

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

MIDDLE EAST & NORTH AFRICA

3 December 2002

This Ops Update is intended for reporting on emergency appeals.

The Federation's mission is to improve the lives of vulnerable people by mobilizing the power of humanity. It is the world's largest humanitarian organization and its millions of volunteers are active in 178 countries. For more information: www.ifrc.org

Appeal No. 01.54/2002

CHF 2,526,660

Programme Update No. 3

Period covered: July-November

IN BRIEF

Appeal coverage: 79.3%

Outstanding needs: CHF 524,126

Related Appeals: North Africa regional programmes (01.60/2002)

Summary: Considerable progress has been made in terms of National Society capacity building in core programme areas and organisational development. Donor support has been crucial to this achievement. The regional programme throughout the Middle East and North Africa has helped this capacity building drive on the ground. Consequently National Society support to vulnerable people has been more effective.

I. Background and Context

1.1. This Programme Update records the highlights of the action by the Regional Delegation (RD) during the 2nd half of 2002 (July-November 2002). The record is based on assessment of achievements and constraints and lessons learnt in the implementation of the objectives set for 2002-2003 under appeal no.01.54 /2002 for Middle East and North Africa (MENA) regional programmes. The programme updates for country-based actions will be separately presented by the respective Delegations/Representations.

1.2. Persistent conflict and instability continue to dominate the operational context :-

- The seemingly endless cycle of conflict in the Palestinian territories/Israel still stands out as a major source of humanitarian concern. The socio-economic consequences of the conflict are getting worse

with up to 22 percent of children in Palestine suffering from acute or chronic malnutrition. The United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) is planning the region's biggest ever food aid to assist up to 1.3 million people in the Palestinian territories during the 1st half of 2003

- More often than not, mobility is severely restricted by curfews and closure of roads. Insurmountable difficulties are faced especially when access is denied to transport patients to hospitals and clinics. Even in cases when access is granted, it takes such a long time to pass through the checks and it becomes too late when the patients arrive to receive the assistance they badly need to survive
- The lingering effects sanctions in Iraq continue to bite worsening the plight of the most vulnerable including children who continue to suffer from malnutrition and lack of medical care The infrastructure including the health care delivery system is in progressive state of deterioration as a result of the effects of the continuing sanctions
- The growing fear that a renewed attack on Iraq may be imminent has further raised the humanitarian concerns in the region. In light of this development, efforts are under way to improve the preparedness/response capacity of the Iraqi Red Crescent supported by the Federation/Secretariat and the ICRC. Contingency plans are in the works both within Iraq and outside involving the neighbouring National Societies (NS). It has also been agreed, through internal consultations within the Movement, that the ICRC will play a lead agency role inside Iraq while the Federation will assume a lead agency role for the operations that may spill over outside Iraq involving the neighbouring NSs

1.3. The complexity and volatile nature of the context provides a background against which the overall progress in the implementation of the MENA 2002 Regional Programmes (appeal no. 1.54 /2002) will be reviewed in this programme update:-

II. Red Cross /Red Crescent Action

2.1. Health and Care in the Community

Summary of Achievements in Relation to Appeal Objectives

In relation to the appeal objective :- *'consolidate efforts and results taking into consideration existing and emerging challenges in health and health-related priorities'*

NS role enhanced in the fight against HIV-AIDS in the MENA region

With the current estimate of HIV-AIDS infected persons in the MENA region reaching up to 440, 000, the NSs are stepping up their efforts to contribute to the prevention of the spread of the pandemic. In particular, the efforts in the Middle East and North Africa sub-regions have started to gather momentum with the necessary facilitation support provided by the RD:-

The NSs assisted to scale up their involvement in the fight against HIV-AIDS

- 60 volunteers/staff from the NSs of Lebanon, Palestine and Syria as well as the Palestinian branches in Lebanon and Syria trained as trainers on HIV-AIDS through two rounds of youth camps organised in July and August 2002. More than 40 percent of the trainees were female participants.
- Also in September and October 2002, the RD facilitated a similar training of trainers on HIV-AIDS facilitated for 24 staff and volunteers drawn from Francophone NSs including Algeria, Lebanon, and unisia. More than 40 percent of the trainees were female participants.
- A country-based HIV/AIDS training of trainers conducted in Baghdad, Iraq (October 2002) involving 36 female and male volunteers/staff of the Iraqi Red Crescent. Although this was the first workshop of its kind in Iraq, the initiative was well accepted . However, the challenge remains as 'it takes much longer than five days' to help the trainees change their attitude in a manner that can facilitate the planning and implementation of HIV-AIDS programmes

