

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

CENTRAL AMERICA

30 June 2005

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 over 181 countries.

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In Brief

Appeal No. 05AA043; Programme Update no. 1, Period covered: 1 January to 15 May 2005; Appeal coverage: 35.4%; Outstanding needs: CHF 2,896,891 (USD 2,313,170 or EUR 1,889,570).

The appeal budget has been revised from CHF 3,891,708 (USD 3,197,196 or EUR 2,521,601) to CHF 3,856,363 (USD 3,006,144 or EUR 2,485,870)

[Click here to go directly to the attached revised appeal budget.](#)

Related Emergency or Annual Appeals: Pan American Disaster Response Unit (Appeal 05AA040)

Programme summary: Despite funding shortages in some areas, much progress has been made during the reporting period towards the objectives of the 2005 Annual Appeal. The regional health team continued to work closely with the Central American Health Network (REDCAMP-SALUD) in strengthening the National Societies' capacity in all key health areas, such as community health, HIV/AIDS, VNRBD and health in emergencies. REDCAMP-SALUD is gradually becoming the voice of the National Society health programmes in Central America, creating a forum where all National Societies can share best practices, methodologies and lessons learned amongst their peers. The Red Cross is also increasingly seen as a credible partner in the fight against HIV/AIDS, both in terms of the Red Cross' programmes and in regards to the organization's strong relations with people living with HIV/AIDS. In the area of disaster management, the regional disaster management network (REDCAMP-DESASTRES) is now well established, and terms of reference have been drawn up. The Centre of Reference for Disaster Preparedness and the Centre of Reference for Community Based Disaster Management are also both fully operational and are providing support to the National Societies in the region. The Federation's humanitarian principles and values coordinator met with the Spanish Red Cross to formulate a regional strategy for violence prevention. These meetings opened the lines of communication between the Federation and the Spanish Red Cross and are ensuring a regional approach is adopted to combat youth violence. In Honduras, the Federation team worked with the technical personnel from the Honduran Red Cross to support the revision and adaptation of the materials for the "Together We Can" methodology to the country's context. The manuals, which address anti-stigma and non-discrimination for people living with HIV/AIDS, can now be used throughout the country. The work of the organizational development programme has focused on the revision of strategic and development plans within the National Societies, with processes being carried out in Nicaragua, Guatemala and Panama. Members of the regional organizational development network participated in the meeting of Presidents and Technical Seminars, held in Panama in early May, and reviewed the results of assessment of progress in relation to the Inter American Plan of Action in the area of organizational development and presented proposals for approval. Whilst there has been little movement on developing formalized cooperation agreement strategy documents, the delegation has been continuing in its dialogue with the National Societies of the region on ensuring that Movement cooperation is coordinated for increased impact. In addition, the Regional Delegation has started the process of validating an advocacy manual as a tool for all National Societies to prepare their leaders for presenting the Red Cross and its humanitarian agenda to

different audiences. The tool will be field tested in the region prior to being published and disseminated.

The revised budget reflects the fact that the core funding allocated no longer appears as part of the appeal funds sought; in addition funding carried over from previous years for earmarked use in the region has now been included in the appeal total.

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This Programme Update reflects activities to be implemented over a one-year period. This forms part of, and is based on, longer-term, multi-year planning (refer below to access the detailed logframe documents). All International Federation assistance seeks to adhere to the [Code of Conduct](#) and is committed to the [Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Disaster Response](#) in delivering assistance to the most vulnerable. For support to or for further information concerning Federation programmes or operations in this or other countries, or for a full description of the national society profile, please access the Federation's website at <http://www.ifrc.org>

Operational developments

In the first four and a half months of 2005, the Panama Regional Delegation has continued its work with the Central American and Caribbean National Societies in accordance with the Annual Appeals 2005. Furthermore, implementation of the Hurricane operations in the Caribbean was completed in the Bahamas, Grenada, Jamaica and the Cayman Islands, although the time-frame of operations in Cuba and Haiti has been extended, particularly to ensure finalization of rehabilitation components of the plans of action. A great deal of work was also generated by the reporting requirements linked to the Hurricane operations and the intention is to recruit a Finance Delegate for a three month period to assist with the financial reporting workload.

The new programme coordinator joined the Panama Regional Delegation in February 2005 and the previous programme coordinator then took on the role of organizational development delegate. Furthermore, the new sub regional coordinator of the Port of Spain Office took up her post in February, filling a crucial vacant post; the Central American and Caribbean team is now almost complete, although there remain some local staff positions to fill in the Port of Spain Sub Regional Office and a number of delegates will complete their mission towards the end of the year.

In mid May, the first hurricane of the 2005 East Pacific Hurricane Season, Hurricane Adrian, threatened El Salvador, Guatemala and Honduras. Although the Hurricane made landfall on 20 May as a category one Hurricane about 35 miles west of San Salvador, El Salvador, there were no casualties, particularly since some 14,000 vulnerable people had been previously evacuated. In Honduras, there was minor flooding and landslides which blocked some roads, and the loss of some poorly constructed houses, but no deaths; in Guatemala two deaths were reported. Red Cross local branches in Guatemala, El Salvador and Honduras were on alert and the National Societies ensured liaison with the national emergency authorities. DREF funding was allocated for activities to assist vulnerable affected families in El Salvador and to promote preparedness for emergencies in Honduras.

Organizational development work with the Nicaraguan Red Cross has been delayed by internal unrest caused as a result of protests by students given the increase in public transportation fares. Demonstrations on occasion became violent and required large-scale police intervention; most of the violence has taken place in Managua. This unrest led to the postponement of the Nicaraguan Red Cross' General Assembly, originally scheduled for the first quarter of the year.

Similarly in Panama, as of May 2005, the introduction and subsequent approval of a law introducing changes to the social security system has resulted in demonstrations, rioting and a situation of unrest which could, potentially, deteriorate further in the coming months should dialogue between unions and the government not result in accepted

solutions. The Red Cross Society of Panama has been particularly visible and ensured the provision of first aid to those injured in the demonstrations.

All of the Federation’s programmes to strengthen the National Societies share a common goal:

Goal: Efficient, responsive, and focused programmes that contribute to reducing vulnerability are implemented by the National Societies in the region

Health and care

Programme Objective: The National Societies of the region are strengthened and further integrated into national health policies and strategies, contributing to a significant improvement of health conditions and the empowerment of vulnerable groups and communities to reduce vulnerability to ill health and disease.

Objective 1: The capacity of the National Society health departments is strengthened and effective partnerships secured in line with Strategy 2010 and the Santiago de Chile Commitment.

Progress/Achievements (activities implemented within this objective)

The regional health team continued to work closely with the Central American Health Network (REDCAMP-SALUD) in strengthening the National Societies’ capacity in all key health areas, such as community health, HIV/AIDS, VNRBD and health in emergencies. The secretariat of REDCAMP-SALUD moved from the Salvadorean Red Cross to the Red Cross Society of Panama in January. The fifth regional workshop of REDCAMP-SALUD was held in coordination with PADRU in April on “Health in Emergencies” and was attended by 22 health professionals. At the Central American Presidents and Technical Seminars Meeting held in Panama in May the importance of REDCAMP-SALUD as a network promoting high-quality health programmes was recognized with a commitment made to support it as it develops its capacity. In addition, final adjustments were made to the REDCAMP-SALUD webpage, which will be officially launched in June/July.

Work continued during the reporting period to strengthen the health departments of the National Societies in the region. A consultant was contracted to carry out a study of the health department in the Red Cross Society of Panama (PRC). The report has been evaluated by the PRC leadership and by the regional organizational development and health delegates with a view to ascertaining how the PRC health department can be strengthened in line with recommendations from the evaluation. In Guatemala, meetings with the National Society resulted in an agreement to begin the process of creating a health department within the Guatemalan Red Cross, starting with the recruitment of a head of health department. This will be undertaken during the second half of the year. In Nicaragua, the process of strengthening the health department has lost momentum but the Regional Delegation is working with the Nicaraguan Red Cross to see how they can ‘kick start’ the process which they began last year. In Honduras, the Honduran Red Cross has begun working on their health strategic plan.

