

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

23 December 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. 2, Period covered: 16 May to 31 October 2005; Appeal coverage: 56%; Outstanding needs: CHF 1,788,061 (USD 1,408,558 or EUR 1,159,544).

Appeal target: 4,062,018 (USD 3,200,543 or EUR 2,633,607). This appeal has been revised from CHF 3,856,363 to CHF 4,062,018.

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

Related Emergency or Annual Appeals: Pan American Disaster Response Unit Annual Appeal (05AA040), El Salvador: Floods and Volcanic Activity (05EA020), Central America, Mexico and Haiti: Floods from Hurricane Stan (05EA021), Caribbean, Central America and Mexico: Hurricane Wilma (05EA024)

Programme summary: Much progress has been made during the reporting period towards the objectives of the 2005 Annual Appeal. The regional health programme has strengthened the Central American Health Network (REDCAMP-SALUD) through the creation of a website where National Societies can share best practices, methodologies and lessons learned amongst their peers and have access to the latest activities being carried out in the different health programme areas. REDCAMP-SALUD also held its 6th Regional Workshop on "Psychosocial Support Programmes" in San Jose, Costa Rica, where the manual on "Psychosocial First Aid" was approved. This manual is now being presented as the official regional psychosocial support resource. Donations by the Norwegian and Swedish Red Crosses made it possible for the regional health team to develop two very successful projects that were not presented in the appeal. These consisted of a pilot project that uses taxi drivers as a means to pass on key messages regarding HIV/AIDS prevention and anti-stigma and anti-discrimination, and a media campaign developed with the international advertising agency McCann Erickson titled "*Nobody has the Truth Written on Their Face. Protect Yourself. Use a Condom*".

The centre of reference for disaster preparedness and the centre of reference for community based disaster management education are both fully operational and are providing support to the National Societies in the region. Two NITs training sessions have been held, and the centre of reference for disaster preparedness has completed a NITs facilitators' manual with the purpose of harmonizing training methodology in the region. The centre of reference for community based disaster management education completed the first four modules of the "Better be ready..." series; these VCA training tools have been copyrighted and continue to be produced with the support of the Regional Delegation.

The humanitarian principles and values programme has been working on the development of a website for the regional communications network, which will provide a common platform for information exchange in the region. The Spanish Red Cross has established a regional strategy for violence prevention with the support of the humanitarian principles and values programme and the humanitarian principles and values coordinator has been supporting the regional health team in the taxi pilot project in Honduras.

The organizational development programme has lent its support to the drafting of Strategic Plans for Guatemala, Honduras and Panama, the finalization of revision of the Nicaraguan Red Cross's Statutes, and the start of a revision process in the Costa Rican and Salvadorean Red Cross Societies that will lead to the drafting of the Strategic Plan. The terms of reference for the regional network for organizational development have been approved. The organizational development programme has defined a strategy to strengthen volunteer and management policy through a regional study and the development of an emergency volunteering protocol. The continental community integrated programme forum, held in October, helped the reinforcement of the organizational structure of National Society branches by developing a standardized approach to community integrated programming. Improved coordination efforts with partner organizations are leading to an improved hurricane response system on a regional level whilst efforts to encourage the adoption of regional methodologies in the programmatic areas are being supported by the thematic networks.

The budget has been revised upwards to reflect additional health activities in El Salvador, as well as additional activities in coordination, cooperation, representation and strategic partnerships.

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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

This reporting period has seen substantial progress made in the implementation of the annual appeal for Central America and the Caribbean. However, in the second half of the reporting period the region was hard hit by the 2005 hurricane season, which was the strongest and longest on record. The hurricane season began with Adrian in May, continued with Hurricanes Stan and Wilma and finally concluded with Gamma, the last of the season, which hit Nicaragua and Honduras and required Federation intervention. The impact of these disasters deflected much of the energies of the Regional Delegation and the affected National Societies, shifting attention away from ongoing development projects.

Although the onset of the hurricane season helped demonstrate the improved capacity of the National and Regional Intervention Teams (NITs and RITs) in the region, which were able to respond effectively to these emergencies, the limitations of the current organizational structure of the regional centre of reference for disaster preparedness in El Salvador and the regional centre of reference for community based disaster management education in Costa Rica were revealed. The coordinator of the regional centre of reference for disaster preparedness is also the relief director of the Salvadorean Red Cross Society and the coordinator of the regional centre of reference for community based disaster management education is also the director of disaster preparedness of the Costa Rican Red Cross. Both directors are obliged to respond to an emergency when it takes place, with the effectiveness of the centres decreasing during their departure. Agreements have been made with the two National Societies to correct these organizational structure problems in 2006.