- In addition to the technical knowledge they gained to work as trainers, the participants exchanged useful experiences as regards the challenges posed by HIV-AIDS and the efforts made to prevent it in the respective countries
- The training sessions also helped to develop the curriculum in a more comprehensive way including not only scientific information on HIV-AIDS and other sexually transmitted diseases, but also the important aspects of self confidence building, leadership, communication, training and presentation skills
- The useful services the trainers render at national, branch and community level will enable the NSs to intensify their roles in the planning and implementation of specific projects to contribute their fair share in the national effort made in the fight against HIV-AIDS working with communities, overnmental organisations, UN agencies and NGOs. In particular, the role of the trainers will be of paramount importance in the facilitation of new initiatives and consolidation of the existing ones :-
 - The HIV-AIDS programme of the Syrian Arab Red Crescent is under preparation with a pilot project to be implemented in Lattakia Branch
 - The HIV-AIDS programme of the Palestine Red Crescent/Syria Branch is under preparation
 - Plans are under way to consolidate the HIV-AIDS programme of the Palestine Red Crescent/Lebanon Branch
 - The Lebanese Red Cross is developing a project on HIV-AIDS focussing on the youth activities at branch level
 - The RD facilitated the working mission of the delegation from the Iraqi Red Crescent and the Federation Delegation in Baghdad to visit the Kermanshah province and learn from the experiences of the Iranian Red Crescent in the planning and implementation of HIV-AIDS which includes training, support (care) and counselling

In relation to the appeal objective :- *'support the NSs with continued technical advice to enable them to improve their health services based on increased knowledge and exchange of experience both within and outside the region'*

Facilitate planning and implementation of Psychological Support Programme (PSP)

- Facilitated by the RD, a regional psychological support network meeting conducted in Beirut (September/August 2002), involving participants from 7 National Societies (NS) - Iran, Tunis, Lebanese, Iraq, Jordan, Palestine and Qatar - and a representative from the Federation's PSP Centre in Denmark.
- The meeting focussed on the review of progress made as part of the effort to promote the implementation of PSP initiatives in the region
- The progress review was followed by a useful exchange of experiences /knowledge sharing as regards PSP implementation in the respective countries.
- The challenge of adapting the PSP manual to the MENA region has been identified as a key priority to be addressed through subsequent efforts
- The PSP manual of the Federation /Secretariat was reviewed by a group of NS staff and volunteers in order to adapt it to the MENA context
- A volunteer/professional from the Lebanese Red Cross worked with the RD on a staff on loan arrangement focussing on how best to assist the NSs in the planning and implementation of PSP as a component part of the health services of the NSs. The staff on loan arrangement is also based on coaching and training to enable the staff or volunteers to get more knowledge on how the Movement works, contributing, at the same time, to the quality of work done in his/her area of specialisation
- The RD participated in the regional Meeting held in Beirut focussing on "Incorporating Reproductive Health, Sexual Health and HIV/AIDS Prevention in youth programs in the Arab Region" facilitated by the Health Education Resource Unit (HERU) at the Faculty of Health Sciences, American University of Beirut. The project covers Algeria, Bahrain, Emirates, Jordan and Morocco. The meeting reviewed cooperation modalities among potential partners and concerned youth organizations working on HIV-AIDS

Enhanced planning /management capacities in relief health

- A pilot training conducted in November 2002 involving 15 health professionals working with the Damascus branch of the Syrian Arab Red Crescent as well as participants from the Federation Delegation in Iraq
- The training covered different aspects including water and sanitation, hygiene, nutrition, assessment and co-ordination, camp planning etc. to enable the participants to have all round knowledge and experience in the planning and implementation of health interventions during emergencies

Follow up mission to review progress with the North African NSs

- The Regional Health Delegate visited the North African NSs to review progress made after the sub-regional training of trainers on HIV-AIDS conducted in Libya during the first half of 2002
- 30 volunteers participated in the discussion organised in Tunis focussing on universal precaution concerning HIV-AIDS and First Aid
- The Tunisian Red Crescent proposal was discussed and it was noted that although the Society's proposal was ready the one expected from the Ministry of Health was not, an aspect which needs further follow up to ensure effective co-ordination
- Practical procedures to be developed with the Egyptian Red Crescent following the approval of the fund allocated for polio eradication in Egypt