Impact

REDCAMP-SALUD is gradually becoming the voice of the National Society health programmes in Central America, creating a forum where all National Societies can share best practices, methodologies and lessons learned amongst their peers. The launch of the webpage will further advance the network as a viable entity in the region, giving all members the opportunity to better communicate amongst themselves.

Constraints

Much work remains to be done in convincing members of the National Societies’ leadership (governance and management) as to the importance of structured health departments working in a coherent manner in the four key health areas for the benefit of the most vulnerable members in their community. Advances are being made in some areas but “political buy-in” is missing in some National Societies where strong health departments with viable programmes are in some cases seen as a threat. This constraint is also becoming evident within the context of networks where powerful thematic networks can be perceived as entities which are taking ownership away from the National Societies’ governance and management. There is a need to clear up these misconceptions as soon as possible as in the future they will negatively impact on the network efficiency and sustainability.

Objective 2: The response of National Societies in Central America to the HIV / AIDS epidemic is refined and scaled up in the areas of prevention, care and the fight against stigma and discrimination.

Progress/Achievements (activities implemented within this objective)

The Central American Red Cross Societies continued to scale-up their response to address the HIV/AIDS epidemic through activities in matters such as prevention and anti stigma and discrimination. These activities are being carried out using the youth peer education methodology, “Together We Can”, and working closely with organizations of people living with HIV/AIDS (PLWHA’s).

The Federation’s health team focused their efforts during the first several months of the year on increasing awareness and promoting non-discrimination within the Nicaraguan Red Cross. The regional health delegate, the regional HIV/AIDS officer and the regional humanitarian principles and values coordinator travelled to Nicaragua and participated in a meeting with Nicaraguan Red Cross, which included the National Society president, health director and members of the different departments, as well as PNSs such as the Canadian, Italian, Netherlands and Spanish Red Cross Societies. The meeting was held to support the development of a plan of action to be implemented by the National Society with the close participation of organizations of people living with HIV/AIDS.

With the support the McCann Erickson advertising agency, the Panamanian Red Cross Society launched an HIV/AIDS prevention campaign using the slogan, “*Nobody Has The Truth Written On Their Face. Protect Yourself, Use a Condom*”. The campaign consists in large posters all over Panama City and posters in bus stops. This campaign has been widely covered in newspapers and on youth websites.

At the end of April, Panama was selected as the location for the launch of the Federation’s global HIV/AIDS campaign, “Come Closer.” The launch included the participation of the Panama Regional Delegation, the Red Cross Society of Panama and Secretariat’s HIV/AIDS department. The launch also included the participation of the Latin American and Central American networks of people living with HIV/AIDS (REDLA+ and REDCA+), as well as local organizations of people living with HIV/AIDS. A Memorandum of Understanding was signed during the event between the Federation and regional networks of PLWA’s.

The Honduran Red Cross and the Red Cross Society of Panama are scaling up their activities in the area of HIV/AIDS using the “Together We Can” peer educational methodology to target students between the ages of 14 and 19. The Honduran Red Cross is currently working on the development of their HIV/AIDS Strategic Plan. In addition, the Guatemalan Red Cross developed a radio spot which is now being disseminated and was also part of a committee that elaborated a “Reject stigma and discrimination” manual for HIV/AIDS. Operational plans have been developed for the months of March to June in four branches which include basic information about HIV/AIDS and stigma and discrimination related to people living with HIV/AIDS. As part of the Global Fund Proposal, the GRC is also working with the National HIV/AIDS Commission to draw up an HIV/AIDS manual for commercial sex workers.

The Federation is currently in the process of signing agreements with two important HIV/AIDS organizations: Population Services International (PSI) and the HIV/AIDS Alliance. Both of these groups work with vulnerable groups such as people living with HIV/AIDS, commercial sex workers (CSW’s) and men who have sex with men (MSM).

Impact

The Red Cross is increasingly seen as a credible partner in the fight against HIV/AIDS both in terms of the Red Cross’ programmes and in regards to the organization’s strong relations with people living with HIV/AIDS. Youth peer education, mass media campaigns, social mobilization campaigns and stronger relationships with people living with HIV/AIDS have all increased the Red Cross’ visibility as an organization serious about assuming a key role in combating HIV/AIDS in the region.

Constraints

Conservatism is a critical constraint when it comes to Red Cross activities and impact in the area of HIV/AIDS in the region. To play a key role in addressing the pandemic, it is vital that Red Cross programmes focus on promoting

condom use as a public health intervention and address the needs of high risk groups such as people living with HIV/AIDS, commercial sex workers and men who have sex with men. Many National Societies are not, as yet, comfortable working with these groups.

Objective 3: Integrated health interventions in the area of mother and child health, VNRBD, and health in emergencies, in partnership with the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO), the Ministry of Health (MoH) and other partners (including vulnerable communities) are implemented by National Societies.

Progress/Achievements (activities implemented within this objective)

In mother and child health, all National Societies continue to provide services to vulnerable communities with the support of a number of Participating National Societies (PNS), including the American, Canadian, Italian, Spanish and Swiss Red Cross Societies. In El Salvador, for instance, the National Society is continuing its community health and latrine construction programme with financial support from the European Union. In Guatemala, the GRC continues its work in communities served by four branches in the south east of the country, whilst Nicaragua and Honduras continue to work in selected communities with support from various PNSs.

The regional health team is continuing to work closely with PAHO and a private advertising agency in formulating a regional campaign for voluntary non-remunerated blood donations (VNRBD). The agency has provided the Regional Delegation with a number of ideas that have been discussed with PAHO and the National Societies through REDCAMP-SALUD. It is hoped that the campaign will be launched in the third quarter of the year once consensus is reached on the type of campaign best suited to the Red Cross.

The regional health team gained more practical experience in health in emergencies in January when the regional health delegate assisted the Guyana Red Cross Society in the emergency phase of their relief operation in response to the severe flooding which hit the country at the beginning of the year. The fifth REDCAMP-SALUD workshop was held in March on "Health in Emergencies" and was attended by representatives from all National Societies in the region, plus representatives from Cuba, the Dominican Republic, Argentina, Ecuador and Paraguay. The organization of the workshop was coordinated with the health department of the Federation Secretariat in Geneva. The feedback from participants was very positive and the regional health team is confident that they now have a good cohort of trained professionals in time for the upcoming hurricane season.

Impact

In the area of mother and child health, National Societies continue to work in vulnerable communities, passing key health messages on to beneficiaries. These projects are having a demonstrable impact on child mortality and morbidity through the promotion of vaccinations, better hygiene practices, diarrhoea reduction and behavioural changes, such as the promotion of breast feeding. In VNRBD many National Societies now have high quality promotional campaigns – especially those National Societies with blood banks such as El Salvador, Nicaragua and Honduras. In addition, there are now 22 fully trained health professionals prepared to respond in the event of disasters in the region.

Constraints

There is an urgent need to discuss and decide upon preferred community health (mother and child health) methodologies with all National Societies and PNS in the region. Many National Societies are still using a variety of methodologies within their countries, according to the preference of PNSs, thus causing confusion and duplication. The regional health delegates from Panama and Lima, along with the health delegate that was based in El Salvador through the first quarter of the year, have met and prepared a discussion document with the assistance of the Federation Secretariat. There is a consensus that this issue needs to be further discussed before the Federation signs a new Memorandum of Understanding with PAHO, but there is currently no funding available to hold these meetings.

Objective 4: The capacity of the Guatemalan Red Cross health department is strengthened in line with Strategy 2010 and the Santiago de Chile Commitment.

Progress/Achievements (activities implemented within this objective)

Central America; Appeal no. 05AA043; Programme Update no. 1

The GRC IMCI projects are continuing to be implemented in four branches in the country and eight volunteer facilitators have been trained in Coatepeque, El Palmar and Retalhuleu on the topics of promotion and prevention of the strategy IMCI (modules 1, 2 and 3). In addition 13 community facilitators from the Tecun Uman branch have been trained in these topics. Eleven health committees have been created in the communities of Tecun Uman and Coatepeque. These committees will coordinate the elaboration and execution of emergency health plans at the community level.