Implementation of the appeal in the first half of the year was gravely affected by delays in receiving funds from the major donors and in unforeseen changes in funding patterns. This situation is further complicated by the fact that some of the funds received have to be returned to the donor if not spent before the end of the calendar year. This has resulted in serious problems of trying to implement a year-long programme in half that time. The delegation has

dedicated a great deal of time in trying to improve relationships with the major donors to ensure that these problems do not reoccur in 2006.

The relocation of the disaster preparedness delegate to Geneva in August has left gaps in the disaster preparedness programme. Recruitment problems have interfered with the assignment of a new disaster preparedness delegate. In the meantime, a disaster preparedness coordinator has been filling this position temporarily, but has been heavily involved in the hurricane operations. The position will not be filled until early 2006.

On a more positive note, unforeseen donations from two donors made it possible for the regional health team to develop two very successful projects that were not presented in the appeal: a project in Honduras funded by the Norwegian Red Cross that is using taxi drivers to pass on messages regarding HIV/AIDS prevention and anti-stigma and anti-discrimination, and a media campaign in Panama funded by the Swedish Red Cross promoting the use of condoms (*for more information please see objective 2 of the health and care section*).

Activities under this appeal were carried out with funding from the British Department for International Development (DFID), the Federation's Capacity Building Fund (CBF) and the British, German, Norwegian, Spanish and Swedish Red Cross Societies.

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 Programme has continued to support partnerships between National Societies and other partner organizations in line with the Strategy 2010 and the Santiago de Chile Commitment by aiding the strengthening of National Society health programming, regional networks and the joint Memorandum of Understanding with the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO).

In June the Honduran Red Cross (HRC) invited the regional health delegate and regional HIV/AIDS officer to participate in a workshop leading to the design of a new national health plan and HIV/AIDS strategic plan. The workshop had excellent attendance and consisted of representatives from the National Society's headquarters and branches, and representatives from the Ministry of Health and PAHO. The national health plan and HIV/AIDS strategic plan are now in the final draft form and will be presented for approval to the HRC national council in January 2006.

The Central American health network (REDCAMP-SALUD) was further strengthened throughout the reporting period through the launch of its webpage – <http://www.cruzroja.org/salud/redcamp> – and through two meetings of its technical committee. The 6th REDCAMP-SALUD Regional Workshop on “Psychosocial Support Programmes” was held in San Jose, Costa Rica in September with the participation of all Central American National Societies and three South American National Societies. The meeting was organized by the Costa Rican Red Cross psychosocial support team, REDCAMP-SALUD and the Federation Reference Centre on Psychosocial Support Programmes (PSP) in Copenhagen, Denmark. The regional manual on “Psychosocial First Aid” was presented and approved as the official regional PSP resource.

In early September in Honduras a follow-up meeting of the Central American Presidents and Technical Seminars Meeting, which had been held in Panama in May, approved the main recommendations promoting the importance of REDCAMP-SALUD as a network promoting high-quality health programmes. The Honduran Red Cross REDCAMP-SALUD representative and the regional health delegate gave a presentation on REDCAMP-SALUD activities and the regional health plan of action to all the Central American Red Cross presidents. Very positive feedback was received from the participants and recognition was paid to the advances in the health programme since the signing of the Santiago de Chile Agreement in April 2003.

In mid-October in Washington DC the regional health delegate attended an important meeting with the head of the Federation's Americas department, the head of the health department in Geneva and the regional health delegate from the Lima Regional Delegation to discuss with PAHO the extension of the joint Memorandum of Understanding (MoU). The meeting was very positive with agreements reached on an improved draft MoU focusing on mother and child health, HIV/AIDS, voluntary non-remunerated blood donation (VNRBD) and health in emergencies. The possibilities for increased collaboration in psychosocial support programmes and water and sanitation were also discussed. PAHO will draft a document on the general agreements that came out of the meeting and share it with the Federation to assess how the new agreement can be worded.

