

# PROGRAMME UPDATE



International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies  
Fédération internationale des Sociétés de la Croix-Rouge et du Croissant-Rouge  
Federación Internacional de Sociedades de la Cruz Roja y de la Media Luna Roja  
الاتحاد الدولي لجمعيات الصليب الأحمر والهلال الأحمر

## LAO PDR

16 April 2002

*This Programme Update is intended for reporting on Annual Appeals.*

*Appeal No. 01.34/2002*

*Appeal Target CHF 524,987 (USD 315,000/ EUR 358,000)*

*Programme Update No. 1 Period covered: 1 January - 31 March 2002*

### “At a Glance”

*Appeal coverage: 41.6%*

*Related Appeals: 01.30/2002 South-east Asia regional programmes*

*Outstanding needs: CHF 306,626 (USD 184,000/ EUR 209,000)*

*Update: Progress continues to be made in disaster preparedness, health and care and organisational development. The Federation is maintaining its assistance to the Lao Red Cross in its change process towards new work methods and a serving leader role for the delegation. There is also a need to diversify the resource mobilisation base and reduce dependency on traditional donors.*

### **Operational Developments:**

Voting took place for a new national assembly, which is dominated by the ruling Communist party. All but one of the 166 candidates for 109 assembly seats came from the ruling party, which has been in power in Laos for 26 years. Voter turnout was an estimated 100%.

Health ministers of ten ASEAN nations came together at the Sixth ASEAN Health Ministers Meeting in Vientiane from 14 to 15 March to seek appropriate ways to develop the regional medical system and reduce the health burden on local communities. The Ministers discussed the continuation of cooperation programmes from now until 2020, as well as action plans for promoting healthy lifestyles in the region. The conference also adopted the framework on healthy ASEAN lifestyles and will sign concerted agreements on some projects in this area.

The issue of unexploded ordnance (UXO) was brought sharply into focus recently with claims of a rising death toll in various provinces. Officials reported that two members of a UXO detonation team were killed in an accident during detonation operations in northern Xieng Khuang province on March 15. In the first three months of this year, unexploded ordnance has been accidentally detonated seven times, killing 10 people and injuring 12 others.

The Luang Prabang provincial authorities and the United National Development Programme (UNDP) have signed a new project document in support of the Governance and Public Administration Reform (GPAR) Programme in Luang Prabang province. The project, which will start in January 2002 and run for a period of two years, will help the province and some of its districts to implement the Government's reform agenda in the public administration sector.

While the Vientiane municipality has borne the brunt of the recent rise in drug use among students, the city will be drug-free by 2005, according to the Director of Vientiane Education Department. He made this pledge during a January 31 meeting to report on the first phase of the drug prevention project for youth in the Vientiane municipality. Officials at the meeting said that the youth in the Vientiane municipality are still using drugs and that the trend is spreading among the unemployed and school dropouts who buy and sell drugs and become addicts. According to a recent survey in which 2,631 students were interviewed in 13 municipal schools, students aged from 12 to 21 years were at great risk, and many had tried drugs at least once in their lives.

Laotian correspondents from various mass media organisations learned how to investigate and report on outbreaks of malaria at a two-day training course held yesterday at the Centre for Malaria, Parasite, and Entomology in Vientiane municipality. The Laotian mass media have so far actively contributed to the dissemination of information about malaria to the public, enabling people in remote areas to understand the consequences of the disease and to employ effective measures to prevent epidemics. This recent training course was sponsored by the European Union and included the promotion of measures to prevent malaria, including village hygiene and cleanliness, and the use of mosquito nets.

### ***Disaster Response:***

There were no significant disaster response activities during the reporting period and no requirement for Federation or Lao Red Cross (LRC) interventions.

### ***Disaster Preparedness:***

#### ***Objective 1***

To create a disaster response capability in every branch of the LRC.

