through the holding of 2,400 workshops throughout the country.

In Guatemala, the National Society is going through a phase of significant change relating to volunteering. As a result, youth members are further involved in the taking of decisions and the identification of community programmes. Red Cross youth implemented three projects in 2002. The

first consisted of the training of youth educators at headquarters level, who then took part in awareness days addressing adolescents and providing information on subjects such as disasters, non-discrimination and non stigmatization of people living with HIV/AIDS, first aid, the environment, and youth leadership. The project took place in Guatemala city with the participation of 110 student youth leaders who then disseminated their knowledge, reaching 2,101 young people in eight schools in the capital. This took place in coordination with the association for assistance to those living with HIV/AIDS and the association of youth volunteers, as well as in coordination with the Ministry of Education.

The second project took the form of a competition in painting and literary composition on the themes of stigma and discrimination of people living with HIV/AIDS and of famine. This project was carried out in coordination with the Spanish Embassy and the American Red Cross. 65 young people took part in the contest with the presentation of paintings and essays, from which the most outstanding were selected to be presented in a Guatemalan Red Cross calendar for 2003.

In Honduras, there are currently 94 school brigades including 79 Red Cross volunteers. In each branch where school brigades are working, at least one of the brigades has worked in the area of HIV/AIDS prevention. Red Cross youth has also worked with the Honduran Red Cross health department in connection with the anti-stigma initiatives which took place in the branches of Potrerillos, Pimienta, Villanueva, Copán Ruinas, Santa Rosa de Copán, Omoa, Puerto Cortes, Progreso, La Lima, Tela, Ceiba and Tegucigalpa.

In El Salvador, the school brigades programme is in its second year, and is being carried out in ten branches of the National Societies, with a major orientation in disaster preparedness. The school to school project was carried out with funding from the municipality of Barcelona, Spain. Support was provided to 2,000 children in five schools in the capital who were helped with the provision of educational materials. A similar project with funding from the Spanish Red Cross, took place in the departments of La Libertad and San Vicente through which some 1,000 school children in two schools were assisted with school materials.

In Nicaragua, Red Cross youth underwent significant changes in structure, given the appointment of a new national director and the encouragement of activities in the area of education. School brigades were therefore formed in Managua in 13 schools, focusing on training in the areas of principles and values, basic first aid and safety at school, gender and AIDS related discrimination and stigma. A total of 290 young people and 15 instructors from the public sector were involved. Brigade members are now working in different schools, promoting the implementation of security plans and first aid. With the cooperation of the American Red Cross, coverage of the school brigade programme was extended to the community of Maderas in Tipitapa where young people took part in the implementation of the school safety plan. In the same way, school brigades were organized in 15 schools in the departments of Masaya, Rivas and Tipitapa, focusing on safety in schools in the months of September and October, with the priority of evacuation plans. Young people are involved in first aid services which are linked with the ambulance department.

In Costa Rica, the school brigades project took place in 50 schools throughout the country, reaching 1,090 children. The project was implemented in the provinces of San José, Alajuela, Cartago and Guanacaste, with the participation of 890 school brigaders who also took part in various volunteer activities organized by the Costa Rican Red Cross.

In each of the regions of the country, youth instructors have been trained in workshops of 8 hours' duration. The instructors then gave small workshops for 15 participants on the subject of HIV/AIDS prevention. In addition, workshops on the theme of stigma were given to 700 young people and adults. Each region appointed a project coordinator who was responsible for the awareness activities, together with the youth directors in the area. The workshops were provided in schools and communities and took place with funding made available by the Costa Rican Red Cross.

Constraints

Little external funding has been available for this programme component, for which a number of National Societies have committed their own funding.

Objective 4: To promote initiatives in peace building and non-violence.

The social and economic situation in Honduras motivated the Honduran Red Cross to seek effective ways of promoting non-violence and peaceful coexistence as a priority. Youth gangs, colloquially referred to as “maras” have an approximate following of around 30,000 members throughout the country; in addition, it is estimated that there are around 60,000 sympathizers of these groups of young people who are involved in illicit activities such as theft, kidnapping and drug peddling. The Honduran Red Cross organized an inter-agency forum with the aim of identifying a strategy to deal with this social problem and coordinating actions. This first step resulted in a clearer definition of the areas of focus of each institution and an exploration of the complexities of the issue which will be a priority for the Honduran Red Cross in 2003. Several PNS are interested in contributing to the implementation of a pilot project which it is intended to carry out in cooperation with the ICRC. The regional youth advisor who is responsible for regional initiatives in the field of humanitarian values will review appropriate strategies in view of initiating such a project.

The Honduran Red Cross has also dealt with the problem of youth gangs in several of its projects, particularly the Ciudad España housing project, funded by Spanish Red Cross. Both the Federation and the ICRC have supported the HRC and Spanish Red Cross team in initiatives seeking to promote a culture of peaceful coexistence in communities through social activities.

Constraints

Although there is a great need in the region for initiatives in peace-building and the promotion of non-violence, complex inter-related social and economic factors must be taken into account in order to define and implement effective projects. As in the case of the Honduran Red Cross initiative, it is essential to build on prior experience and to build alliances as projects are designed.

Health and Care w

Objective 1: To support and strengthen National Society health departments across the region, focusing on their capacity to develop and deliver sustainable health programmes which are in line with Strategy 2010.

In Nicaragua, a health consortium has been formed, made up of the Spanish Red Cross which is taking the lead, and the Italian and Netherlands Red Cross Societies, with the Nicaraguan Red Cross as their counterpart. As a result, a proposal was presented to the Regional Reconstruction Programme for Central America “Programa Regional de Reconstrucción de América Central” (PRRAC) to establish a community health programme in two communities in Nueva Segovia: Jalapa and San Fernando benefiting a total of 6,530 persons (1,271 families). The programme aims to build capacity in preventive and curative health and to improve community management of health issues, also reinforcing the National Society branches in the area, enhancing their capacity to support vulnerable communities in questions relating to health. Funds were allocated for this project (EUR 397,841) which will begin implementation in early 2003. A memorandum of understanding was signed by all involved parties and the Federation, according to which the Federation has a coordination role in view of the commitments entered into by the National Societies.