Technical support provided to the Qatar Red Crescent Society

- The Regional Health Delegate visited the Qatar Red Crescent in September 2002 and assisted the NS providing information about Emergency Relief Unit (ERU) in terms of what it is and how it works
- As part of the positive outcome of the meeting, the QRC committed itself to finance part of the budget for the polio eradication campaign in Iraq.
- The involvement of the QRC in the promotion of the Annual AIDS Day Campaign (1st December 2002), using Al-Jezira and other means of promotional channels, was discussed. Useful examples from South East Asia were also shared with the NS

Challenges

The considerable momentum created regarding the need to address the challenges of HIV-AIDS in the region requires sustained follow up and commitment. However, the financial support the Federation/Secretariat can provide is too limited to meet the expectations of the NSs. Although other mechanisms of resource mobilisation exist (e.g., global funding for HIV-AIDS) the capacity of most NSs to create the necessary partnership and access such resources remains limited. However, the fact that the Lebanese Red Cross is preparing itself to benefit from the global funding, co-ordinated through the National AIDS Authorities, can be cited as a case of good practice which can be replicated by other NSs

Lack of adequate planning, monitoring and evaluation capacities of the NSs (e.g., Syria Arab Red Crescent) acts as a constraint in their effort to develop effective projects to deal with HIV-AIDS. A training on the project cycle management is strongly recommended to overcome the constraints in this respect.

Lessons Learnt

Often within the Lebanese Red Cross departments work in isolation with little co-ordination. However, the co-operation made between the Youth and the Training Department of the Lebanese Red Cross in the planning and implementation of the training of trainers on HIV-AIDS helped to demonstrate the value of co-ordination and co-operation to achieve greater results. The training intervention also encouraged the Palestine Red Crescent/Lebanon branches to strengthen their youth organisations and create more dynamic activities that can attract and retain the youth as an important group that contributes to the success of their programmes

2.2. Disaster Preparedness**Summary of Achievements in Relation to Appeal Objectives**

In relation to the appeal objective:- *'strengthen DP activities utilizing vulnerability - capacity assessment experiences'*

NS staff/volunteers from Syria and Iraq trained as national intervention teams

- The RD facilitated the training of 80 participants from the Syrian Arab Red Crescent Society (with representatives from the branches) with a focus on emergency relief/logistics (contingency) planning. The training was conducted to prepare (develop) *a core of national intervention teams* for disaster management in view of the anticipated refugee influx into Syria following the growing threat of a possible conflict in Iraq.
- Conducted in Palmera (east of Damascus) between 15 and 25 September 2002, the contingency planning was based on a simulation exercise (drills) in which the participants addressed the planning and management of emergency interventions consisting of such activities as setting camps, organisation of logistics, distribution of supplies, hygiene, communication, psychological support, water and sanitation, etc.,
- Based on the experience gained from the contingency planning exercise in Syria, the RD facilitated a similar training involving 120 staff/volunteers drawn from the Iraqi Red Crescent and its branches as well as from the Federation Delegation in Baghdad
- Conducted in Hamdanyeh (South of Baghdad) over a period of one week at the beginning of November 2002, the specific aspects of the contingency planning exercise included the key aspects of search and rescue, telecommunication, food distribution, shelter/camp planning and management, water and sanitation, tracing, first aid, etc.
- The contingency planning initiatives have been well received and appreciated in both Syria and Iraq, as they enabled the NSs to develop the required capacities creating a core of national intervention teams to handle the challenges they face with increased skills and greater confidence

Syrian Red Crescent volunteers and staff trained in risk reduction

- The RD facilitated a training on risk reduction in which 27 volunteers and staff from the Syrian Arab Red Crescent (including representatives from the branches) participated.
- Conducted in Edlib (north of Damascus) from 26 to 29, September 2002, the training focussed on assessment of risks and capacities, hazard mapping and risk reduction approaches, project planning, and overall awareness building at the grassroots to enable the trained volunteers to work with communities

40 volunteers and staff trained in disaster management as part of the preparation to develop a regional disaster response team (RDRT)

The RD, in cooperation with the Disaster Management and Coordination Division in Geneva, facilitated the disaster management training conducted at the Relief and Logistics Centre in Tehran (13 - 23 December 2002) providing the basis for developing a Regional Disaster Response Team (RDRT) in the MENA region.

- As the NSs in the MENA region are increasingly interested in improving their disaster management capacities in view of the real and potential threat they face due to the recurrent natural or man-made disasters, the training represented a relevant and timely input to the development of NS disaster management capacities. In particular, the training has enabled the participants to develop broad-based knowledge as regards understanding and use of standard disaster management tools (with possible modifications as may be necessary on a case by case basis) encompassing the key aspects of Field Assessment and Coordination Team (FACT), Emergency Relief Units (ERU) and Regional Disaster Response Teams (RDRT).