#### ***Activities & Achievements***

The LRC/Federation have made visits to the southern LRC branches to assess the status of readiness of existing disaster preparedness (DP) volunteers, check the three regional DP warehouses and prepare the ground for field testing the new DP module programme. Emphasis is being placed on developing a realistic programme of 'normal time' DP as part of the well-established the LRC CBFA activities linked to programmes such as HIV/AIDS, Watsan, and dissemination.

The LRC Disaster Relief and Preparedness Division (DRPD) has prepared its annual workplan and budget for 2002, part of which can be funded from the small balance of funds still remaining from 2001.

#### ***Constraints***

There were no constraints.

#### ***Objective 2***

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

#### ***Activities & Achievements***

There have been further discussions between the NDMO, the LRC, the Federation, the UN system, and NGOs regarding ways and means of building greater disaster prevention, mitigation and

preparedness capacities into the Lao disaster management system at both central and local level. The view is that the LRC has an important part to play as the only national social organisation with grass roots connections through its community based first aid and disaster preparedness (CBFA/CBDP) activities and network of trained volunteers.

Links with other regional Red Cross initiatives continue to improve with the head of the LRC DP department attending the Third Regional DP Cooperation (RDMC) meeting in Brunei. Meetings have been held with the UN system, particularly WFP and other agencies, to explore the possibilities of long-term cooperation with LRC disaster preparedness.

### ***Constraints***

There were no specific constraints, but some additional funding will certainly be required after the middle of the second quarter (Q2) to enable the LRC to implement its modest DP programme.

### ***Health and Care:***

In the area of health and care in the community, the Japanese Red Cross Society (JRCS) and the Federation have been supporting the LRC national blood programme since 1995. This programme will increasingly focus on developing an effective national blood donor recruitment system in line with the Federation's strategic directions, as well as consolidating the achievements of the programme to date. The Federation continues to provide administrative support and financial reporting services for the blood programme.

The 2002-2003 Appeal process has led to a strategic refocusing of the Federation's support for the LRC in the health sector, with a growing role for the Regional Health Unit (RHU) Bangkok, in close cooperation with the participating National Societies (PNS), WHO and other partners. The priorities are to promote capacity building within the LRC health division, enhance networking, skills development for voluntary blood donor recruitment, CBFA, Watsan and HIV/AIDS awareness.

Apart from the regular administrative support and financial reporting services provided by the delegation for the blood programme, the main Federation activities during this quarter were linked to the planning of the forthcoming Regional Watsan training in Luang Prabang and the LRC health and CBFA review. The RHU is playing an important role in this respect. With the increasing spotlight on HIV/AIDS, LRC and its partners are working together to build more awareness messages into programmes 'across the board.'

### ***Objective 1***

To strengthen the capacities of the national voluntary blood donor recruitment system by complementing the work of, and providing administrative support for the LRC and JRC programme, in cooperation with the regional health unit.

### ***Activities & Achievements***

The target for 2001 was that 90% of blood donors will be non-remunerated. During the past three months, an average of approximately 99.4% was achieved. This was similar to the previous six months. Dissemination and voluntary blood donor recruitment activities continue to increase. Blood donor recruitment campaigns are being organized in 8 provinces with the ministries of health and education as well as at universities, schools, technical colleges, government training institutes, police and army training academies and factories in Vientiane.

### ***Constraints***

Whilst the number of voluntary non remunerated donors is increasing, the volume of blood collected has remained stable during the fourth quarter.

### ***Objective 2***

To strengthen the capacities of the LRC health division in the planning, management and coordination of the CBFA, and water and sanitation programmes.

***Activities & Achievements***

A standard procedure was introduced earlier to ensure that all blood units are routinely tested for: ABO; Rh; HIV; HBV; HCV; syphilis, and screened for antibodies. This procedure was introduced to ensure that testing was performed prior to blood transfusion.