The major focus of work of the regional health delegate in 2002 was the preparation for the Inter American Conference in order to work with all concerned parties on the articulation of a health strategy for the Americas. This strategy will be of great benefit to the National Societies’ health departments and will facilitate prioritization and enhance programme focus. Following the

collaboration meeting held in April in Antigua Guatemala with 48 representatives of Red Cross Societies, Central American health authorities, the Federation Secretariat and the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO) and the ensuing signature of a memorandum of understanding between the Federation and PAHO on 15 May 2002, a health experts' group was formed. This is composed of Federation health delegates, representatives of the Federation Secretariat, of PNS and of PAHO. As a result, an experts' meeting took place between 28 and 29 September in Panama in order to continue work towards a Pan American health strategy to be presented at the Inter American Conference which will be held in April 2003 in Santiago de Chile. The motto which was adopted to illustrate the objective of the strategy is as follows: "Equity in Health, Road to Development". During this meeting, National Societies were tasked with the development of particular chapters relating to the strategy. A further gathering took place in Bolivia between 23 and 25 October 2002 with 80 participants from National Societies, Ministries of Health and the Pan American Health Organization. Meetings were planned to take place in Washington in early 2003 in order to develop further and finalize the draft strategy through a process of consultation and consensus.

Constraints

The regional health delegate joined the regional delegation in August 2002, and there was therefore a significant gap in coverage over the year. Furthermore, the regional health delegate was allocated responsibility not only for the Central American region, but also for the Caribbean.

Objective 2: To strengthen and increase HIV/AIDS programming.

This is a major priority for the region and the regional health delegate has focused on working with the National Societies and delegations in the region in order to draw up a regional strategy for the Federation's work in the area of HIV/AIDS which will be a priority theme during the Inter American Conference.

The pilot project focusing on the reduction of stigma and discrimination of people living with HIV/AIDS began in June, focusing mainly on HRC branches located in areas with the highest rates of HIV/AIDS infection. The project involved 12 branches in the northern and central areas of the country.

In a first phase, the project sought to increase awareness on the part of Honduran Red Cross volunteers and staff as regards HIV/AIDS prevention, and to reduce stigmatization and discrimination faced by people living with HIV/AIDS. 18 awareness days took place for volunteers with a methodology based on knowledge, attitudes and practice (KAP). A questionnaire made up of 13 questions was used, five of which were directly linked to stigma and discrimination. During the day, experience regarding contact with people living with HIV/AIDS was exchanged. At the end of the year, over 441 people had taken part in these sessions in the 12 branches involved in the pilot project. Furthermore, five members of each branch were trained in this process, resulting in the availability of 60 facilitators of the methodology within the branches. It has been agreed that each of the participating branches should undertake at least four activities together with the community in order to convey messages focusing on prevention and anti-discrimination.

The Honduran Red Cross, with the support of the Federation, has, through the pilot project, become known as one of the institutions working actively in the field of HIV/AIDS prevention and in anti-discrimination and reduction of stigma. The Honduran Red Cross drew up a draft agreement for collaboration with ASONAPVSI DAH, to strengthen 28 self-help groups under this association of people living with HIV/AIDS.

With the support of UNAIDS and the municipality of the central district of Tegucigalpa, the Honduran Red Cross carried out HIV/AIDS prevention days with anti-discrimination messages held in 12 educational centres, thereby raising awareness amongst 833 adolescents. The prevention days also included dissemination and promotion of the Red Cross principles and values.

At the end of the year, USAID funding was obtained for a three year project in cooperation with the organization Casa Alianza, providing free HIV/AIDS testing and counselling to marginalized young people in three of the country's major cities. A further project of an 18 month duration, envisages work with garífuna communities in the north of Honduras.

The anti-stigma campaign which was launched on 8 May in El Salvador, is still actively running in three departments: San Salvador, La Libertad and Sonsonate. 23 Salvadorean Red Cross volunteers from the youth department, under the supervision of the national HIV/AIDS coordinator, are leading radio programmes on the national radio once a week, organizing films and debates in the branches of the National Society and also organizing round tables and debates in high schools in three departments and in four departmental branches of the Salvadorean Red Cross Society. In the framework of the campaign against HIV/AIDS related stigma, awareness days were organized in 14 branches on 1 December, World AIDS Day, and with the participation of Red Cross youth members, debates and round table discussions took place in schools; certain debates were also aired on radio and television. With Federation support, a puppet show was organized with the theme "Although you are seropositive, you are still my friend". Through the show, it is hoped to raise awareness amongst the population as a result of anti-stigma messages.

To date, 3,500 young people in the departments of San Salvador, La Libertad and Sonsonate have taken part in the programme for the prevention of HIV/AIDS, financed by the Federation and the Italian Red Cross. The expansion of this programme throughout the country will take place in stages, and extension to the department of San Vicente, with funding from the Spanish Red Cross, is under consideration. Furthermore, the Canadian Red Cross will provide support for the programme in the west of the country, to be managed from the branches of Juayua and Nahuizalco, in the department of Sonsonate.

The scaling-up of activities in HIV/AIDS is included under the mandate of the community health office which is prioritizing the fight against HIV/AIDS, particularly in relation to strategies for prevention and education. In addition, the Salvadorean Red Cross is working with the national network of people living with AIDS to carry out joint activities in this field.

Constraints

It is agreed that there needs to be a greater focus on HIV/AIDS in view of the gravity of the problem. Pilot experiences will provide useful experiences and lessons learned to improve and ensure interventions which are more and more effective.

Objective 3: To promote integrated community development through the Golfo de Fonseca project.

Sharing of experiences: Over the year, concepts introduced in the Golfo de Fonseca project have been used for the programming of community health activities by Salvadorean Red Cross branches financed by the Canadian Red Cross, particularly in relation to the management of volunteers (providing services without per diem) and the implementation of low cost sustainable training sessions.

Another aspect of the Golfo de Fonseca project which has been replicated is the integrated approach whereby, in addition to community health activities, project components also focus on branch development. Priority is also attached to resource mobilization and providing quality services to the community in order to improve the Red Cross image.

In Nicaragua, project resources have been used to facilitate a water and sanitation situation assessment, based on which projects will be designed for eight communities at an estimated cost of USD 160,000. These projects will then be implemented with the help of resources identified by the

Spanish Red Cross. Therefore, a small amount of resources has advocated for the most vulnerable, improved coordination and leveraged an increase of resources / services at the community level.

Branch development: The branches of Santa Rosa de Lima and La Unión in El Salvador have been supported by the project through the organization of activities with existing volunteers in order to recruit more monthly donors and active volunteers. Subsequently, low cost induction and first aid courses have been given to train the incoming volunteers. In both branches, volunteers have been in charge of the rehabilitation of their building or extension with a garage or warehouse. When initial budgets made by the branches did not cover all expenses, the project supported fundraising activities to raise the necessary funds from the community.



The board of the Chinandega branch in Nicaragua which was appointed in January 2002 was given financial support which, together with support from the Spanish Red Cross, enabled the branch to settle the debt incurred to the electricity company as a result of a bill that had been unpaid for three years, thereby avoiding a cut in the electricity service. Efforts have also focused on installing routines of regular meetings both for the board and with all volunteers. Additionally, a 12 day organizational development course has been given which stimulated discussions on the strategic plan for the branch.