As part of the IMCI project, the GRC carried out a monitoring of 237 children under the age of two years in the communities of Tecun Uman and Retalhuleu to measure their growth rates. A total of 181 families in the communities of Tecun Uman, Coatepeque and Retalhuleu were trained in the topics food and nutrition for children under two years of age, vaccination, basic sanitation, prevention of illness, warning signs for pneumonia and family planning. In addition, surveys were carried out of families in the communities of Tecun Uman and Coatepeque to evaluate the IMCI activities and 10 key messages on IMCI activities were transmitted daily to the population of El Palmar. Finally, 11 health committees were created in Tecun Uman and Coatepeque. These committees will draw up and execute community emergency health plans.

To begin the implementation of the GRC HIV/AIDS programme, four educational centres were established. Ten teachers were trained in the various topics covered by the programme and it is expected that they will be able to replicate this training in the educational centres. In addition, a television spot containing key awareness-raising messages for HIV/AIDS was finalized by the GRC and Wachalal, an indigenous organization that is collaborating with the GRC in the television spots.

The training materials for the HIV/AIDS project “Together We Can” was validated on 21 January with the participation of 12 youth volunteers from the Jalapa branch of the GRC. Another 12 youth volunteers were trained to support the HIV/AIDS project in the Mazatenango. In addition, 445 students in Mazatenango, 350 students in Retalhuleu and 10 teachers in four schools in Coatepeque participated in Red Cross diffusion activities, including the themes of HIV/AIDS/STIs, sexuality, sex and sexual diversity. A total of 23 volunteer facilitators from the branches of Tecun Uman, Coatepeque, Retalhuleu and Mazatenango were trained. These volunteers shared lessons learned and constraints for the implementation of HIV/AIDS projects and a work plan for 2005 was drawn up based upon their comments.

In April, working meetings were held with the GRC volunteer facilitators that support the GRC HIV/AIDS project in the south west of the country and educational material was distributed. Volunteer facilitators from the Coatepeque branch of the GRC received methodological guides for training youth facilitators in HIV/AIDS/STI prevention, along with manuals addressing HIV/AIDS stigma and discrimination. Work was also carried out on a theatrical presentation on the theme of HIV/AIDS prevention. The GRC’s regional HIV/AIDS programme coordinator continued to provide technical support to local groups from the delegations of Tecun Uman, Coatepeque, Retalhuleu, and Mazatenango. Some 40 students from Retalhuleu were trained as volunteer facilitators for the HIV/AIDS programme.

On 26 April a coordination meeting was held to plan activities for the National Campaign for the Fight Against HIV/AIDS with the participation of representatives of the ACSLCS and government, non-governmental and international organizations. The meeting addressed the possibility of conducting a workshop for journalists and sponsoring a contest for the best article about HIV/AIDS. A workshop for members of the media is considered to be a top priority as it is seen as an opportunity to raise awareness of how HIV/AIDS is presented in the media.

In Coatepeque, a training session was held with the participation of 9 local volunteer facilitators to address the themes of sex and sexuality, sexual diversity and HIV/AIDS/STIs. Some eight facilitators from the same community were trained HIV/AIDS discrimination and stigma. In addition, 22 volunteer communicators from 15 branches of the GRC and two local coordinators for the HIV/AIDS project in Coatepeque and Mazatenango received training in communicating key messages of the Red Cross Movement, particularly with regards to HIV/AIDS prevention, stigma and discrimination.

Work in the area of water and sanitation in Guatemala continued during the first several months of the year with a project to improve the water and sanitation infrastructure in the community of Troje in Coatepeque. This project

Central America; Appeal no. 05AA043; Programme Update no. 1

was finalized in February. An additional project to build cisterns was also started in the community of Coban in Alta Verapaz. A database was created to monitor and evaluate Red Cross-supported water and sanitation projects in the country and criteria were drawn up for the selection of priority areas and targeted communities.

The legal, technical and social modules for water and sanitation projects were finalized following several months of revisions. Also, with the support of the USI-HA project, which works to provide clean water in indigenous communities, the GRC water and sanitation coordinator collaborated in the revision of training modules. The GRC also participated in a workshop addressing post-disaster damage and needs assessments for water and sanitation which was held in Costa Rica in February. The coordinator of the GRC water and sanitation technical unit met with personnel from the Spanish Red Cross and a local construction company to discuss issues that arisen in the drainage project in the community of El Pataxte Izabal. At this time it was agreed with the construction company that a visit would be conducted to the site to supervise the projects and clearly identify problem areas in order to come up with solutions.

On 12 May a workshop was held in the city of Huehuetenango on “Safe Drinking Water”. The event was organized and facilitated by Project Concern International, Fundación SODIS and Water for People and included the participation of the coordinator of the CRC water and sanitation technical unit. Among the topics discussed during the workshop were: legal consideration for disinfection of water, water treatment processes, operation of a water treatment plant, disinfection of water for municipal and community water systems, and charging fees for the use of water.

The GRC is working to build strong partnerships with organizations working in community health in the country. In April, the GRC and the Federation participated in inter-agency technical meetings with personnel from the Ministry of Health and PAHO. The GRC also participated in coordination meetings with the Guatemalan Inter-Institutional Group for Information about Food Security and Nutrition (GIISAN), the Ministry of Health and several other national and international groups. During meetings with GIISAN, the GRC addressed topics such as the FAO-FNCH awareness programme, the implementation of the nutritional food security law, and the annual forum to address the current and future situation of nutritional food security in Guatemala.

Impact

- There has been a high level of interest on the part of volunteers working in the GRC’s IMCI, HIV/AIDS and water and sanitation projects. Communities are also actively participating in these projects.
- Communities where projects are being developed have shown themselves to be well organized and working to reduce health risks and take preventative actions.
- The incidence of gastrointestinal illnesses, along with infant mortality rates, has reduced in the community of El Troje, where the GRC recently completed a water and sanitation project.
- Indigenous women in the communities where GRC projects are being developed are actively participating in efforts to reduce health risks.
- Members of the boards of directors in four branches of the GRC have received awareness-raising training in HIV/AIDS-related stigma and discrimination.
- Strategic alliances have been strengthened at the national and local level with organizations such as the Ministry of Health, the Pan American Health Organization, HOPE and other NGOs as well as with communities and volunteers.

Constraints

There is a serious lack of financial resources which has caused the suspension of several activities within the Guatemala health programme.

Objective 5: The capacity of the Honduran Red Cross health department is strengthened in line with Strategy 2010 and the Santiago de Chile Commitment.

To date, no funding has been received for this objective. However, the regional health delegate and regional HIV/AIDS officer will visit the Honduras Red Cross in early June to provide them with technical advice to begin work on their strategic plan for health and HIV/AIDS.

Objective 6: The capacity of National Societies to carry out high quality water and sanitation interventions using standard methodologies is improved and strategic alliances with relevant partners are formed.

Progress/Achievements (activities implemented within this objective)

Several activities have been carried out in the area of water and sanitation during the reporting period; however, these activities were limited as this project has thus far received no funding support. In general, significant advances have been made in improving strategic alliances with relevant partners. In particular, a regional water and sanitation group has been created, based in Panama, which includes UNICEF, PAHO, CATHALAC and Plan ROA. In addition, some information, education and communication (IEC) materials have been produced and work has been ongoing to train field personnel in preparing project proposals for donors. These strategic alliances are not only being formed with regional organizations, but also with those National Societies that have expertise in water and sanitation, such as the Guatemalan and Honduran Red Cross Societies. With support from the Regional Delegation, water and sanitation officers from these two National Societies attended a meeting on water and sanitation that was organized by PAHO and held in Costa Rica in February. There has also been an ongoing effort to standardize and improve tools to monitor water and sanitation projects. With the help of a volunteer from the Red Cross Society of Panama, new software has been created to carry out baseline data surveys and project monitoring.

The regional water and sanitation team is working to promote water and sanitation activities within the health departments of the National Societies in the region but supporting the creation of water and sanitation units within the Costa Rican Red Cross and the Red Cross Society of Panama. The regional water and sanitation delegate has also visited the Cuban, Dominican, Guatemalan and Salvadorean Red Cross Societies.