In relation to the objective :- *'facilitate training to promote integrated community based disaster preparedness, health and organizational development'*

Disaster management training as part of the integrated training on Strategy 2010 core areas and organizational development

- Based on the experience of the first integrated training conducted in Syria in February 2002 involving the participants from the Middle East sub-region, disaster management elements were included in the

integrated package including health, the Fundamental Principles and Values as well as organizational development.

- Hosted by the Saudi Red Crescent Society, the training was conducted in Riyadh (Saudi Arabia) involving participants from the NS in the Gulf sub-region as well as from Egypt and Syria
- The disaster management part of the integrated curriculum is based on the continuum of the disaster cycle covering the three phases of pre, during and post disaster activities
- In view of the increasing difficulties the NSs face in attracting and retaining a sufficient number of volunteers and staff, the integrated training support aims to enable them to develop a core of well trained staff/volunteers that can perform multipurpose functions as and when required. The integrated approach also generates additional benefits in terms of cost effectiveness and synergy in the concerted efforts to support NS programmes and projects including those emanating from VCA studies.

In relation to the appeal objective:- *'strengthen the DP programme through utilising VCA experiences and action learning, and conduct additional VCA studies with selected NSs'*

The Iraqi Red Crescent forging ahead with the implementation of the VCA studies

- The different roles among the components of the Movement (NS, ICRC, Federation) more clearly defined with better mechanisms of co-ordination
- More focussed disaster management training and other critical support to be provided for volunteers and staff working in the North, South and Central zones of the country.

The Algeria Red Crescent to launch a VCA study facilitated by the RD

- A plan of action has been agreed in which the RD will assist the Algerian Red Crescent to conduct a VCA study based on the experiences within the MENA region as well as in a global context
- The plan of action also incorporates a comprehensive meeting focussing on disaster management to raise awareness of selected staff and volunteers working at the HQ and in all the 48 branches of the NS
- Representatives from Egypt, Iraq and Yemen participated in the global VCA training of trainers in Jeslo, Italy organised by the Federation/Secretariat. The Regional Disaster Preparedness Project co-ordinator also participated in the training and contributed to the facilitation of the training based on the experience gained in the MENA Region

In relation to the appeal objective:- *'assist the NSs of the region to set up regional disaster preparedness and disaster management coordination network enhancing cooperation in terms of human, material and knowledge resource sharing'*

The RD participates in interagency planning meetings to improve coordination

- The RD participates in the interagency contingency planning meetings coordinated by the UNHCR to coordinate responses to the possible conflict in Iraq. A rapid assessment of needs and capacities has also been conducted with the NSs of Iraq, Jordan, Syria, Iran, Lebanon and Palestine to enhance the level of preparedness

The RD supports NS efforts in resource mobilization

- The Field Reporting Delegate within the RD closely works with the NSs of Iraq, Lebanon and Palestine in skills development pertaining to project design and management (including reporting) with specific reference to ECHO funding

Challenges

The disaster management structure of the NSs is not clearly defined. The planning and implementation of disaster management is not adequately decentralised to ensure rapid response at branch/community level. The challenge of changing the existing centralised structures and working methods tends to be a matter of long term objective as centralisation, rather than decentralisation, seems to dominate the overall political and socio-cultural pattern of the regional context

More often than not, the staff and volunteers the NSs nominate for the various disaster management skills development training do not fulfil the selection criteria. This poses a challenge in terms of ensuring uniformity of

standards and undermines the positive impact the training is expected to generate in terms of improving NS services.

Lessons learnt

Within the limitation the centralised structures of the NSs, consistent efforts are being made to enable wider participation of the branches in the process of vulnerability-capacity assessments. This has proved beneficial engendering a sense of growing ownership and creating the basis for a greater commitment to the planning and implementation of the specific projects emanating from the VCA studies

Several NS staff and volunteers have participated in the facilitation of VCA studies. This has helped not only to distribute tasks but also to facilitate the process through the active participation of volunteers and staff with better knowledge of the local context.

2.3. Promotion of Humanitarian Values and Fundamental Principles of the Movement

Summary of Achievements in Relation to Appeal Objectives

In relation to the appeal objective :- *'enhance public knowledge of Strategy 2010 through the active use of mass media; ensure that NS staff/volunteers have full understanding of the Strategy and clearly see it as a primary tool in planning their programmes'*

The Monthly Regional Newsletter-Al-Ittihad regularly issued

- The monthly bilingual newsletter - Al-Ittihad (federation or unity), which highlights the Strategy through NSs and Federation's work, is issued on a regular basis. Each month until October and, since then, once every other month, over 3,000 copies have been distributed to NSs in the region, contributing to the effort made to raise knowledge about the Movement and its work in the region.