Community development: The Golfo de Fonseca project is presently working in 35 rural communities with 510 community volunteers having been trained in Nicaragua and 144 in El Salvador. Community volunteers have received training in disaster preparedness. By the first quarter of 2002, prior to the hurricane season, disaster simulations were carried out in all communities with the participation of Red Cross volunteers. Community volunteers received a refresher course in first aid as a preparation to the disaster simulations held.



Two micro projects were implemented in El Salvador and, as a result, a well was built in one community and another community was equipped with a maize mill in order to generate income for the inhabitants.

In both El Salvador and Nicaragua, community volunteer support to the campaigns organized by the Ministry of Health in water chlorination and village clean up activities were given priority to help reduce the impact of preventable diseases such as diarrhoea and of the dengue epidemic experienced in both countries in 2002. In addition, community members were given information on disease prevention, symptoms and treatment during home visits.

Six trainer of trainers' courses in integrated management of childhood illnesses (IMCI) were held. In each community, four volunteers have now been trained in this methodology. In 2003, they will focus on replicating their training to fellow community volunteers.

External evaluation/ review of the project: In April 2002, an external evaluation of the project with participation of the health department of the Secretariat, the British Red Cross and the regional delegation took place. Key findings were as follows:

- The need to develop methodologies to increase the level of ownership within the senior management of the National Societies.
- The project started with an assistance methodology. However, it now needs to develop further the organizational development aspects for the branches and the project design should be reoriented towards a more developmental methodology.
- Support from the regional team should be increased; the Golfo de Fonseca project is an opportunity for regional initiatives.
- The country delegates and heads of delegation should take more central role with the project. The local project staff need support, but not necessarily a direct delegate placement.
- Staff changes in the technical team in Nicaragua were suggested.
- The project should not be expanded geographically. It is still fragile and will need more development before it is extended to other areas
- In Nicaragua, for the third quarter of 2002, there should be a focus on strengthening the local team.

Constraints

- **Importance of personalities:** Stability at all levels with regard to the people involved in the project is important as with each change in person, there is an impact on the vision and implementation of the project. This makes the project fragile.
- In El Salvador the responsibility for the project at headquarters level has changed from the planning department to the newly created community health office and is currently the responsibility of the organizational development department, with these changes affecting the vision of the project.
- In the branch of Chinandega, the board and some of the key volunteers such as the head of relief volunteers have changed. Even in the community, if key volunteers move away for work or personal reasons, this has an impact on the functioning of the volunteer group.
- **Ambitious project design:** Most of the failures in the project are due to an over- ambitious project design. Too much was planned over a short period of time, without taking into consideration existing headquarters, branch or volunteer capacity. Therefore, in 2003, the focus will be on consolidating results achieved.
- **Need for more branch ownership:** From the initial project design, the branch needs to be fully involved so that a shared vision between the branch and project is established before planning the project. This will increase branch ownership of the project and ensure it will be based on realistic capacities.
- **Interest in money:** At higher levels of the Red Cross organization, the interest in the project is sometimes more focused on the possible funds that the project brings to the department involved, and very little on support to the process of the management and implementation.
- **Management difficulties for integrated projects:** The structure of a Red Cross organization is not adapted to manage an integrated project. Projects are always under the responsibility of a

single department, for example: health, disaster preparedness or organizational development, depending on the content. A project with each of these three components therefore does not benefit from an adequate management structure designed for the implementation of integrated projects.

Organizational Development w

The Federation and the ICRC declared two National Societies in Central America as priorities for programme support: the Guatemalan Red Cross and the Nicaraguan Red Cross.

Objective 1: To support and strengthen national society governance and management.

Achievements

Support in this area during the year focused on the revision of Statutes and regulations; negotiating the transfer of the American Red Cross organizational development programme in Guatemala to the Federation, including the availability of an American Red Cross organizational development delegate; encouraging National Societies to fill out the self-assessment questionnaire; facilitating governance workshops at branch levels; facilitating project cycle workshops at branch levels; facilitating a management workshop for one of the two priority National Societies; facilitating two regional meetings of directors general; assessing the organizational development needs of a National Society through extensive interviews with its management staff; initiating an organization-wide change process in one of the priority National Societies, and organizing the first regional organizational development workshop for National Societies, PNS partners, and Federation delegates. Workshops focusing on the Seville Agreement were also held in the National Societies of El Salvador, Guatemala and Mexico with the participation of the PNS.

The Guatemalan Red Cross

Support to the Guatemalan Red Cross initially focused on the revision of the National Society's Statutes and regulations. The regional organizational development delegate participated in two meetings of the Statutes revision committee, which also included a representative of the ICRC and the head of the Guatemala country delegation (HoD). The revised Statutes and the National Society's National Development Plan were approved by the national assembly, which was held on 26 and 27 April 2002. Key revisions were made promoting impartiality, a new profile for the board, improved representation of volunteers and a more detailed allocation of responsibilities between governance and management. In May, the Guatemalan Red Cross National Development Plan 2002-2006, was also approved by branch presidents. At the request of the HoD, the regional organizational development delegate facilitated an off-site meeting of the delegation and PNS representatives in Guatemala, as a further step in the Cooperation Agreement Strategy (CAS) process. During the year, the Guatemalan Red Cross became embroiled in a leadership crisis. The regional organizational development delegate helped monitor the situation and took part in several meetings with the head of the regional and country delegations and the Guatemalan Red Cross leadership to help solve the crisis. At the request of the national board of the Guatemalan Red Cross, the regional organizational development delegate facilitated a meeting of the board and branch presidents as part of the effort to resolve this crisis. In November, a workshop was held with the management team of the Guatemalan Red Cross, including the Director General, to assist the National Society in drawing up an operational plan based on the National Development Plan. During the workshop, the management team was introduced to various analytical and decision making tools they could apply in their day-to-day work. Also in November, a senior member of the Secretariat in Geneva visited the Guatemalan Red Cross and worked with the National Society to help diffuse the on-going crisis.

During the year, the regional organizational development delegate was involved in the negotiations between the head of the regional delegation and the American Red Cross acting HoRD to transfer the American Red Cross organizational development programme in Guatemala to the Federation. The transfer, including approximately USD 90,000 was accomplished by the end of the year. The

programme is now being administered by the Federation's HoD in Guatemala, while the former American Red Cross organizational development delegate reports on technical matters to the regional organizational development delegate.

Constraints

Although it is self-evident from the leadership crisis that the Guatemalan Red Cross needs to transform itself, and the leadership voices its desire for change, it was impossible in 2002 to initiate an organization-wide change process. Key persons in management were routinely fired by the board, creating a sense of instability and insecurity throughout headquarters.