Other major activities during the quarter include the blood donor recruitment planning meeting for 2002 with the education sector in the Vientiane municipality, Vientiane province and Borikhamxay. Three blood bank staff completed the training course on blood banking at Chiang Mai University and have now returned to work. Two staff members participated in the annual scientific meeting on blood transfusion and in a short course of blood service in Bangkok, Thailand, by the National Thai Blood Centre, Thai Red Cross Society. The blood centre invited the director of the ASEAN World Federation of Hemophilia to initiate the collaboration in the future of transfusion medicine.

The director of the blood programme and the president of the LRC, together with the technical staff, spent a few weeks in the field monitoring the blood activities in Khammouane, Savannakhet, Champasack, Saravane, Oudomexay, Luang Phabang and Sayaboury provinces.

The construction of the regional blood centre was reviewed by the director of the blood programme and Champasack Red Cross branch officers before the bidding process is opened.

The president of the LRC and the Director of the blood programme recently held meetings with the Ministry of Health and WHO regarding the long-term future of the blood programme.

***Constraints***

There were no major constraints, however, in order to avoid any cash flow difficulties, it is hoped that hard pledges for this programme will be forthcoming in the near future.

***Objective 3***

To complement the ongoing work of the LRC/Australian Red Cross HIV/AIDS peer group education programme through enhanced regional cooperation and networking.

***Activities & Achievements***

The Delegation and the RHU provided support for the LRC in CBFA/Watsan, and HIV/AIDS networking during this period. The regional health evaluation team visited Vientiane from 20 to 22 March. New approaches for including HIV/AIDS managers in other programme areas are being developed between the LRC, ARC, and the Federation.

***Constraints***

There were no constraints.

***Organizational Development:***

The primary focus of the Federation's work continues to be on organisational development and resource development (OD/RD) as well as capacity building, particularly at LRC HQ; this is in the context of working from the LRC five-year development plan and working towards the Lao Cooperation Agreement Strategy (CAS). A growing priority is assisting the LRC in developing a realistic and sustainable HRD/RD plan. This activity is supported by all the LRC partners (the Federation, ICRC, and the PNS). A key element of this will be introducing a common transparent financial management and reporting system for the LRC and its partners in the first generation CAS.

In January 2002, the LRC annual work plan, which is based on the five-year development plan, was finalized and circulated to the branches and other partners. The LRC, the Federation and PNS are all actively involved in supporting this process and in monitoring progress through the newly established OD focal point. The annual planning process is seen as an integral part of OD/capacity building.

Three regional and one national (for northern, central and southern branches) planning meetings are scheduled this year to help further institutionalize the annual planning process.

### ***Objective 1***

To ensure that all LRC senior managers are equipped with the basic management skills needed to run the society.

### ***Activities & Achievements***

The main achievements with the OD/capacity building programme during this quarter are as follows:

- ✓ The LRC annual plan 2002 was finalized and circulated to the branches.
- ✓ Based on the Training Needs Analysis (TNA), the LRC has finalized a more targeted staff training plan for 2002, concentrating on specific English language, computing, financial management, editorial, report and proposal writing, and warehouse management skills.
- ✓ The LRC human resource and resource development policy has been revised and a practical plan of action for 2001 is being prepared with an emphasis on RD.
- ✓ A realistic communications and information plan of action for 2002 has been prepared with the support of the Regional Information Delegate. This includes strengthening the staffing of the LRC information/fund-raising division.
- ✓ Expanding dissemination in cooperation with ICRC.
- ✓ Planning events for World Red Cross Day on May 8 with a spotlight on HIV/AIDS.
- ✓ Tailored support for the 4 unsponsored branches.
- ✓ Actions to relaunch the LRC Youth activities in Vientiane.
- ✓ The facilitation of the LRC's staff participation in various regional meetings and workshops, such as the disaster preparedness meeting in Brunei, the communications conference in Macaw, the partnership meeting in Jakarta, and the regional OD workers meeting in Vientiane.