Increased promotion as a basis for effective service delivery and advocacy

- Press releases, stories and pictures from the field have been regularly shared with all major media organisations. The information is widely disseminated through the Arabic and English speaking press in the region. During the period under review, 17 stories were published on the Federation's public web site (over 5 million hits monthly), promoting activities of the MENA NSs.
- Two major regional Arabic-speaking Internet web sites have used several Federation's stories and news items.
- Stories were published in local and regional newspapers (Arabic and English) about HIV/AIDS and the way the Movement is fighting against the disease, as well as about the work of the Palestine Red Crescent.
- The Arabic edition of the SPHERE manual (i.e. minimum standards in disaster response) was published (July 2002) and distributed to NSs and other organisations across the region through a pan-Arab private distributor. A 10-minute promotional video on the SPHERE project was adapted into Arabic (November 2002).

NS capacity building in advocacy and communication

- The advocacy mandate of the Federation and the Movement was introduced to 18 newly-elected board members of the Yemen Red Crescent (YRC) branches in a workshop organised in Sanaa (September 2002). As part of the disaster response training exercises organised respectively in Syria (September 2002) and Iraq (November 2002), 80 Syrian Red Crescent volunteers and 120 Iraqi Red Crescent volunteers attended a practical training session on relations with external partners and, in particular, on how the Movement can benefit from the media.
- A Joint Federation /ICRC training workshop on communications and media relations was held in Baghdad for 30 staff and volunteers of the Iraqi Red Crescent (December 2002).
- Two Information Officers of the Federation Delegation in Baghdad and the Iraqi Crescent received a six-week, on-the-job training working with the RD in Amman, with a view to strengthening their dissemination and communications capacities with a particular focus on the promotion of the activities of the NS and the Federation

In relation to the appeal objective:- *‘strengthen collaboration and co-ordination among the components of the RC/RC Movement at regional and NS level to present a united vision and a more solid image of the Movement’*

ICRC - Federation/Secretariat relations improved through increasing joint efforts

- Joint Federation /ICRC communications to the press with regards to the Movement’s work in Iraq and the Palestinian territories have contributed to the process of building up more united image. This reflects on both the media and the NSs, their staff and volunteers.
- Also instrumental was the systematic dissemination to the media of statements, stories, and pictures, not only from the Federation but also from NSs (the most prolific being the Palestine Red Crescent).
- A joint Federation /ICRC/ Iraqi Red Crescent information seminar for Iraqi and international media representatives was organised in Baghdad with a view to promoting the common vision and values of the three Movement components, as well as their respective mandates (December 2002).
- Press lines on Iraq were developed jointly by the Federation and ICRC and circulated to all NSs to promote common messages and ensure coherent communications .

In relation to the appeal objective :- *‘provide communication support to regional programmes such as OD, Health and DP’*

The implementation of Strategy 2010 core areas more effectively promoted

- All main activities (programmes, workshops, training sessions, missions, publications) carried out highlighting Strategy 2010 core areas and organisational development were extensively promoted through the various channels including the Al-Ittihad and the Federation’s web site.
- A special attention given to the promotion of initiatives focussing on HIV-AIDS and related issues. During the period under review, four stories and several brief news published in the Al-Ittihad and two main stories posted on the web site

Challenges

- Much time, effort and money is spent to get needed news items from NSs which are not yet proactive enough when it comes to providing inputs to the newsletter. Shipment of the newsletter across the region and the world also takes time. Although all country delegations and NSs are encouraged to disseminate the newsletter to the media in their respective countries, the leverage the RD commands to ensure the distribution is limited. Monitoring of the media pickup is also difficult, except in Jordan. Time and human resources are badly lacking to develop strong, direct relations with local and regional Arab media outside Jordan.
- The different agendas and constant workload of the various components of the Movement in the field tends to limit the effort made to improve co-ordination and coherence
- The challenge for the Federation and the NSs is to promote their respective mandates and activities in a regional context where recurrent conflicts have traditionally given the ICRC a more prominent position towards the media which, in turn, shape public perceptions and opinions. More remains to be done, in particular through the media, not only to show the unity of the Movement, but also to explain its different identities and the division of responsibilities.