Finally, technical support has been provided to the Haiti: Floods emergency operation and a multilateral proposal was put together by the Haitian and Dominican Red Cross Societies along with the Federation and the Spanish Red Cross. This proposal for a two year water and sanitation project has been presented to the African Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) and European Union (EU) Water Facility.

Impact

Through the work of the regional water and sanitation team, there is now a Red Cross presence in regional and national water and sanitation forums. In addition, the Costa Rican Red Cross and the Red Cross Society of Panama are now ready to begin creating formal water and sanitation units within their health departments, which will help them to carry out effective water and sanitation projects in the future.

Constraints

The regional water and sanitation programme has, to date, received no funding. This has seriously limited the ability of the regional water and sanitation team to carry out effective interventions and trainings in this area.

Disaster Management

Programme Objective: The National Societies and the Federation in the region have effective mechanisms and programmes for response and disaster preparedness which contribute to reducing the impact of disasters on affected populations, as well as reducing vulnerability and increasing the capacity of communities in high risk areas.

Objective 1: The Federation's capacity to support the National Societies with a view to assisting disaster victims is enhanced through strengthened and standardized disaster response mechanisms.

Activities in this area are being implemented by the Pan American Disaster Response Unit (PADRU). For more information, please see the PADRU programme update.

Objective 2: Capacity to assist disaster victims in the region is enhanced through strengthened National Societies and scaling up of support and advocacy to improve national and regional disaster systems.

Progress/Achievements (activities implemented within this objective)

The regional disaster management network was formally started in 2004 with the participation of relief directors and community based disaster management officers. A plan of action 2004 – 2005 was agreed by all the members of the network. In March 2005, a regional meeting was held in Panama in order to produce and agree on the draft proposal of the terms of reference for the disaster management network. This was done with the support of the regional organizational development delegate as part of the Regional Delegation's work to promote more integrated support within departments and networks. The terms of reference were presented at the Presidents and Technical Seminars meeting held in Panama in May along with the Regional Mutual Support agreement between National Societies. The Regional Centre of Reference for Disaster Preparedness, based in El Salvador, was also presented to the network members during the disaster management network meeting in March. The centre will be coordinated by the Salvadorean Red Cross and will focus on the main needs related to disaster preparedness at the institutional level. National Societies agreed that the new centre should focus on specific areas to support all the National Societies in the region and to avoid jeopardizing the efficiency of the centre by overstretching its capacities. In addition, the other Centre of Reference, which is located in Costa Rica and mainly focuses on community based disaster management, presented a report of activities to the disaster management network members. Both regional centres of reference received support from the National Societies during the Presidents and Technical Seminars.

The Guatemala Red Cross used the template developed by the Regional Delegation and the disaster management network to establish and formalize an agreement between the Red Cross and the Civil Defence agency (CONRED). The draft document was evaluated by CONRED and signed in April 2005. A proposal for disaster pre-agreement was presented to the directors of the Guatemalan Red Cross with the aim of developing a model that could guide other pre-agreements in the region. An initial draft version drawn up by PADRU was shared with the Regional Delegation and the Guatemala Country Office and present to the National Society. In this instance, rather than establish a pre-agreement between the Guatemalan Red Cross and the Federation Secretariat, it was extended to other donor National Societies with presence in the country. The pre agreement will be revised with all the National Societies from the region during the upcoming Pre Hurricane Season meeting to be held in Panama in June.

During the reporting period, five key documents were presented and approved by the Presidents and General Directors of the Red Cross Societies from Mexico, Central America and Panama:

1. Development of quality standards for the strengthening of the Disaster Management Departments of the Red Cross Societies.
2. Integral Risk Management approach to strengthening cross-border Red Cross Branches
3. Creation of REDCAMP-DISASTER network
4. Recognition and support of the Regional Centres of Reference (Community based and Disaster preparedness).
5. Red Cross Societies Mutual Agreement support

The Regional Delegation, using the recently produced document "Red Cross and Red Crescent as auxiliaries of the governments," developed a training module to be included in National Intervention Team (NIT) training. The first test took place in the Bahamas in early April, during the NIT's training. A second validation will take place in Jamaica during NITs training, and a final one will take place in Cuba, also during NITs training. The aim of this training module is to develop a standardized lesson plan for NITs training in the Caribbean and Central America. The Regional Delegation's disaster preparedness office also developed the four year strategy which will help to guide the support of the Federation Secretariat to the National Societies in the region. The strategy was presented during the presidents and technical seminars meeting. In addition, work has been ongoing to support the development of the disaster management websites for the Caribbean and for Mexico and Central America.

The Federation is working to enhance the capacities of the National Societies in the region to recruit, manage, train, motivate, support and reward volunteers. In El Salvador, volunteer involvement is being promoted by the Regional Delegation's disaster preparedness and organizational development departments within the project "Integrated approach to disaster risk reduction," which includes a section on enhancing the volunteer base at the branch level and improving branch capacity. Relief and youth volunteers from the Red Cross Society of Panama met in March to plan their activities for 2005 and define training needs. In Guatemala and Costa Rica, VCA trainings are helping to increase and maintain the interest of volunteers.

The regional disaster management network agreed upon the need to promote and develop a common methodology for disaster plans as well as templates to the National Societies. At the same time the importance of having minimum Standard Operational Procedures throughout the region was recognized. This will enhance the opportunities for mutual support within National Societies and increase the National Societies' disaster preparedness capacities. A plan of action was decided upon in preparation for the regional NITs meeting which was held in May in Guatemala with the aim of standardizing the training in the region. The meeting included the participation of disaster management personnel from throughout the region.

The Federation's Centre of Reference for Disaster Preparedness in El Salvador organized a three day regional meeting in El Salvador to revise the module on "Security during times of emergency" and also organized the regional NITs harmonization meeting held in Guatemala. At the same time, this centre of reference is working to develop NITs training, materials, methodologies and tools, to support the harmonization of standard operating procedures and disaster plans, to support and guide the development of emergency operations centres within the National Societies and to map Red Cross disaster preparedness capacities at the national and local level.

The regional disaster preparedness delegate participated in the World Disaster Reduction Conference in Kobe, Japan, with the support of the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction. As a result of this invitation, the Panama Regional Delegation was able to participate as a panellist in two conferences: Information, Disaster Risk Reduction and also in a panel on the role of media in disaster risk management.

It was also pre-agreed with ISDR the presence of an indigenous organization from Guatemalan Indigenous organization to present the study case of the development of riskland (a children game about disaster reduction) in a Mayan language. An initiative promoted by the Guatemalan Red Cross and the Federation Secretariat national office.

Objective 3: Vulnerability in high-risk communities is reduced through community based disaster management projects implemented according to methodologies developed through the CBDM models and the Centre of Reference.

Progress/Achievements (activities implemented within this objective)

The four countries involved in the ProVention project: Honduras, Costa Rica, Guatemala and Belize, have worked on VCA activities at the community level and organized community based Red Cross teams that will support further testing and validation activities for the documents that have been produced. These National Societies are working in four communities in each country to implement the VCA and develop VCA tools for floods, volcanic eruptions, droughts, hurricanes and earthquakes. Guatemala organized a multi-sectoral VCA training for their own volunteers, as well as for members of CONRED and social volunteers from two universities of Guatemala.

During April the four National Societies together with the Organization of American States (OAS) and the Regional Delegation met in Honduras to evaluate the progress of the project as well to revise the new tools produced as part of the project. As a result of the meeting it is expected that by the end of June the new draft version of the manuals will be revised by OAS and the Federation Secretariat.

The Regional Centre of Reference in CBDM in Costa Rica is now fully operational. Activities during 2005 are focusing on:

- Involving Red Cross youth members in the final revision of the school based disaster management manual
- Increasing communication between National Society relief, community and youth offices in order to enhance the use of the training modules
- Elaborating the interactive CD related to the first four modules of the community based training: Community Based First Aid, Family Based Disaster Management, School Based Disaster Management and Community Based Disaster Risk Reduction and Organization
- Developing the Regional Centre of Reference website
- Coordinating with Donor National Societies, mainly the Italian, Netherlands and Spanish Red Cross Societies to support them in the elaboration of training materials for DIPECHO IV projects in Guatemala and Nicaragua.