It was decided to delay any major change effort until the national board elections in May 2003. A new board may bring stability and the new leadership may be more amenable to addressing deep-seated problems within the National Society. The regional organizational development delegate is monitoring the situation closely with the HoD and the organizational development delegate in Guatemala.

The Nicaraguan Red Cross

A workshop on governance and management was held for the governing board of the Nicaraguan Red Cross which took office in January 2002. The workshop was facilitated by the ICRC and the Federation and focused on self-assessment of the National Society and guidelines for National Society governance, leading to discussions on the role of the governing body. During the course of the year, the Statutes of the Nicaraguan Red Cross were under revision; a committee was established and an agenda and work programme put forward. It was anticipated that the revised Statutes would be in place by November 2002. However, work on the revision continued into 2003.

The Nicaraguan Red Cross has been caught up in one kind of institutional crisis or another since approximately 1980. The devastation of hurricane Mitch in 1998 also severely stretched the capacity of the National Society. Several efforts by the Federation to address the National Society's institutional problems were either repeatedly rebuffed or put on hold by the leadership of the Nicaraguan Red Cross. This situation came to a head by the summer of 2002, as increasing pressure was brought to bear on the National Society from various levels of the Secretariat. It was apparent that capacity building workshops were not enough to address the National Society's serious institutional issues. An organization-wide change process was proposed by the regional delegation and a written commitment was made by the President of the Nicaraguan Red Cross, whereby the National Society would undertake and implement such a process.

Between 6 and 8 June, the regional organizational development delegate facilitated the first in a series of organization-wide management workshops, with representation of all components of the Nicaraguan Red Cross, including 76 participants: 17 representatives of local branches, 15 representatives of departmental branches, and 44 members of the national council, the executive committee, and directors of programmes and sectors at headquarters. In addition, representatives of the five PNSs working in Nicaragua participated in the workshop: the American Red Cross, the Canadian Red Cross, the Italian Red Cross, the Netherlands Red Cross, and the Spanish Red Cross. The purpose of the workshops was to assist the Nicaraguan Red Cross in analyzing its current situation, agreeing on a shared vision, and by November 2002, drawing up a strategic plan and a national development plan.

After four two-and-a-half day workshops, with the last one finishing in November 2002, an average of 89 members of the Nicaraguan Red Cross, representing all levels of the organization, had examined the National Society's past, identified key problems and their causes, agreed on solutions, and defined the future course of the Nicaraguan Red Cross. During the workshops, the participants learned new analytical tools, mapped out the country's vulnerable groups by province, and identified what other organizations were doing to assist these groups. Representatives of the PNSs working in Nicaragua also participated in all of the workshops. In addition, the planning process involved the active

participation of representatives of the Nicaraguan Ministry of Health and the national agency in charge of disaster mitigation.

In December, the National Board of the Nicaraguan Red Cross approved its new strategic plan 2003-2007. The plan is the National Society's commitment to the country's vulnerable people, within the framework of the Federation's *Strategy 2010*. It has one new component: a national programme aimed at supporting indigenous peoples and ethnic communities, who are clearly among the nation's most vulnerable groups. A draft national development plan was prepared in December, which will guide the National Society in implementing its change process. It was agreed that the plan would be further discussed by key stakeholders before being approved by the National Board.

Also in December, the Nicaraguan Red Cross President, the treasurer, the director general, and the finance director, together with support from the executive committee, drew up a plan to regain the National Society's financial solvency.

Based on the recommendation of the Head of the Regional Finance Unit and with the approval of the President of the Nicaraguan Red Cross, a Norwegian volunteer with an expertise in financial management was placed in the Nicaraguan Red Cross to assist the National Society's finance director. The volunteer was in place by December 2002. His commitment is until May 2003.

A financial and administrative audit of the Nicaraguan Red Cross was carried out in 2002. Also, in cooperation with the Nicaraguan Development Centre, a local NGO, a series of management courses were carried out at the branch level, funded by the Federation, the ICRC, the Canadian Red Cross, and the Spanish Red Cross. The course contents included fund-raising, service provision, and the project planning process. The process was launched in early July and it is now expected that all branches will be in a position to draw up plans of action and work plans. In early August, courses were held in the branches of Siuna, Bluefields, Puerto Cabezas, El Rama, and Waspán, and at the end of August in Chinandega, Chichigalpa, Corinto, Leon, La Paz Centro and Nagarote.

Constraints

The resistance to change on the part of some of the leadership of the National Society is the major constraint. This resistance acts as a break on change efforts that have already been decided upon by representatives of the entire National Society.

It is recommended that the national board should create a commission responsible for implementing the strategic plan and the change process. The composition of the commission should reflect all levels of the National Society and should be headed by senior person. This commission should report its achievements twice a year to a meeting of all of the persons who participated in the creation of the strategic plan and the national development plan. Technical assistance to this commission would be provided by the head of the Federation delegation supported by the regional organizational development delegate.

Honduran Red Cross

During the reporting period, the HoRD and the regional organizational development delegate spent two full days interviewing more than 20 staff persons at headquarters. In addition, a visit was conducted to one of the branches. It was obvious from the visit that the Honduran Red Cross leadership is committed to implementing the new national development plan. The National Society has the added benefit of having a staff person in charge of organizational development with extensive experience. The National Society needs support in drawing up an evaluation of its national development plan, including indicators, which will be provided in 2003.

In Honduras, workshops, co-financed by the Federation and the PNS, were carried out in each of the branches at the level of governance, focusing on Honduran Red Cross policies. The revised Honduran

Red Cross Statutes were reviewed by the Joint Commission and were presented for approval at the General Assembly held on 21 September. In June 2002, work began on the drafting of the regulations for the Statutes. The national development plan of the National Society was actively disseminated in the branches by a network of 15 disseminators trained for this purpose.

Mexican Red Cross

Through the presence of the regional communications delegate who took up his post in Mexico in June 2002, 45 National Society leaders were trained in governance and management and in dissemination thanks to facilitation from the ICRC, through two workshops; one for volunteers and staff members at the headquarters and a second for National Society personnel working in the different states of the country.

It was agreed that the Mexican Red Cross would work with the Joint Commission in 2003 on the revision of the National Society Statutes, together with a member of the Commission. Information and documents provided by the Honduran Red Cross were provided to the National Society regarding a human resources data base, regulations for volunteers and the blood bank.

Regional Directors' Meetings

Two meetings of the Director Generals in the region were held. The first took place in Guatemala and the second in El Salvador. The meetings were a follow up to the Presidents and Technical Seminars' meeting held in September 2001 in Honduras. During the second meeting, the Director Generals agreed that they had taken on too many commitments during the first workshop. These commitments were therefore reduced. They decided that communications within a National Society, and among themselves, had to be greatly improved. Accordingly, a small action plan was drawn up to this effect.