Lessons learnt

- Arabic material makes a difference both towards the media and the NSs. RD’s efforts and initiatives in this respect have considerably increased But, a lot more needs to be done to strengthen the effort to produce/reproduce working documents in Arabic. Although published by the RD, it is important that “Al-Ittihad” become the newsletter of all the MENA NSs.
- Better focus is required to highlight a few but newsworthy, outward-looking, and beneficiary-oriented achievements rather than a lot of repetitive, internal activities which are not amenable for promotion although they may be useful to carry out the identified priorities.

2.4. Organisational Development

Summary of Achievements in Relation to Appeal Objectives

In relation to the appeal objective:- *‘OD support to follow up on the planning process leading to the development of co-operation agreement strategy (CAS) in Iraq, Syria, and Yemen’*

NS strategic planning as a basis for evolving co-operation agreement strategy (CAS) Follow up consultations made between the RD and the leaderships of the NSs of Iraq, Syria and Yemen

- The strategic plan of the Yemen Red Crescent Society (2001-2005) finalised and approved by the National Executive Board of the Society and an agreement made to develop the CAS during the second half of 2002.
- A basic understanding also reached with the leadership of the NSs of Iraq and Syria to encourage them to finalise their strategic plans and start to develop their CAS

In relation to the appeal objective :- *‘regional OD support to initiate/consolidate strategic planning processes involving the NSs of Jordan and Palestine’*

A strategic planning review meeting with the NS of Jordan

- The RD facilitated a strategic planning review meeting in order to encourage and enhance the momentum created through the national strategic planning seminar (March 2002) in which volunteers and staff participated to analyse the situation of the Society and generate ideas to improve its future performance
- The review meeting brought together all the members of the task force (represented from HQ and branches) entrusted to develop the draft strategic plan based on the discussion and recommendations made during the national strategic planning seminar during the 1st half of 2002
- The review meeting provided an opportunity to discuss and reach a consensus as regards the key priorities and tasks that the NS should address in its strategic plan encompassing short, medium and long term perspectives
- The immediate output of the review process is a more enriched draft (2nd draft) produced by the task force with a comprehensive analysis of :-
 - background and context
 - NS capacities, services and challenges (at HQ and branch levels)
 - rationale for and directions of the strategic plan
 - mission objectives and results
 - key priorities and tasks
 - co-operation and co-ordination

In relation to the appeal objective:- *‘regional OD support to enhance human resource development in the region’*

Key OD challenges/ strategic options discussed with the National Board of Directors of the Syrian Arab Red Crescent

- The RD facilitated a two-day meeting enabling the National Board of Directors of the Syrian Arab Red Crescent to discuss the key OD challenges the NS faces including the lack of intermediate management capacity, as almost all the co-ordination /monitoring of all NS activities is done by one or two staff members at the HQ without sufficient decision making delegated from the Board
- In terms of challenges,
 - the lack of intermediate capacity identified as a major area of weakness that creates a disconnect between the policy level apparatus and the grassroots volunteer work at the branch level
 - the sustainability of the NS in terms of institutional capacity and service delivery was discussed at length as a matter of important concern
 - the overall performance of the NS was analysed in relation to the emergency operation launched to assist the victims of the Zayzoun Dam collapse and including the problems encountered concerning reporting and lack of sufficient media outreach to promote the visibility of the NS
- The main strategic options discussed and agreed include the following :-
 - recruitment/employment of co-ordinators at the HQ to deal with the co-ordination and monitoring of the key functions related to disaster management, health, etc.
 - delegation of sufficient level of authority in a manner that reflects a clear separation of roles between governance and management
 - needs and capacities assessment at branch level in order to develop a clearer direction and focus leading to better impact
 - finalization and endorsement of the draft five year strategic plan of the NS as a basis for developing a co-operation agreement strategy (CAS)

- staff /volunteer skills upgrading with emphasis on project planning process (PPP) - other trainings based on a further training needs assessment
- evaluation of the lessons learnt in the emergency operation of the NS assisting the victims of the Zayzoun Dam collapse

Challenges

The relative emphasis made on the preparation of the MENA appeal 2003/2004 imposed a competing priority during the reporting period. As the same technical resource at the RD deals with both the OD work and the co-ordination of the MENA appeal, it was difficult to ensure full time focus on the follow up of the regional OD work.

A sustained leadership commitment is required to maintain a momentum that enables the NS to bring the OD initiatives to their conclusions. However, sustained commitment often tends to be an area that leaves a lot to be desired. Hence, the slow pace in the finalization of the strategic planning process in Syria, Yemen and Iraq.

Lessons Learnt

Discussion of OD issues with NS leadership is likely to have better impact when it is focussed on the felt needs of the NS. The discussion of key OD challenges/ strategic options with the National Board of Directors of the Syrian Arab Red Crescent can be cited as a case in point. The Board members actively participated in the discussion of the issues requiring a process of change to address the challenges the NS faces in terms of ensuring adequate capacities at HQ and branch levels.