- Supporting other Red Cross Societies from the region in designing new modules as part of the ProVention project.

Objective 4: The Guatemalan Red Cross capacity to assist disaster victims is enhanced through skilled human resources and effective planning.

Progress/Achievements (activities implemented within this objective)

The GRC and the Federation are working to update VCA training for volunteers and other organizations and to develop community VCAs. During the reporting period, Federation's regional disaster preparedness officer, who is based in the Guatemala country office, worked on the training of volunteers from the Grenada Red Cross in early February. The results of these trainings were promoted in the Caribbean and were also used to elaborate a proposal for ECHO to address nutrition and food security in Guatemala. The VCA tools, along with the "Riskland" board game, are being translated into two Mayan languages for use in Guatemala and Nicaragua. It is expected that the translations will be ready in June. Work is also ongoing in coordination with Sotzil, an indigenous organization, to translate the community first aid guide into Mayan languages.

As part of the GRC's ongoing efforts to develop contingency plans for natural disasters and social disturbances, in January and February the GRC disaster management coordinator participated in several planning meetings to draw up a national contingency plan for the Easter season. The disaster management coordinator also worked with the GRC branches to develop local contingency plans.

The development of NITs strategy that will be incorporated into the National Society's strategy was discussed during the disaster management network meeting in early March. It is expected that the GRC will be able to compile the information requested during this meeting will be presented during the NITs workshop that is scheduled to take place in May in Antigua, Guatemala. The GRC disaster management coordinator has been holding weekly and monthly meetings to define priorities in the area of disaster preparedness in order to develop a national strategic plan. In addition, the GRC's disaster preparedness plan of action was drawn up with the support of the Federation team and was submitted to the British Red Cross.

In the area of community based disaster management (CBDM), a technical committee was established to work in the selected communities and follow up on the project's implementation. The committee includes members of the Guatemala City branch, two disaster coordinators from the GRC, the National Society's director general, the Federation representative in the country and the Federation's disaster preparedness officer. An agreement was signed with the municipality of Guatemala City to formalize the intervention in the communities that have been selected.

With the support of the regional disaster management team, the Federation representative held a meeting with representatives from Acción Contra el Hambre (Action Against Hunger), CONRED and the Netherlands Red Cross to promote the "Es Mejor Prevenir" (It is better to prevent) methodology and the VCA training. It is expected that these negotiations will be confirmed at the end of April.

During the reporting period, the Federation and the GRC have coordinated several local and national level meetings to address issues of disaster preparedness. To celebrate the 29th anniversary of the 1976 earthquake which devastated the country, the National Disaster Reduction Coordination Office organized an activity entitled "Seismic Risk in Guatemala", which gave organizations working in disaster management, including the Red Cross, the opportunity to exchange their experiences and examine the current situation in the country. The Federation also met with the International Humanitarian Rights Commission in Guatemala to promote the activities related with disasters.

With the intention of raising awareness within the local government and other organizations with presence in Guatemala, the National Disaster Reduction Coordination Office (CONRED), the Central America Disaster Preparedness (CEPRENAC), the Central America Municipal Federation, (FEMICA) and the Inter American Development Bank (IADB), a national campaign entitled "Prevention of Local Risks" was launched on 1 March. Finally, the Federation and the GRC participated in the regional disaster management network, held in Panama. As

a result, the GRC disaster management coordinator is drawing up some key documents for discussion in the next meeting.

Humanitarian Principles and Values

Programme Objective: Humanitarian principles and values are integrated in each of the core programme areas within the National Societies in the region, in accordance with Strategy 2010 and the Federation’s non-discrimination and respect for diversity pledge made at the XXVIII International Red Cross Red Crescent Conference.

Objective 1: The capacity of the National Societies in the area of humanitarian principles and values and advocacy is strengthened through the regional networks, using the Centre of Reference for principles and humanitarian values in Honduras.

Progress/Achievements (activities implemented within this objective)

During the first several months of the year, the Federation held meetings with the ICRC and the coordinator of the regional communications network to prepare the agenda for the Presidents and Technical Seminars meeting in May and to define the agenda for the regional communicators meeting.

Objective 2: National Societies in the region promote awareness and carry out advocacy in the areas of youth violence, non-discrimination and the rights of migrant populations.

Progress/Achievements (activities implemented within this objective)

The Federation’s humanitarian principles and values coordinator met with the Spanish Red Cross to formulate a regional strategy for violence prevention. These meetings opened the lines of communication between the Federation and the Spanish Red Cross and are ensuring a regional approach is adopted to combat youth violence. An approach to the problem was defined and a chronogram of activities was drawn up to be consulted with the National Societies, NGOs and governmental organizations in the region. The Federation’s centre of reference in humanitarian values also presented a proposal for the implementation of projects to the Spanish Red Cross. The Spanish Red Cross has expressed interest in supporting this initiative.

A regional consultation was carried out of the National Societies, NGOs and governmental institutions in Central America, Mexico and the Spanish-speaking countries in the Caribbean regarding violence in all of its forms. In total, 41 responses were received from 10 National Societies and consultations were carried out with 12 regional institutions. Two university students were recruited to support the compilation of the information received. The Federation team also met with members of the Nicaraguan, Italian, Netherlands and Spanish Red Cross Societies regarding violence prevention proposals. In addition, the Federation humanitarian principles and values team met with member of Honduras’ National Autonomous University to share experiences and projects in order to find common areas of work. The Federation and the university hope to establish strategic alliances to support the creation of a centre of reference for the prevention of violence.

In Honduras, the Federation team worked with the technical personnel from the Honduran Red Cross to support the revision and adaptation of the materials for the “Together We Can” methodology to the country’s context. The manuals, which address anti-stigma and non-discrimination for people living with HIV/AIDS, can now be used throughout the country. In addition, the Federation provided support to the HRC in the evaluation of their national development plan, placing particular emphasis on promoting diversity and non-discrimination through the Red Cross’ programmes. The Federation’s principles and humanitarian values team also worked with the Honduran Red Cross in preparation for the national workshop that was held to develop the National Society’s strategic plan for work in the area of HIV/AIDS.

Three meetings were held with representatives of the National Association of People Living with HIV/AIDS in Honduras and the National Society and a mutual support agreement was drawn up between the two institutions. In addition, forum addressing HIV/AIDS was developed in coordination with Alianza Francesa, NGOs, the Ministry of Health and other international agencies. During this forum, the Federation and the National Society presented the

Central America; Appeal no. 05AA043; Programme Update no. 1

“Breaking the Silence” video the “0%” television spot that were created as part of the Red Cross’ humanitarian principles and values programme.

The Nicaraguan Red Cross held three working meetings during the reporting period with technical personnel from the National Society, PNSs present in the country, the National Society president and the Regional Delegation’s health delegate and HIV/AIDS officer. As a result of this meeting, a plan of action was drawn up to promote anti-stigma and non-discrimination both within the Red Cross and in the community. The plan of action includes:

- Design of a national training plan in the area of anti-stigma and non-discrimination
- Development of an institutional baseline regarding the knowledge of volunteers and staff with respect to HIV/AIDS
- Revision of policies and protocols
- Revision of roles of the departments within the NRC
- Development of links and alliances
- Formulation of a national strategic plan for HIV/AIDS

The NRC also held a workshop to promote anti-stigma and the rights of people living with HIV/AIDS for personnel working in the National Society blood bank and with the National Society ambulance service. In addition, the Federation supported the National Society in the anti-stigma television campaign “0%”.

In Guatemala, the Guatemalan Red Cross’ anti-stigma television campaign was revised to establish agreements with the media. The television campaigns were also presented to the National Society’s board of directors.

In Guatemala, the Federation and the National Society have been in contact with the regional office of European Commission to examine funding possibilities for projects to address the needs of the indigenous population in the country. Two meetings were held with the GRC board of directors to examine topics for the presentation of a proposal. A meeting was also held with the National Society’s planning coordinator at which time the procedures were agreed upon for the formulation of a proposal to the European Commission to work with indigenous populations.