Regional Organizational Development Conference

The regional organizational development delegate, with financial support from the Norwegian Red Cross, organized a regional organizational development conference in October in Managua, Nicaragua. The conference was attended by representatives from the National Societies of El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras and Nicaragua, as well as delegates and/or representatives from the American Red Cross, the Canadian Red Cross, the German Red Cross, the Italian Red Cross, the Netherlands Red Cross and the Spanish Red Cross. Also present were Federation delegates working in the area of organizational development, a representative of the OD department at the Secretariat and of the Dominican Red Cross. The following recommendations were made at the meeting: to create a virtual organizational development library in Spanish, to establish a regional OD strategy that would then be adapted by each National Society and PNS, to designate OD counterparts in each National Society, and to form a regional OD team made up of Federation and PNS delegates, as well as National Society counterparts. Each participant received a CD-Rom containing all relevant Federation documents and a list of non-Federation links to useful information sources.

Self-Assessments

During this period, all National Societies in the region, with the exception of the Guatemalan Red Cross, completed the self-assessment.

Objective 2: To promote the development of integrated programmes at the branch level, addressing basic community needs.

The regional organizational development delegate participated in the evaluation of the Golfo de Fonseca project, which took place in April 2002, during which he facilitated a workshop with the Chinandega branch of the Nicaraguan Red Cross, with participation from the executive board, management, and volunteers. The purpose of the workshop was to review the branch from an organizational development point of view. A meeting was also held with the Canadian Red Cross delegation in Managua to ensure that the Canadian Red Cross proposed OD project in three branches will not conflict with the Nicaraguan change process.

The lessons learned from the Golfo de Fonseca project were taken into consideration in the drafting of the Appeal 2003-04 for the region, resulting in the log frame for the integrated branch development project.

Constraints

It was not possible to implement further activities due to a lack of funding and resources.

Objective 3: To promote human resource development and effective volunteer management.

Over the reporting period, in order to promote the integration of the social volunteer, the induction course for volunteers in Honduras was revised, together with the regulations governing volunteer participation in the National Society. Meanwhile, the Guatemalan Red Cross, with support from the Federation, worked on establishing a volunteer department, aiming to attract new volunteers, improve volunteer management, and retain and promote diversification of the volunteer base. The National Society promoted the integration of volunteering as included and approved in the new version of the Statutes. In the future, three members of the volunteer corps will become members of the national board. The Guatemalan Red Cross worked on its internal volunteer regulations, expanding on the rights and obligations included in the new Statutes.

The regional communications delegate in Mexico facilitated knowledge sharing in El Salvador, providing information on the work carried out in Honduras in order to draw up new regulations regarding volunteering and to revise appropriate clauses relating to volunteering in the National Society Statutes. Members of the Salvadorean Red Cross and the Guatemalan Red Cross visited the Honduran Red Cross with a view to exchanging information and experience, particularly as regards the introduction of a database for the registration of volunteers established by the Honduran Red Cross.

The Nicaraguan Red Cross appointed a member of the governing board as a focal point for volunteering in July. Following this appointment, a workshop was held in July in the north of the country, launching a national survey to determine current numbers and profile of Nicaraguan Red Cross volunteers. The Statutes of the National Society, under revision, will reinforce the concept of volunteering.

Leadership workshops were held throughout the year in Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua and Mexico focusing on: the promotion of principles and values; Strategy 2010 and governance and management. Furthermore, in early June, the third module of the leadership development course, decentralized from the Secretariat, and organized by the regional delegation for South America, took place at the Spanish International Cooperation Agency, AECI, training centre in Antigua Guatemala. Several members of the regional delegation in Guatemala provided facilitation at the workshop in which 22 members of 17 National Societies in the Americas were trained.

Constraints

It was not possible to implement further activities due to a lack of funding and resources.

Objective 4: To strengthen national society capacity in communications and information and to support activities in communication and advocacy.

The regional annual meeting of the directors of communication of six National Societies in Central America took place at the end of February in Antigua, Guatemala. Discussions focused on the need for improved internal communications, on guidelines for the strengthening of capacity in communications, and national work plans for 2002.

The National Societies of El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Panama, Nicaragua, Uruguay, and Venezuela were managing their own web sites in 2002, with technical support received from the regional delegation's webmaster. Staff from the Guatemalan and Salvadorean Red Cross Societies received training in the development of management and updating of web pages.

The regional delegation facilitated the organization of the annual "Inter American Red Cross Forum on Communications and Development" in coordination with the regional delegation for South America. The forum took place in Bolivia between 6 and 10 May with participation from the three regions of the Americas. It resulted in an effective exchange of information and dialogue between National Society communicators, Federation information delegates and communications staff from the Secretariat. Several conclusions were reached, including the need to disseminate key policy documents more widely, including the Movement Strategy and the Inter American Regional Committee (CORI) plan of action.

A continuous dialogue was maintained with the communications departments of each of the National Societies and news articles from information promoters were constantly posted on the web. Overall, throughout the year, a total of 305 articles, information bulletins and press releases with information on the Americas were posted on the Federation's global web site, the web site for Latin America and the web site for the Caribbean.

In 2002, the *Costa Rican Red Cross* mostly concentrated on the long distance education programme (LDEP): 22 new students joined the programme in June. The data base of media representatives has been constantly updated. Communications promoters used knowledge obtained in the long distance education programme to launch fund-raising initiatives at branch level. The National Society continues to work with three branches, but in 2002 profiles of branches were drawn up with a view to selection of three further branches, to join the capacity building project at the beginning of 2003.

The *Honduran Red Cross* expressed interest in participating in the project as of September 2002. A plan of action was drawn up, however, given a number of constraints, few achievements had been made at the end of the year.

The *Nicaraguan Red Cross* is now working in capacity building in communications with 11 branches, each of which has a dedicated communicator. Four of these branches are at departmental level: Esteli, Leon, Matagalpa and Granada, and seven are local branches: Ocotal Somoto, Jalapa, Yali, Sebaco, Tipitapa and Diriama. The Nicaraguan Red Cross uses documentation from the long distance education programme as part of its capacity building project. Each plan for the branches involved has been tailored to take into account strengths and weaknesses of the branch concerned. A data base of media representatives in Nicaragua has been compiled by the communications department. A significant development is that the communicators have been involved in promoting the change process which is taking place in the Nicaraguan Red Cross and are working closely with the national development plan.

The *Red Cross Society of Panama* is working with six branches: Chitre, La Villa de Los Santos, Las Tablas, Bugaba, David and Santiago. In Panama City, the headquarters, the Las Cumbres branch and the youth group are also involved in the project. Priorities in communication were defined as follows: strengthening of internal communication and information work focused on communities. As regards the long distance education programme, 40 new volunteers began participation in the programme in 2002, whilst 35 volunteers graduated in 2001 and are working as communications promoters, forming part of the communications network. A data base has been created in each branch of media contacts at local and national level.