The discussion generated sufficient awareness and led to some concrete action regarding the need to strengthen the HQ through recruitment of full time co-ordinators to deal with the core tasks of health and disaster management. However, the nature and extent of the expected action on decentralised decision making is yet to be determined and agreed by the Board. The fact that the structural change is instituted faster than the change requiring a process of decentralised decision making underscores the difficulty/sensitivity involved in engendering a cultural change pertaining to the process of thinking and practice as it relates to the relationship between governance and management.

2.5. Co-ordination and Management

Summary of Achievement in Relation to Appeal Objectives

In relation to the objective :- *'facilitate and co-ordinate communication and support among the NSs and their partners within and outside the Moment'*

MENA Consortium - 3rd Meeting

- The RD participated in the 3rd meeting of the MENA Consortium held in Geneva in November 2002. Highlights of the MENA appeal for 2003/2004 were presented and discussed

Visit to Finland, Norway and Sweden

The Head of the Regional Delegation undertook a mission to Finland, Norway and Sweden where he had the opportunity to discuss with NS colleagues and other collaborators as regards the need to strengthen co-operation with the MENA NSs

Contingency planning

- The RD participated in the contingency planning meeting in which the ICRC, the Federation and representatives of the NSs in the countries sharing borders with Iraq discussed the need for a comprehensive contingency plan to ensure effective response to the humanitarian effects of (the potential) conflict in Iraq. An understanding has been reached confirming the lead agency role of the ICRC for the activities inside Iraq while the Federation/Secretariat will assume the lead agency role for the activities outside Iraq.

Field missions to discuss with NS leadership and country delegations

- The Head of the Regional Delegation paid a visit to the NSs of Tunisia and participated in the sub-regional meeting of the North African NSs. This was followed by a visit to Lebanon and Syria in which a series of discussion was held with NS leadership to foster co-operation on NS capacity building. A working visit was also made to Iraq in which detailed discussion was held with the NS leadership and the Federation and ICRC Delegations in Baghdad regarding the need to intensify co-operation and

co-ordination especially in view of the potential conflict and its humanitarian consequences. The Head of the RD also visited the Iranian Red Crescent in connection with the Regional Training conducted at the strategic relief centre in Tehran with a focus on the development of regional disaster response teams (RDRT).

In relation to the objective :- *provide overall co-ordination support to the Country Delegations/Federation Representations*

Facilitation of MENA Heads of Delegations Meetings

- Facilitated by the RD and attended by the MENA Department and Heads of Delegations/and or Federation Representatives, the 3rd quarterly meeting of the MENA HoDs was held in Amman (September 2002)
- The meeting reviewed the draft MENA appeals for 2003/2004 and discussed the Secretariat's change strategy and its implication for the MENA region
- The 4th quarterly HoD meeting held in Amman (December 2002) focussed on the evaluation of the year end performance review of 2002 and discussion of draft plans of action covering January-June 2003

Administration /logistical support to operations

- Administration/logistics support provided to the operations in Iraq and Palestine

Financial management support

- Financial management support provided, through the Regional Finance Unit, to the Delegations /Federation Representations in the region.
- On site technical support missions carried out in North Africa and Iran
- Budget holders trained in the basic techniques of financial management

Co-ordination of reporting

- Half year and second half year programme updates on appeal 2002/2004 produced and distributed to all concerned
- A progress report produced and submitted to DFID
- A progress report (highlighting the activities of the RD in the past two years) produced and submitted to the Executive Committee of the Arab Secretariat (Damascus, October 2002)
- A progress report highlighting the implementation of the Hanoi Declaration in the MENA region produced and submitted to the Asia Pacific Conference, Manila, November 2002)

Training / coaching

- A trainee from the Swedish Red Cross worked with the RD for about six weeks and acquired experience as to how the Federation/Secretariat works in the field.. The mission can be considered an important part of human resource development providing potential delegates with the opportunity to gain advance insight as to what challenges they might face in their future missions if and when they are called to undertake one.

III. Challenges and prospects

- Considerable progress has been made in terms of NS capacity building pertaining to Strategy 2010 core areas and organisational development. However, as the new change strategy of the Secretariat puts a renewed focus on NS capacity building, the implementation of the strategy in the region calls for more efforts to consolidate the gains made to date in the area of comprehensive NS capacity building with a possibility of scaling up the support as may be required.
- The overall achievement to date is based on awareness building (skills development/training of NS staff and service volunteers) pertaining to Strategy 2010 core areas and organisational development. However, the challenge remains to ensure the required level of commitment (political will) of NS leadership to transform the skills and capacities into a dynamic force of action that can make a difference in the lives and livelihoods of the most vulnerable.