Organizational Development

Programme Objective: National Societies in the region demonstrate the characteristics of a “well functioning National Society” and implement vulnerability-focused programmes resulting in constantly improved service delivery to and with vulnerable people through a holistic organizational development approach.

Objective 1: Organizational structures and processes of National Societies are strengthened, and links between branches and headquarters are reinforced.

Progress/Achievements (activities implemented within this objective)

The Nicaraguan Red Cross has appointed a volunteer as the focal point for the promotion of the volunteer management model. The Nicaraguan Red Cross has completed the process of revising its Statutes to incorporate some of the observations of the Joint Commission and the Statutes were approved by the General Assembly. The Nicaraguan Red Cross has validated the National Development Plan and has agreed carry out a midterm evaluation to analyze the level of compliance and make adjustments to the plan according to the results of the assessment. The NRC has also completed a survey of the capacities of 13 branches with a view to reviewing how best to provide to support the branches and, in some cases, recommending that certain branches be closed. The survey is focusing on finance, administration, human resources and programming.

The Honduran Red Cross began activities for the project to strengthen volunteering in four branches in the south west of the country and signed a memorandum of understanding with the Panama Regional Delegation for the implementation of this project using Capacity Building Funds (CBF). The aim of the project is to improve the number and quality of volunteers. The HRC also continued activities to strengthen branch capacities in coordination with the PNS carrying out projects in vulnerable communities in the country using the manual for “Well Functioning Branches.”

The Salvadorean Red Cross National Board was placed in charge revising the National Society's statutes and regulations. In January 2005, the National Board also approved the revised National Development Plan.

The Red Cross Society of Panama signed a memorandum of understanding for the CBF project aimed at creating a National Development Plan. A project coordinator was appointed and the plan of action has been drawn up. In addition, an analysis of strengths and weaknesses was carried out at the national level and for the departments of principles and values, communication, health, relief and youth which will be used to feed into the NDP process. A proposal was also drawn up to look at resource development through a consultancy and an external audit was commissioned in February 2005 with particular emphasis on financial and administrative procedures. For the follow up to the National Society Self Assessment, the Red Cross Society of Panama sent the relevant questionnaire to the monitoring and evaluation department of the Federation Secretariat in Geneva.

The regional OD programme coordinated the design of tools to monitor the Inter American Plan of Action in Central America. In addition, the organizational development areas of the Inter American Plan of Action are being evaluated and analyzed by the regional OD network.

Constraints

There has been reduced funding in 2005 for the regional OD programme. Currently, activities in this area are being supported by DfID (Central America region and Nicaragua) and CBF (Panama, Nicaragua and Honduras). During the first several months of the year, much of the focus of the OD programme was on the organization of the Presidents' and technical seminars meeting. In addition, social tensions and disturbances in Nicaragua limited work in the area of OD.

Objective 2: A regional network of National Society organizational development practitioners is established and functioning, supporting the National Societies' "characteristics of a well-functioning National Society".

Progress/Achievements (activities implemented within this objective)

In support of the process of drawing up the GRC National Development Plan, the regional OD network coordinator facilitated a third workshop during which a SWOT analysis was carried out with the branches of Jalapa and Escuintla and with staff from the National Society headquarters. A chronogram of activities was developed to define the strategic lines of the plan. In addition, the president and executive director of the Guatemalan Red Cross visited the Honduran Red Cross to benefit from the experiences gained and tools used by the HRC with respect to monitoring of the implementation of the HRC national development plan. Common areas of support were identified between the two National Societies.

Members of the OD network, which consists of members from the Red Cross Societies of Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua and Panama, participated in the meeting of Presidents and Technical Seminars, held in Panama in early May. The network members reviewed the results of assessment of progress in relation to the Inter American Plan of Action in the area of organizational development and presented proposals for approval, as follows:

- The Central American OD network was formally recognized and approved by the membership of the meeting. The terms of reference will be presented for consideration to the presidents and directors general in the region. The network will provide a framework within which the National Societies of the region can work and will promote standardized tools for working towards common goals.
- The manuals for "Well Functioning Branches" and "Model for Branch Regulations" reference documents for National Societies in the region were approved.
- A policy for the development of financial resources was endorsed.
- A policy for volunteer management and the development of volunteer resources was approved.

Recommendations regarding the role of OD practitioners as regards support to disaster departments during times of emergency were drawn up and shared among the Guatemalan, Honduran, Nicaraguan and Salvadorean Red Cross Societies.

Objective 3: National Societies' capacity to diversify their financial resource base, and better organize their human resources, both volunteers and salaried staff, is improved.

Progress/Achievements (activities implemented within this objective)

Development of Volunteering

In April, the "Guide to the Implementation of the Volunteer Policy" and the "Cycle of Volunteer Management" were adapted and validated. The seven Central American National Societies took part in this process with the participation of a Vice President, two Directors General, two members of the OD network including the coordinator, two national youth coordinators, one national relief volunteer coordinator, one national coordinator of women volunteers, three volunteer administrators and a representative of the volunteer programme from the OD Department at the Headquarters. As a result, these policies and reference documents were put forward during the Presidents and Technical Seminars meeting held in early May in Panama. Furthermore, during this meeting, it was agreed that:

- a) the volunteer policy, the implementation guide and the management model should be submitted for approval to the governing bodies of each National Society.
- b), the definition and the application of volunteer regulations in each country should be promoted through advocacy initiatives in order to boost volunteer recognition on the part of governance and public authorities.
- c) measures to facilitate protection and participation of volunteers in emergency situations should be integrated in disaster response and contingency plans.
- d) resources which favour the strengthening of volunteering internally in the Red Cross and in national or international cooperation projects which are managed by National Societies in the region should be identified.
- e) the creation and appropriate running of a volunteer commission should take place in each National Society where this does not exist or is not functioning, with the support of governance bodies and management.

As part of the OD process of the Red Cross Society of Panama, volunteers from the branches and the headquarters, together with the management team, were trained in the volunteer policy and its implementation as well as the management model. Volunteer profiles and job descriptions were drawn up for those in charge of volunteering. The General Assembly of the Nicaraguan Red Cross approved revised Statutes which include new benefits for volunteers and the inclusion of a youth volunteer representative in the governing body – the national board. The volunteer policy and the management model were disseminated in the national youth meeting held by the Costa Rican Red Cross.

Development of Financial Resources

The Director General of the Costa Rican Red Cross participated in a working meeting regarding resource development with the Directors General from the South American National Societies which took place in Buenos Aires, with the support of the Lima Regional Delegation and the Argentine Red Cross. As a result of the exchange of experience and the commitments reached in Buenos Aires, during the XVIII Presidents' and Technical Seminars meeting, the National Societies of Mexico, Central America and Panama approved the proposal drawn up by the Costa Rican Red Cross on resource development, as below. A working group is being formed made up of Presidents, Directors General and those responsible for marketing and communication departments in order to define a regional resource development strategy with the following emphasis, as proposed by the Costa Rican Red Cross:

- Economies of scale relating to purchases and investments in specific areas such as: airlines, hotel accommodation, fuel, publicity, vehicles and so forth.
- Nomination of an expert as responsible for resource development.
- Carry out studies relating to image and positioning of National Societies in the region which are experiencing the most serious financial limitations. This will be carried out in the framework of harmonization activities carried out with the ICRC.
- National Society development plans and budgets are to form the basis of the policy and strategy on financial resource development and obtaining funds from international cooperation.
- Establishment of a data base on cost-effective National Society programmes with case studies and information on successful results, regulations, national, regional and international donors.

Central America; Appeal no. 05AA043; Programme Update no. 1

- Implementation of mechanisms to ensure financial accountability and control systems which ensure transparent and efficient use of resources.
- Training of a technical group from each National Society on different models or project designs in accordance with the requirements of the different sources of origin and using tools such as PPP and SISPRO.
- Positioning and promotion of each of the National Societies with respect to relations with businesses and the private sector in accordance with the concept of corporate social responsibility.