The REDCAMP-SALUD technical committee representatives from El Salvador and Honduras have carried out a review of the health indicators from the Santiago de Chile Agreement and have presented a draft document with much improved indicators. There are plans to have this document approved at the next meeting of the REDCAMP-SALUD technical committee in early 2006. The document has also been shared with the Lima Regional Delegation to see how it can be used as a continental resource.

Impact

REDCAMP-SALUD continues to provide a vehicle for promotion of health issues and is gradually becoming the voice of the National Societies' health programmes in Central America. The Panama Regional Delegation has also been working much closer with the Lima Regional Delegation on programmatic issues and in sharing ideas and resources. This will continue to improve in 2006. The network website is proving very useful in sharing methodologies and lessons learned, but it must have greater participation from the REDCAMP-SALUD membership to maintain its relevance.

Constraints

Health department capacity continues to be a constraint in a number of National Societies. A number of National Societies have very strong and functional health departments whilst others have some way to go before they can really commit to the objectives set out in the Santiago de Chile Agreement. What is evident, however, is the commitment and professionalism of all health representatives throughout the region. It is clear that some National Societies have to work on key areas such as health department structure; volunteer recruitment and retention; linkages with Ministries of Health and other agencies and fundraising to support sustainable programmes. The regional health team is working together with the regional organizational development programme to assess how National Societies can receive assistance in these key areas.

The constraint expressed in the previous programme update with respect to the acceptance of REDCAMP-SALUD as the regional voice for health programming has to a great extent been resolved through dialogue with the National Societies' leadership in events such as the Presidents' meeting in Honduras and through better communication at a national and regional level.

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 reporting period has seen a number of clear and concrete advances in the region as responses to the HIV/AIDS epidemic continue to be scaled up. The scaling-up has focused on four critical and interlinked areas: Youth Peer Education, Social Mobilization, Social Marketing/Mass Media Campaigns, and Anti Stigma/Anti-Discrimination and Advocacy.

Youth Peer Education: The Red Cross Societies of Costa Rica, Honduras and Panama are currently implementing the “Together we Can” youth peer education methodology with impressive results. By the end of the reporting period, 1,189 adolescents had been exposed to the programme even though Costa Rica only began implementation in August. The three National Societies are committed to increasing impact in the remaining months of 2005 and throughout 2006 by reaching more peers. As the multiplier system continues to grow, the numbers of peers reached will incrementally increase.

The “Together we Can” Monitoring & Evaluation Toolkit is nearing its final phase of production and will assist the Federation in measuring impact from a qualitative perspective. The final preparation and production of the toolkit was facilitated by a youth peer educator from the Red Cross Society of Panama who is a graphic designer by profession, thus making the final product more relevant and user friendly.

Social Mobilization: In July the Regional Delegation began a pilot project in Honduras, El Salvador and Guatemala that uses taxi drivers as a means to pass on key messages about HIV/AIDS prevention and anti-stigma and anti-discrimination. The campaign is managed by the regional humanitarian principles and values coordinator and to date has proved to be an unqualified success. (See the humanitarian principles and values section below)

Social Marketing / Mass Media Campaigns: In March the regional health programme launched the “*Nobody has the Truth Written on Their Face. Protect Yourself. Use a Condom*” campaign with the Red Cross Society of Panama and the international advertising agency, McCann Erickson. By the end of the reporting period it had reached over 500,000 people in Panama through publicity at bus shelters, on youth websites, in the national newspapers and on the radio. The campaign has been introduced into Honduras and Guatemala with plans to do so in Costa Rica early in 2006. There are also plans to launch it in the Caribbean in early December.



“*Nobody has the Truth Written on Their Face. Protect Yourself. Use a Condom*” campaign

Anti-Stigma/Anti-Discrimination and Advocacy: All National Societies in the region are involved in programmes addressing the stigma and discrimination that continues to be shown towards people living with the HIV/AIDS. The planned high-profile Red Cross presence at the Central American HIV/AIDS Congress (CONCASIDA) to be held in El Salvador in November will further assist the regional health team in promoting its programmes of tolerance and respect for people living with HIV/AIDS.

Impact

The Red Cross is becoming much more relevant in terms of its role in the fight against HIV/AIDS. The Federation’s involvement in high-profile campaigns such as “The Faces Campaign” has provided it with a strong platform to advocate for better HIV/AIDS prevention and for tolerance and respect for those living with the virus. Many National Societies are showing real leadership and an openness to work on campaigns that some time ago would have been viewed as controversial, such as the condom promotion campaign.