### ***Constraints***

There were no constraints.

### ***Objective 2***

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

### ***Activities & Achievements***

The 'new' annual workplan for 2002, which was approved at the LRC national planning meeting in December, has now been finalized and sent out to the branches.

This more inclusive and coherent approach to branch development, building on the experience of 2001, involves all of the LRC's partners who share a common commitment to assist the LRC in developing 'its model' of development in accordance with the five-year development plan of the NS.

Three regional planning and review meetings (for northern, central, and southern branches) combined with a one day ICRC dissemination workplan, will be held during 2002.

### ***Constraints***

There were no constraints.

### ***Objective 3***

To significantly strengthen the management and programming of the four most recently established branches, currently without any external assistance.

### ***Activities & Achievements***

The French Red Cross sent a delegate to revise their proposed programme of support for two unsponsored branches – Sayaboury and Vientiane Province – through institutional development, CBFA and Watsan programmes. It is not yet clear as to when the programme will start.

The Federation is providing some support, and more detailed plans are now being developed, for all the unsponsored branches through the OD programme as well as funding their participation in the aforementioned planning and review meetings. The ICRC and the Federation are cooperating on information dissemination activities for all branches.

***Constraints***

There were no major constraints.

***Objective 4***

To assist the LRC with: i) addressing outstanding management/governance issues highlighted at the OD workshop in November 2000; ii) developing a clear and comprehensive HRD policy, which incorporates a dynamic income generation/fundraising plan suitable for Laos, as an integral part of the priority focus on OD and capacity building.

***Activities & Achievements***

Progress with governance issues remains very slow due to the political system, Lao PDR and the LRC's role within this system. The regional planning meetings provide the opportunity for the LRC and the Federation to get to grips with fundamental governance issues with the branches at the grass roots level.

***Constraints***

There were no constraints.

***Objective 5***

To lay the foundations for a strong and well-developed LRC communications capacity, through a realistic and progressive programme of capacity building to raise awareness of the movement's humanitarian values. This will contribute to a better understanding and increased visibility of LRC programmes and activities, both internally and externally. The activities related to achieving this objective will be carried out in close cooperation with the ICRC and the Regional Information Unit in Bangkok. It is hoped that this groundwork will enable a small humanitarian values programme to be included in the Appeal for 2004.

***Activities & Achievements***

The good cooperation which exists with the ICRC for dissemination continues to develop, based on a shared commitment for the need to assist the LRC in significantly expanding dissemination, information and communications activities this year. A practical, and cost effective, example of this cooperation is that ICRC and the Federation will combine dissemination with the three regional planning meetings for the branches in order to better integrate dissemination with other LRC programme activities.

***Constraints***

There were no constraints.

***Coordination and Management:***

The delegation's main task for 2002 will be to help the LRC manage the change process during this transition period (2002-2003) towards the Federation's new serving leader role around the CAS process. This was the clear message from the Jakarta partnership meeting which took place from 12 to 15 March.

Specific tasks will be to facilitate the introduction of the first generation Lao CAS in the next few months, the coordination of external resources (including the generation of new resources from nontraditional sources), and the representation and routine management of the delegation.

A key priority will be to enhance the capacity of the delegation's national staff so they have the skills to take a less operational and more coordinating role in Laos.

### ***Objective 1***

To establish a fully inclusive CAS which supports the LRC national plan and strategy, and is accepted by all partners.

### ***Activities & Achievements***

Good progress has been made with preparing the 'final draft' CAS during the quarter. It is hoped that the first generation Lao CAS will be finalized by June.

### ***Constraints***

No constraints.

### ***Objective 2***

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

### ***Activities & Achievements***

The delegation's main priority is to further strengthen the good cooperation and coordination which exists between the LRC, Federation, PNS and ICRC through a shared commitment to making the Lao CAS work. Central to this is the collective involvement in the annual planning and progress monitoring process which is now in operation.