- A comprehensive evaluation would be required to examine the existing link between the capacity building support provided through the Secretariat and the improvement of the quality and quantity of NS services. This will help to ensure that the implementation of the new change strategy in the region is based on a sound process in which the net result of the capacity building support is strongly demonstrated in the positive impact NS services make in terms of improving the lives and livelihoods of the most vulnerable. To what extent the dominant strategy of the NSs is based on a culture of working with communities and other stakeholders (including NGOs and governmental organisations) also determines the degree of success the NSs want to achieve in the various areas of their engagement. The evaluation would further provide the basis for sharpening (redefining) the priorities, the basic structure, resource requirement (including human resources) and strategic positioning/repositioning of Delegations required to enhance the relevance and effectiveness of the Secretariat's NS capacity building in the MENA region.
- The effective implementation of the Secretariat's change strategy in the region requires a more sustainable mechanism of resourcing. Although inadequate funding support to the MENA appeals has remained a major limiting factor over the past few years, the improved situation in 2002 provides a basis for optimism owing to the concerted efforts made to exchange information through the MENA Consortium and other channels as well as the increasing contribution to the appeal from some of the NSs in the region. However, there is still a long way to go to realise the full potential from within the region in a manner that can generate not only the required level of financial self reliance of the Secretariat's capacity building support in the region but also increased capacity to contribute to the global humanitarian effort of the Movement in other parts of the world.

For further details please contact: Evgeni Parfenov, Phone : 41 22 7304325; Fax: 41 22 733 03 95; email: parfenov@ifrc.org

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

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

John Horekens
Director
External Relations

Ali Said Ali
Head
MENA Department

MENA regional						ANNEX 1
APPEAL No. 01.54/2002		PLEDGES RECEIVED			02.12.2002	
DONOR	CATEGORY	QUANTITY	UNIT	VALUE CHF	DATE	COMMENT
CASH						
REQUESTED IN APPEAL CHF ----->				2'526'660		TOTAL COVERAGE 79.3%
CASH CARRIED FORWARD				308'928		
Programme support				497'960		
Programme support RFU				98'000		
BRITISH - GOVT/DFID				242'500	19.02.2002	INST. DEVELOPMENT, DISASTER PREPAREDNESS, CBFA, RELIEF/REHABILITATION, REG. INFORMATION
BRITISH - GOVT/DFID				237'500	07.08.2002	INST. DEVELOPMENT, DISASTER PREPAREDNESS, CBFA
BRITISH - RC		36'000	GBP	86'087	15.04.2002	DP DELEGATE
DANISH - RC		20'000	DKK	3'944	10.09.2002	NEWSLETTER "AL-ITTIHAD"
FRENCH - RC		1'500	USD	2'211	20.08.2002	AL-ITTIHAD
NORWEGIAN - RC		210'000	NOK	42'063	03.07.2002	ITTIHAD, DISASTER PREPAREDNESS, CBFA, HUMANITARIAN VALUES, ORGANISATIONAL DEV.
SAUDI ARABIAN - RC				9'988	24.07.2002	RD AMMAN, BULLETIN
SWEDISH - RC		93'896	SEK	15'136	15.04.2002	CORE AREAS
SWEDISH - GOVT		1'070'262	SEK	172'740	28.05.2002	
SWEDISH - GOVT		270'000	SEK	42'930	05.09.2002	OD DELEGATE, AL-ITTIHAD,
UNITED ARAB EMIRATES - RC		1'329	USD	2'142	30.03.2002	CFA & ROAD SAFETY, DIRECTLY TO THE DELEGATION
UNITED ARAB EMIRATES - RC		25'000	AED	10'590	24.03.2002	AL ITTIHAD, REGIONAL HEALTH, INCL. HIV/AIDS
SUB/TOTAL RECEIVED IN CASH				1'772'719	CHF	70.2%
KIND AND SERVICES (INCLUDING PERSONNEL)						
DONOR	CATEGORY	QUANTITY	UNIT	VALUE CHF	DATE	COMMENT
FINLAND	DELEGATE(S)			59'959		
FRANCE	DELEGATE(S)			59'959		
GREAT BRITAIN	DELEGATE(S)			59'959		
NETHERLANDS	DELEGATE(S)			49'938		
SUB/TOTAL RECEIVED IN KIND/SERVICES				229'815	CHF	9.1%