Efforts were made to reincorporate the *Salvadorean Red Cross Society* in the capacity building project, given setbacks which had occurred as of early 2002. A plan of action was defined

concentrating on information workshops to improve the communicators' network in the country. Six workshops were held for volunteers in information with an average of 35 volunteers participating in each session. Compilation of data relating to local and national media representatives was carried out. However, further support is necessary to ensure the sustainability of this initiative in 2003.

The numbers of communication promoters currently working in each country are as follows:

Nicaraguan Red Cross	12
Red Cross Society of Panama	18
Costa Rican Red Cross	20

Objective 5: To promote awareness and provide technical training on disaster information issues and practices for national societies and the mass media.

The Costa Rican Red Cross celebrated the first disaster preparedness fair between 18 and 22 March to promote awareness of the work carried out by the National Society in the area of disaster preparedness. Conferences were attended by an average of 150 persons per day, and there was good media coverage of the event. In Costa Rica, five workshops were carried out over the year for communications promoters, with the following themes: the role and responsibilities of communicators, "information saves lives", media relations and the use of information contingency plans. An exchange with the Red Cross Society of Panama (see below) proved successful, particularly in view of the simulation which took place during the workshop which centered on implementation of the contingency plan. The role of the promoters was highlighted during relief operations carried out in 2002.

In Nicaragua, between May and November, eight workshops were held with the participation of all communicators who make up the national information network. These focused on management of information in disasters, the role of communicators, promotion of Red Cross activities at national and local level and the drawing up of communications plans for branches, together with practical activities to strengthen skills in producing articles, organizing events, public relations and marketing. Additional workshops included an event which focused on disasters which was successfully held in Estelí and attended by local journalists, representatives of local organizations and members of governing boards of associated branches. A further workshop was held on 4 August in Matagalpa focusing on information in disasters and attended by National Society communicators, local authorities, members of the fire brigade and the civil defence. In additions, simulations took place on 28 July and 18 August, concentrating on the organization of a press conference and implementation of the contingency plan in information. On 7 October, a workshop on information in conflict situations, violence and natural disasters was held in coordination with the ICRC, with the participation of 56 university students.

In Panama, information workshops were held in conjunction with meetings on the long distance education programme which included evaluations and follow up sessions. A workshop was also held on contingency planning on 26 October and a seminar was held in coordination with the ICRC, in which 25 university students of journalism took part. As part of a pilot initiative, an exchange took place as the communications assistant from Panama assisted the Costa Rican Red Cross to stage a workshop on contingency planning in Santa Ana in the Province of San Jose, which included a simulation exercise. 20 communication promoters from Costa Rica attended. All communication promoters are involved in information activities: in the coverage of emergency operations, compilation of information and taking of photographs for various publications, attendance at interviews and public relations activities at branch level in coordination with local authorities, provision of support in communications to the headquarters, and the drawing up of contingency plans.

In September 2002, the Guatemalan Red Cross participated in the capacity building project through the launch of the second information diploma intended for national journalists. A communications professional was recruited as coordinator to oversee the implementation of the courses leading to the diploma. 20 journalists representing various media took part in the courses. In addition, the first workshop on information in disasters was held in November 2002 in order to initiate Red Cross communicators' network in which 20 members of local branches took part.

A CD rom was produced by the Nicaraguan Red Cross with recommendations for the period of heavy rains in the country including advice from communicators to populations in high risk areas. This has been used by local radio stations, thus enhancing the image of the Red Cross. The branches of Leon and Somoto have links with local radio stations where Red Cross communicators benefit from a slot to broadcast information on Red Cross activities. In Panama, the Bugaba and David branches have access to local radio air time to broadcast information on Red Cross activities. Red Cross youth has been allocated a slot of half an hour on national radio to broadcast information on the Red Cross Society of Panama, for which responsibility has been allocated to the communicators.

Constraints

- At the level of governance and management, support for the capacity building project in communications remains weak.
- Communications promoters are not always present in high risk zones.
- Financial and human resource constraints limit the expansion of the programme.
- Recognition of capacity building in communications amongst the National Society programmes remains limited, despite positive results.

Regional Cooperation w

CAS documents moved forward with the facilitation of the regional communications delegate based in Mexico in the National Societies of Guatemala and Honduras (second generation). The CAS in El Salvador was finalized in coordination with the ICRC. A meeting of all Participating National Societies in the region helped to raise awareness with regard to the change process and the Master Service Agreements to be implemented as support to PNS in the region. Mitch exit strategies were discussed with a view to avoiding the creation of gaps and to promote transfer of assets, financial and material to National Societies in an orderly and planned manner. All visitors from the PNS were provided with information on the regional programmes and priorities.

Objective 1: To promote effective cooperation between the National Societies of the region and Red Cross partners.

PNS Coordination Meetings.

Two meetings were held in the year to discuss issues of mutual interest and to review the Federation's role in organizational development processes as formulated in the Seville Agreement. As a result of such discussions, there was a potential agreement on the part of the American Red Cross (ARC) for the transfer of the ARC OD programme to the country delegation in Guatemala. This first meeting, held in Guatemala, also sought to strengthen links between the regional staff of the Federation and the PNS, in particular the American and the Netherlands Red Cross Societies. It was also sought to initiate discussions around increased benefit of economies of scale, sharing of resources in the field, and agreements regarding joint proposal writing, particularly for the European Union. All objectives for the meeting were met as vehicles, office space and, in some instances, staff were shared among PNS and the Federation producing some cost savings in field operations. The second meeting held in Nicaragua in October was directed at supporting the ongoing change process in Nicaragua and to define areas for support to be considered under the Master Service Agreement developed by the

Secretariat. Much support continues to be provided to the PNS, particularly with regard to requests for visas for their country delegates.

All PNS representatives visiting the field were introduced to the Federation programmes, activities and priorities for the region. The visit by the top leadership of the American, Netherlands and Spanish Red Cross Societies were particularly useful. The Spanish Red Cross delegation held a regional meeting in which the National Societies in the region participated to discuss and plan the next cycle of projects. The Federation was part of this meeting to ensure integration with the Appeal process and to ensure continuity with the National Development Plans. In an effort to strengthen the relationship with the major donors, visits were conducted to the Norwegian and the Spanish Red Cross headquarters.

PNS Consortia for proposal writing

The Netherlands Red Cross utilized available funding for the drought operation in Nicaragua and extended field work to cover the objectives of the drought operation in this country. The proposal writing for the DIPECHO IV was a model of cooperation among all European PNS and the Federation, according to which all proposals were submitted in a consortium approach with four main areas highlighted for the Federation for leadership and ombudsman support. These include the usage of common materials developed by the Federation (CBDP model), monitoring and evaluation services and the provision of services where needed, given the Federation's ability to function in all countries for which proposals were submitted.