Constraints

Resources for certain activities are available through DfID and the Capacity Building Fund (CBF); funding from PNS is urgently required to ensure the success of the programme. During the months of January and February, the OD delegate ensured support for the area of programme coordination. In addition, the OD Delegate was assigned responsibility for the coordination of the Presidents and Technical Seminars meeting which limited time available for the management of the regional OD programme. Furthermore, unrest in Nicaragua delayed the progress of activities with the Nicaraguan Red Cross and the achievement of certain results including the holding of the General Assembly originally scheduled for the first quarter of the year, the adoption of the revised Statutes and the development of the NDP.

Objective 4: The Guatemalan Red Cross has the characteristics of a well-functioning National Society in governance and management, both at the national and branch levels.

Progress/Achievements (activities implemented within this objective)

The Guatemalan Red Cross' health, humanitarian principles and values, disaster management and volunteering and planning programmes submitted the first draft of the National Society's Strategic Plan. The plan also includes the areas of governance and management. The GRC held an ordinary General Assembly to present the biannual activity report, which was approved. The extraordinary General Assembly to elect the vacant positions on the National Board was postponed as it was necessary to adapt the announcement in accordance with the Statutes, taking into account that the candidates should be volunteers. In addition, the regulations of the branches of the GRC were adapted as a reference document at the regional level and were made available to all the National Societies in the region during the Presidents' meeting and Technical Seminars in order to promote the revision of such regulations and their improvement at branch level.

With the objective to strength the communication and coordination among the branches and headquarter, 3 OD workshops were developed during the reporting period. Members of the various boards, volunteers, management team of the Guatemalan Red Cross, along with PNSs and the Federation, participated in these activities. The Santiago de Chile Commitment was also promoted.

Throughout 2004 the Federation funded an internal audit service in the GRC. At the end of the year an analysis was done to determine whether it was appropriate to continue financing this service. With the scope of the auditing as well as the lack of implementation of recurring recommendations it was deemed that the service would be reviewed quarterly in 2005. In the first three months of the year the auditing firm did not make a report on how to tackle to two specific problems and the decision was made to suspend the auditing service.

Constraints

In the first three months of the year the auditing firm did not make a report on how to tackle to two specific problems and the decision was made to suspend the auditing service. In addition, there is a lack of funding for the activities planned in this area.

Community Integrated Programming

Programme Objective: The National Societies in the region have improved their capacity to work in vulnerable communities through integrated programmes and projects, partnerships and branch networking which contribute to a reduction in community risks and promote empowerment.

Objective 1: The organizational capacity of branches to respond to the needs of vulnerable people through community integrated programmes is enhanced.

Progress/Achievements (activities implemented within this objective)

An analysis of needs and capacities in relation to telecommunications was carried out in the El Real branch of the Red Cross Society of Panama with the participation of volunteers and staff from headquarters and from the branch, together with staff from the regional delegation and members of the local communities. This initiative seeks to improve communication with local communities in the event of frequent disasters such as floods.

As a result of difficulties encountered in 2004 under the CIP programme, the branches of Waspám and Chinandega in Nicaragua will take part in a capacity analysis in the second semester of 2005; this analysis will focus most particularly on administrative and financial procedures and human resources with a view to assessing the sustainability of future projects.

In coordination with the regional disaster management programme and with the OD and DM departments of the Salvadorean Red Cross Society, a risk reduction and strengthening of capacities project is being carried out in the branches of Intipucá and La Unión. The main project components are disaster preparedness and community based first aid. The OD departments of the Salvadorean Red Cross Society and the Honduran Red Cross are liaising to review the experience taking place in El Salvador, with the involvement the regional OD network and promoting mutual support in the area of community-based disaster preparedness.

During the meeting of Presidents and Technical Seminars, the National Society Presidents approved proposals for branch strengthening, as follows:

- a) Within a period of three months to agree on a definition and a methodology for integrated community programmes; the National Societies requested the Regional Delegation to coordinate and manage the human, technical and financial resources required and to secure the support of the regional networks and of Partner National Societies to implement this decision.
- b) To design common indicators relating to branch development and in order to ensure appropriate supervision and auditing based on National Society Statutes, regulations, the National Development Plan, the Characteristics of a Well-Functioning National Society and the Plan of Action of the Inter American Conference.
- c) To adopt the "Well-Functioning Branch" manual designed by the Honduran Red Cross and the model branch regulations of the Guatemalan Red Cross as reference documents for the National Societies in the region.
- d) To continue training activities for governance and management at branch level and in headquarters through the harmonization programme, uniting efforts and resources from National Societies, the Federation and the ICRC.

Constraints

The radio equipment has not been purchased and the follow-up phases of the project implementation in El Real have not been carried out given that the budget has not been approved, as there is a lack of funding support for the programme.

The tension and social unrest in Nicaragua together with the concentration of efforts on the holding of the General Assembly prevented the carrying out of the analysis of capacities and project review in the branches of Waspán and Chinandega. In El Salvador, one of the branches, San Miguel, initially selected to take part in the risk reduction project could not be included and its place the branch of La Unión was selected. This has incurred a delay in the project implementation schedule.

To date, it has not been possible to define the border projects between Costa Rica and Panama and Nicaragua and Honduras. It is essential to explore with the National Societies which branches should be involved or whether these projects should be cancelled, particularly since the project does not have sufficient funds for implementation of activities or administrative costs, given the lack of donor support.

Implementation of activities under this programme has also been delayed as a result of the time invested by the OD delegate in the area of programme coordination during the first two months of the year and in the organization of the Presidents and Technical Seminars meeting which took place in May 2005.

Coordination, Cooperation, Representation and Strategic Partnerships

Coordination, Cooperation, Representation and Strategic Partnerships Programme Objective:
The Secretariat will exercise a leadership role in Central America to facilitate better coordinated service delivery through enhanced cooperation with components of the Movement, in particular with the National Societies of the region, and external partners including the corporate sector.

Objective 1: Cooperation Agreement Strategies are in place and strategic alliances and National Society programme networks are reinforced.

Progress/Achievements (activities implemented within this objective)

CAS, Harmonization and Programme Networks

Whilst there has been little movement on developing formalized Cooperation Agreement Strategy (CAS) documents, the delegation has been continuing in its dialogue with the National Societies in the region, as well as PNSs active in the region, to ensure that Movement cooperation is coordinated for increased impact. A number of PNS have visited the Regional Delegation in order to have a better understanding of the functioning of the Federation in the region and to explore options for collaboration in the future. The model of cooperation agreement developed in the pre-CAS meeting in Guatemala has now been adopted by the Red Cross Societies of Guatemala and the Dominican Republic. All PNS and the ICRC signed the document, signalling increased efforts to coordinate activities in Guatemala.

Improving cooperation between partners through programme implementation is an area where the delegation continues to try to add value. For example, in the area of disaster preparedness, the Centre of Reference in Community Based Disaster Preparedness has supported the National Societies of Guatemala and Nicaragua in their implementation of DIPECHO IV projects together with their partners from the Italian, Netherlands and Spanish Red Cross Societies through the provision of community methodologies and materials, as well as tools to support monitoring and follow-up. A similar approach has been operating in the health programme, where the focus on HIV/AIDS has involved those National Societies and PNS working in HIV/AIDS prevention and anti-discrimination projects and supporting the use of the "Together We Can" methodology and materials.

During the coming months increased focus will be given to supporting improved cooperation between National Societies, both at the country level as well as through the regional programme approach highlighted above. The Regional Delegation has collected and is the repository of all the finished products developed with support of the regional delegates. There currently exist a virtual library with the newly revised statutes, National Development Plans, Strategic Plans and educational tools. These tools are readily available to Movement members for their consultation.

The Federation and ICRC have continued to meet regularly to share information on on-going work and identify areas where work can be harmonized. Examples include a joint mission between the Federation and the ICRC to work with Nicaraguan Red Cross to review their contingency planning prior to the national elections in early 2006 and the support to the same national Society in their revision of their statutes. The two institutions are also currently engaged in a general review of harmonization in the past three years to look at how to increase the impact of this way of working.