Regular trilateral coordination meetings are held each quarter in addition to informal coordination meetings between the Federation, the PNS and the ICRC on specific issues. The delegation's priorities are finalising the CAS, strengthening coordination between all the stakeholders (particularly of external resources), providing support for the annual planning process, and HQ capacity building as part of the focus on OD/RD.

### ***Constraints***

No specific constraints other than the need to secure additional PNS support for delegation core costs.

## ***Federation Delegation:***

The delegation is now up to full strength and running smoothly. The delegation is staffed by the representative and three national staff (one programme officer, one finance officer, and one driver). The delegation works closely with, and receives good support from, the regional delegation.

The delegations main functions are in: assisting the LRC in implementing the OD/Capacity building programmes, coordinating external resources, facilitating the CAS process, and the representation and management of the delegation.

## ***Monitoring & Evaluation:***

Monitoring against the Appeal 2002 is being carried out by the delegation with the support of the HoRD and Bangkok based technical units. The LRC has established an OD focal point who works closely with the delegation to monitor progress with implementing the annual work plan 2002. The delegation has submitted its final objectives for 2002 to the Regional Delegation.

Financial monitoring support for the delegation has been provided by the Regional Finance Unit (RFU). Assisting the LRC to establish a standard, more professional and transparent financial management and reporting system is seen as a priority.

### ***Lessons Learned:***

There have been no new lessons learned during this quarter. However, it continues to be clear that the role of the Federation in Lao is crucial as the strategy of support shifts from one of being operational to one of facilitator and 'serving leader'.

### ***Financial Update (see attached annex):***

The Appeal remains adequately funded for the time being due to ongoing support from the JRC for the blood programme, a pledge of CHF 50,000 from the German RC, Australian Red Cross funds for coordination and management, as well as funds from the Swiss Government for organizational development and capacity building, and the balance of flood funds reallocated to disaster preparedness.

New funds from the French RC for CBFA, Watsan and branch development in two unsponsored branches are anticipated in 2002. There has been a carry forward of some unspent balances for OD and DP into 2002. However, new funding for DP will be required after the middle of the second quarter (Q2) to enable the LRC to implement its modest DP programme. Funding from the ARC, the DRC, and the JRCS towards delegation core costs has been received, but more funding from other PNS is still urgently required for C&M. The main priority is securing the approval from the Swiss government, so that the unspent balances of their capacity building funds from 2001 may be used in 2002 as they underpin the core work of the delegation.

### ***Plans for the next quarter:***

#### ***April:***

- National CBDM course with NDMO/ADPC, Vientiane.
- In-country meeting between the LRC, Federation, PNS to review final draft CAS.
- Visit by Magne Barth, Deputy Head of the ICRC Regional Delegation, Bangkok .
- First regional planning meeting of 2002 for the four southern branches, combined with an extra day at the end for an ICRC dissemination workshop. This meeting will be held in Pakse (as agreed between the ICRC/Federation after the LNT workshop, due to sound practical and economic reasons in combining the regional planning meeting with ICRC dissemination).

#### ***May:***

- DP meeting with northern branches in Luang Prabang and Xiengkhouane.
- Observance of World Red Cross Day (special programme of events and activities).
- The LRC National Health Review /CBFA Review (as discussed with RHU).
- Final draft of CDBP module (English and Lao) completed.
- The LRC/IFRC OD study visit to Cambodian Red Cross.
- CAS document finalized and approved by the LRC and its partners.
- Second regional planning meeting for central branches plus Vientiane Province and Municipality (location to be agreed).

#### ***June:***

- Regional OD workers meeting, Hanoi.
- ToT using new CDBP module starts (HQ and branches).
- ICRC dissemination seminar, Vientiane.
- Regional Watsan training, Luang Prabang organized by RHU/LRC.
- Regional HoDs meeting , Bangkok.

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