Constraints

While the Master Service Agreements proposal was presented and discussed with the PNS and the ICRC, little progress in formalizing these agreements has been made, given the requirement for further guidance and instructions from the respective headquarters. All support needs of PNS are being met on a case by case basis concentrating on requests for visas for their delegates. Work is underway in Nicaragua to seek reimbursement of Value Added Tax (VAT) on behalf of the American and Netherlands Red Cross Societies. The coordination with PNS in their proposal writing remains elusive at the field level. This is an objective to be shared with our respective headquarters.

Objective 2: To promote the training and recruitment of delegates from the region.

Several of the regional staff members and National Society staff were supported in their applications to follow basic training courses (BTCs) abroad. The scheduled BTC for South America was cancelled this year. Language remains a major challenge in the selection of candidates for a BTC. The regional delegation continues to rely on regionally recruited staff and, after the move to Panama, will step up efforts to develop more human resources in the programme areas. A plan, under implementation, to recruit officers and assistants in the different programme areas will introduce this element of human resource development.

Objective 3: To promote effective cooperation, partnerships and alliances with non Red Cross partners.

A push to consolidate relationships was made with particular attention to the Pan American Health Organization, the Inter American Development Bank, the European Union and cooperation agencies including the Swedish, Norwegian and Spanish agencies. Emphasis was made on identifying and engaging marketing agencies or foundations with National Societies in the region.

International Partners

The meeting of the Health Ministries, PAHO, health department leadership of the National Societies and the Federation Secretariat was supported in Antigua Guatemala. Several PNS also took part.

Following this meeting, an MoU was signed in Geneva between the International Federation and PAHO; the signing ceremony was witnessed by the President of the Honduran Red Cross who is also a Secretariat Board member. Local meetings have been promoted in all countries with the representatives of the Inter American Development Bank; to date, only the Spanish Red Cross has been offered funding through a Bank project in Honduras to work with indigenous populations in disaster preparedness programmes. All National Societies are studying possibilities to be included in the funding formulas and proposals of their countries. The global HIV/AIDS funds may prove more accessible for National Societies for this coming year.

The UNDP in Nicaragua encouraged the Federation to seek its funding support. A number of agencies are decentralizing their funding to the region. This decentralization will require an effort to ensure coordination, as many of the PNS depend on submitting proposals through their capitals.

Marketing or foundation like organizations

There were two major organizations that were approached to initiate a long term relationship with the National Society in Guatemala: the United Way and Saatchi-Saatchi. The United Way, an internationally known US-based charitable foundation, with franchises in Guatemala, Nicaragua and Costa Rica was approached to include the local National Society in its list of agencies. However, the foundation requires audited reports which has delayed the process of their inclusion. The offer to have a partnership with the National Society to channel all international funding as a result of a disaster needs to be formalized this coming year. The United Way agreed to earmark the funds received from abroad and collected locally for Red Cross disaster relief operations in Guatemala; a similar agreement will be sought in Nicaragua and Costa Rica. Saatchi-Saatchi was contacted and engaged in supporting the Federation's marketing efforts for its programmes. The display used in the Mexican Red Cross annual convention and the handouts distributed to the public were developed and produced on a pro-bono basis by this firm. There is a commitment to link the National Societies and local Saatchi-Saatchi offices in the region with the help from the Saatchi-Saatchi CEO in Guatemala.

Other efforts were local to Guatemala as major foundations were approached and worked with the Guatemalan Red Cross through the country delegation. These foundations became active supporters of the Guatemalan Red Cross through assistance provided during the drought operation with in-kind donations. These foundations will continue their support to the Guatemalan Red Cross.

Coordination and Management w

Objective 1: To manage and coordinate Federation support to National Society programmes in the region effectively and efficiently.

All National Societies were provided working advances (WA) as programmed to support their activities in the programmes and/or projects on a timely basis. The Secretariat communications for the National Societies were transmitted regularly including the open positions listings. Telephone calls to consult and inform National Societies of Secretariat initiatives were held with the Presidents and contacts by the delegates with their counterparts maintained the information flow uninterrupted. In addition, two meetings hosted for Directors General promoted coordination and communication. These meetings hold a great potential and must be a future fora for sharing best practices and fomenting the development of MoUs among National Societies to pledge their capacities for mutual support.

There are six Legal Status Agreements in place in the region. These agreements have enhanced the profile of the Federation as an International Organization. Many of the benefits are already being enjoyed by PNS whose delegates have access to their visa renewals through the Federation, thus

allowing them to remain in country to manage their projects and reduce the costs of leaving the country every three months to renew visas.

There were a number of staff changes in the regional delegation in late 2002: in July and August a new disaster preparedness delegate and a regional health delegate joined the delegation and the programme coordinator, formerly responsible for the Golfo de Fonseca project, took up his post in Guatemala.

In the final quarter of the year, the regional delegation was much occupied with the transfer of the regional delegation to Panama and the future management of support from Panama to National Societies of both Central America and the Caribbean. Many practical and logistical issues needed to be resolved: the transfer, sale or disposal of delegation assets; the setting up of new offices for the delegation in Panama; accommodation for delegates and recruitment of local staff. The delegation moved to Panama in early December 2002.

Objective 2: To support the financial management of Federation regional and country delegations in Central and South America and the Caribbean.

The regional finance unit (RFU) for the Americas was established in Guatemala in January 2001. The unit has provided close follow up of the delegations in the Americas with regard to financial issues, and has maintained regular contact with all delegations and finance staff. In mid 2002, it was decided that the RFU would be transferred to Panama. The unit therefore reduced its staff in Guatemala in November 2002. In early December, the unit moved to Panama and was operational from a temporary location, although full services could not be provided at this stage. The re-establishment of the unit in Panama was completed in early 2003.

One of the local staff members of the unit spent two months working with the finance department at the headquarters. The unit benefited from this experience and the basis was set for improved support to the delegations. Unfortunately, given the transfer of the unit, the local member of staff involved left the Federation at the end of the year.

The RFU set and complied with a time limit for responding to the finance staff in the delegations in order to ensure that their needs are fully met. In order to be in a position to provide improved support, members of the RFU conducted missions to various delegations in the Americas over the year, providing training and resolving pending financial issues. The unit has ensured that the delegations are provided with feedback and reports on their accounting on a monthly basis. In addition, one detailed analysis of the financial status of each delegation has been made. These reports will form the basis for further work to improve financial procedures in the Americas.