The use of networks has proven to be an effective approach to developing regional programmes to respond to the priorities of the Plan of Action of the Inter American Conference. REDCAMP-SALUD, the Central American health network, has now been up and running for over a year and in that time has produced a number of key draft documents to guide the work of the National Societies in community-based health and other areas. The disaster management network has also worked in a similar way and the regional OD network, whilst younger, is also aiming to provide this platform for exchange and learning. In the coming months, it is planned for the coordinators of the

Central America; Appeal no. 05AA043; Programme Update no. 1

various networks to meet in order to take stock of the experience of running and participating in networks and to identify some common criteria to guide the networks in the future.

Strategic Alliances and Advocacy

The pre-arranged visit with the European Union liaison representative from Brussels to the European Union Commission and ECHO offices in the Dominican Republic and Nicaragua gave impetus to the planning sessions and meetings for a full participation by the Movement members in the DIPECHO V Caribbean proposal preparations.

The preparatory meetings with the Mexican Red Cross towards the hosting of the XVIII Presidents and Technical Seminars Meeting were held. The meeting venue changed to Panama in early May due to difficulties with the confirmations from the National Societies in the region. Panama hosted what turned out to be a very productive meeting. The meeting was underwritten by contributions from the Spanish Red Cross, the ICRC and the Federation. The meeting, as well as the regional planning meeting early in the year, had the active participation of all the major international organizations with regional offices in Panama. Their pledge to support cooperation with the National Societies was made public during the Presidents meeting.

Two proposals with UNDP, UNICEF, Plan International and the International Organization for Migration (IOM) were prepared this year. The first proposal to work with the UNDP regional office on emergency management was not selected for funding by ECHO. The second proposal is still being drafted for the provision of protection and social services to migrant children in the Central American region.

The Regional Delegation continues to participate in many training activities hosted by the major organizations in the region as lecturers. IDB, Plan Puebla Panama, PAHO, UNICEF, UNFPA, OCHA, ACS, CDERA, CEPREDENAC, USA South Com all have required the participation of the Federation to explain its programmes and services. This provides an excellent platform for cooperation and knowledge sharing. The challenge here is in the financial constraints as many of these invitations do not come with full funding. A total promotion of the existing network of over 1,100 Red Cross branches in Central America and the Caribbean is one of the major pushes in the Federation presentations. Bilateral meetings have also been held with the embassies of the donor countries to provide verbal updates on the work of the Federation, which includes the work of the PNS.

The Costa Rican Red Cross and the Red Cross Society of Panama have secured two very influential partners in their quest to improve their communication influence in their respective communities. The Red Cross Society of Panama has received well over USD 100,000 in in-kind publicity through its partnership with MacCann World Group, which has developed a far reaching anti-stigma campaign. The Costa Rican Red Cross is about to complete negotiations with Saatchi-Saatchi Centre of Excellence in Costa Rica to promote the community based disaster management on a regional basis. This campaign is a revenue producer and current deliberations are underway to seek an equitable redistribution of the income with other National Societies in the region where the CBDM programme is implemented.

Plan International, OXFAM, UNICEF and IOM have pledged to work closely with National Societies in the region to leverage resources and amplify their reach through their support to the network of branches. Country specific negotiations with these agencies are now being picked up by National Societies, with the support from the Regional Delegation. UNESCO has accepted the Federation's request to formalize the working relationship with an MoU.

The proposal for a region-wide resource mobilization project was prepared to be presented in the XVIII Presidents and Technical Seminar meeting in Panama. The proposal was reduced to collaborations in the coordination of efforts to use economies of scale for purchases with airlines, lodging, petrol, publicity, vehicles and other essential items for the day-to-day operations of the National Societies. The National Societies also agreed to form a task force with representatives from governance, management, marketing and communication departments to provide follow up and implement a fundraising network, based on a regional focus and utilizing the exiting networks. The National Societies also agreed to request the designation of a professional fundraiser in the Regional Delegation to be the focal point, to coordinate, follow up and account for the fulfilment of the commitments of the fundraising network and the task force. The National Societies have also asked for the Federation to provide information on fundraising sources and donors interested in investing the region.

The Regional Delegation has developed a software programme aimed at collecting information from Movement members on their proposals and projects to make the information available to National Societies. This software contains a large directory and database of donors and funding sources. The software resource directory also includes the information on the different country offices opened to coordinate the Global Compact for Corporate Social Responsibility. Two National Societies have been chosen for field testing of the software: Cuba and Costa Rica. Training sessions have been conducted in use of this tool. Additional funding for training in this tool is essential to get the National Societies to generate their own donor lists and proposals.

Objective 2: The Secretariat and National Societies in the region actively participate in the Council of Delegates and in other key international fora of partners to influence the humanitarian agenda and consolidate the support base.

Progress/Achievements (activities implemented within this objective)

The Regional Delegation has started the process of validating an advocacy manual as a tool for all National Societies to prepare their leaders for presenting the Red Cross and its humanitarian agenda to different audiences. The tool will be field tested in the region prior to being published and disseminated. An effort is being made to develop standardized points of views on various humanitarian issues to compliment this manual. The existing points of view from the Federation's Secretariat will be presented in a series of focus groups to validate their impact in Latin American audiences. The Red Cross Society of Panama has agreed to lead the effort in promoting the active participation of the National Societies in the region in presenting humanitarian issues in regional venues such as the Latin American Parliament and the Secretariat for the Central America Integration.

Constraints

A new programme coordinator started in late February, which meant limited the Regional Delegation's ability to enhance coordination with National Societies, PNS and the ICRC during the early part of the year. In addition, fundraising coordinator post cannot be filled at this time because there is currently no donor support. Mapping exercises will start to gather as much information on the level of fundraising activities by National Societies in the region with the intent of measuring some of the results to determine the cost effectiveness and yields of these campaigns.

[Revised appeal budget below; click here to return to the title page and contact information.](#)

BUDGET 2005

PROGRAMME BUDGETS SUMMARY

Appeal no.: 01.43/2005

Name: CENTRAL AMERICA

PROGRAMME:	Health & Care	Disaster Management	Humanitarian Values	Organisational Development	Coordination & Implementation	Emergency	Total
	CHF	CHF	CHF	CHF	CHF	CHF	CHF
Shelter & construction	0	0	0	10,000	0	0	10,000
Clothing & textiles	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Food	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Seeds & plants	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Water & Sanitation	12,000	0	0	10,000	0	0	22,000
Medical & first aid	0	0	0	10,000	0	0	10,000
Teaching materials	33,500	78,200	0	3,000	3,000	0	117,700
Utensils & tools	2,000	0	0	1,500	0	0	3,500
Other relief supplies	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
SUPPLIES	47,500	78,200	0	34,500	3,000	0	163,200
Land & Buildings	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Vehicles	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Computers & telecom	0	2,400	0	56,665	0	0	59,065
Medical equipment	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Other capital exp.	0	11,000	0	0	0	0	11,000
CAPITAL EXPENSES	0	13,400	0	56,665	0	0	70,065
Warehouse & Distribution	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Transport & Vehicules	24,945	1,200	3,000	4,738	0	0	33,883
TRANSPORT & STORAGE	24,945	1,200	3,000	4,738	0	0	33,883
Programme Support	75,394	70,690	16,177	77,497	9,871	0	249,628
PROGRAMME SUPPORT	75,394	70,690	16,177	77,497	9,871	0	249,628
Personnel-delegates	244,476	140,000	0	108,000	0	0	492,475
Personnel-national staff	97,740	134,252	0	84,125	12,098	0	328,215
Consultants	61,800	34,660	0	42,804	20,000	0	159,264
PERSONNEL	404,016	308,912	0	234,929	32,098	0	979,955
W/shops & Training	298,477	255,300	153,805	570,190	55,040	0	1,332,811
WORKSHOPS & TRAINING	298,477	255,300	153,805	570,190	55,040	0	1,332,811
Travel & related expenses	74,980	57,600	8,550	106,968	38,850	0	286,948
Information	60,380	71,840	59,500	52,043	7,000	0	250,762
Other General costs	190,143	230,400	7,840	54,726	6,000	0	489,108
GENERAL EXPENSES	325,503	359,840	75,890	213,737	51,850	0	1,026,819
TOTAL BUDGET:	1,175,835	1,087,542	248,872	1,192,256	151,859	0	3,856,363