Overall, in 2002, in comparison with 2001, there is improved financial management of projects, resulting in less dormant projects, less deficits and significantly less write-offs. The delegations in the Americas have improved their compliance with the Federation's financial procedures and, given the Federation's move towards the adoption of full international accounting procedures, the Americas is prepared to meet new, more demanding requirements.

Objective 3: To set up a pan regional reporting unit in order to ensure effective support to the regional and country delegations of Central America, Southern America and the Caribbean in reporting issues and to build capacity for reporting in the Americas.

In 2002, the regional reporting delegate based in Guatemala worked with a network of delegates and officers responsible for reporting based in the regional delegations for the Caribbean and South America and in the El Salvador and Honduras country delegations. Liaison was also ensured with PADRU in disaster situations to ensure coordination with respect to reporting on disaster response.

Although the funding situation in 2002 did not allow the establishment of a pan regional reporting unit, the methodology of a unit was applied whereby each of the regional and country delegates and officers responsible for reporting forwarded draft reports to the regional reporting delegate in

Guatemala who was responsible for quality control and editing work, and who then forwarded the finalized document to the Secretariat. As a result of a concerted team effort, long-overdue reports were finalized and in 2002, the region was able to comply with the Federation's minimum reporting standards, with the exception of one overdue report at the end of the year.

Some capacity-building work was carried out, mostly through facilitation at NIT and RIT training courses where the topic of reporting was introduced. The regional reporting delegate in the Caribbean and the regional OD delegate in South America, responsible for reporting, carried out training in their respective delegations. The regional reporting delegate based in Guatemala facilitated a session on reporting during the leadership training course in Antigua in June.

In 2003, core funds will be allocated for the establishment of a regional reporting unit in Panama. With a network of trained reporting officers in the regions, it is hoped that the quality of narrative reports in the Americas will continue to improve and that increased liaison with the regional finance unit will enhance coherence in narrative and financial reporting to donors. The newly-created unit will also carry out more capacity-building work to assist National Societies in the region in improving the standard of their reporting to donors.

In 2002, the regional delegation for Central America received funding support from the British government, DFID, the British Red Cross, the Norwegian government and the Norwegian Red Cross, the Swedish government, the Red Crescent Society of the United Arab Emirates and the Canadian, German and Netherlands Red Cross Societies.

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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>.

INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION OF RED CROSS AND RED CRESCENT SOCIETIES

Interim report	
Annual report	X
Final report	

Appeal No & title: 01.19/2002 Central America regional

Period: year 2002

Project(s): PCR161, NI000, 005, P43002, 43005, 43006, 43008, 43102, 43104, 43160, 43161, 43162, 43163, 43301, 43401, 43402, 43403

Currency: CHF

I - CONSOLIDATED RESPONSE TO APPEAL

FUNDING	CASH		KIND & SERVICES		TOTAL INCOME
	Contributions	Comments	Goods/Services	Personnel	
Appeal budget	2,896,416				
less					
Cash brought forward	1,131,054				
TOTAL ASSISTANCE SOUGHT	1,765,362				
<u>Contributions from Donors</u>					
British Red Cross (DNGB)	506,382				506,382
DFID - British Government (DFID)	200,000				200,000
DFID 3- British Government (DFID03)	295,765				295,765
Donor - Unidentified (D000)	97,495				97,495
Finnish Red Cross (DNFI)	14,004				14,004
Japanese Red Cross (DNJP)	2,082				2,082
Norwegian Govt.via Norcross Grant No (DGNNO1)	108,270				108,270
Norwegian Govt.via Norwegian Red Cro (DGNNO)	25,000				25,000
Norwegian Red Cross (DNNO)	13,534				13,534
Spanish Red Cross (DNES)	1,403				1,403
Swedish Govt.via Swedish Red Cross (DGNSE)	116,742				116,742
United Arab Emirates Red Crescent (DNAE)	11,907				11,907
CANADA				30,882	30,882
GERMANY				24,148	24,148
GREAT BRITAIN				59,959	59,959
NETHERLANDS				2,628	2,628
NORWAY				60,000	60,000
TOTAL	1,392,584			177,617	1,570,201

II - Balance of funds

OPENING	1,131,054
CASH INCOME Rcv'd	1,392,584
CASH EXPENDITURE	-1,919,616

CASH BALANCE	604,022

Appeal No & title: 01.19/2002 Central America regional

Period: year 2002

Project(s): PCR161, NI000, 005, P43002, 43005, 43006, 43008, 43102, 43104, 43160, 43161, 43162, 43163, 43301, 43401, 43

Currency: CHF

III - Budget analysis / Breakdown of expenditures

Description	APPEAL Budget	CASH Expenditures	KIND & SERVICES		TOTAL Expenditures	Variance
			Goods/services	Personnel		
<u>SUPPLIES</u>						
Shelter & Construction	26,906	17,529			17,529	9,377
Clothing & Textiles						
Food & Seeds		-11,185			-11,185	11,185
Water & sanitation		411			411	-411
Medical & First Aid	2,154	3,308			3,308	-1,154
Teaching materials	33,500					33,500
Utensils & Tools	1,000	-1,675			-1,675	2,675
Other relief supplies	33,000	1,686			1,686	31,314
Sub-Total	96,560	10,074			10,074	86,486
<u>CAPITAL EXPENSES</u>						
Land & Buildings						
Vehicles		204			204	-204
Computers & Telecom equip.	37,103	18,504			18,504	18,599
Medical equipment						
Other capital expenditures	37,550	4,164			4,164	33,386
Sub-Total	74,653	22,872			22,872	51,781
<u>TRANSPORT & STORAGE</u>	55,705	59,270			59,270	-3,565
Sub-Total	55,705	59,270			59,270	-3,565
<u>PERSONNEL</u>						
Personnel (delegates)	955,372	653,848		177,617	831,465	123,907
Personnel (national staff)	596,512	602,659			602,659	-6,147
Sub-Total	1,551,884	1,256,508		177,617	1,434,125	117,759
<u>GENERAL & ADMINISTRATION</u>						
Assessment/Monitoring/experts	111,109	99,931			99,931	11,178
Travel & related expenses	185,856	140,964			140,964	44,892
Information expenses	38,784	12,457			12,457	26,327
Admin./general expenses	196,260	183,850			183,850	12,410
External workshops & Seminars	267,000	18			18	266,982
Sub-Total	799,009	437,220			437,220	361,789
<u>PROGRAMME SUPPORT</u>						
Programme management	195,305	130,228			130,228	65,077
Technical services	58,464	38,834			38,834	19,630
Professional services	64,836	43,079			43,079	21,757
Sub-Total	318,605	212,142			212,142	106,464
Operational provisions		-78,469			-78,469	78,469
Transfers to National Societies						
TOTAL BUDGET	2,896,416	1,919,616		177,617	2,097,233	799,183