Constraints

Whilst some National Societies are showing openness and leadership, others are unfortunately reluctant to play a role due to entrenched traditionalism and conservatism. This tends to exist at the highest level of some National Societies and is creating barriers for committed health professionals and the youth volunteers to play a meaningful role in HIV/AIDS programmes within their countries. Another critical constraint is problems with volunteer recruitment and retention which, as elsewhere in the region, is having a detrimental impact on the regional health team's youth peer education programmes.

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, a big step towards harmonizing approaches and increasing impact was taken in September with the holding of the "Continental Workshop on Mother and Child Health" in Panama City, supported by the American, Canadian, Norwegian and Swedish Red Cross Societies and attended by twelve National Societies from Central America, South America and the Caribbean. Consensus was reached on a number of key areas and roles were better defined. In the most bilateral region in the world it is important that the Federation has a clearly defined role to play, with many Partner National Societies (PNS), including the American, Canadian, French, Italian, Netherlands, Spanish and Swiss Red Cross Societies, carrying out specific projects throughout the Americas with their regional sister Societies. The majority of National Societies are carrying out high-quality mother and child interventions, with most using the PAHO-sponsored "Integrated Management of Childhood Illnesses" approach.

In voluntary non-remunerated blood donation the regional health programme continues to work with the Federation in Geneva and its counterparts in the Lima Regional Delegation in the planning of the 10th Colloquium on VNRBD to be held in Santiago de Chile in March 2006. The regional health programme also continues to work closely with PAHO and the McCann Erickson advertising agency in formulating a regional campaign for voluntary non-remunerated blood donations (VNRBD). The agency has committed to presenting its ideas at the colloquium on a social marketing / mass media campaign for VNRBD.

In emergency health the regional health delegate visited Guatemala after Hurricane Stan in mid October to work with the Guatemalan Red Cross (GRC) in putting together their health plan of action. The plan of action consists of separate but integrated focuses on mother and child health, HIV/AIDS and psychosocial support programmes (PSP). The Norwegian Red Cross has recently contracted a bilateral delegate who will take responsibility for the water and sanitation rehabilitation phase. Good coordination exists between the Federation, the Guatemalan Red Cross and Norwegian Red Cross in the implementation of the plan of action, with the GRC working closely with other agencies such as universities on the PSP component of the plan.

Following the REDCAMP-SALUD workshop mentioned in objective 1 above, the Panama and Lima Regional Delegations have contracted a consultant to work on a "Continental Psychosocial Health Strategy". This document is due in early 2006 and will assist National Societies in the planning and implementation of PSP programmes.

The Salvadorean Red Cross Society (SRC) completed their manuals on "Working Successfully with Communities" and "Micro projects" and the regional health team hopes to use these as a regional resource through REDCAMP-SALUD. The SRC has also completed the educational models on "The Management of Community Health Projects" with the University of Central America and it is hoped that they can find funding to continue this initiative.

The regional health delegate participated in a teleconference with Geneva, Lima, and American Red Cross on regional response to the avian flu virus. Communication with Geneva is ongoing and information on the epidemic has been sent out to all regional National Societies and has been posted on the web page.

Impact

In the area of mother and child health, National Societies continue to carry out valuable work with the most vulnerable communities in their countries in association with other key strategic allies through the promotion of vaccinations, focusing on hygiene and diarrhoea reduction and behavioural changes, such as the promotion of breast feeding.

Constraints

Lack of funding remains an issue; despite this the regional health programme has managed to achieve greater clarity in terms of approach and methodologies.

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)

The Guatemalan Red Cross continues its interventions in the five branches in the southwest of the country – in Tecun Uman, El Palmar, Coatepeque, Mazaltenango and Rethalhuleu.

The mother and child health programme, using the “Integrated Management of Childhood Illnesses” methodology, has proven very difficult to implement since there have been a series of problems with the financing of the programme. The regional health delegate visited Coatepeque in July and visited a number of the target communities. Unfortunately, there had been very little activity for some time, although the branch and communities were still totally committed to the programme’s implementation. The same could be observed in regards to the HIV/AIDS programme and, in particular, water and sanitation.

In September the regional health delegate participated in a three-day workshop with the Guatemalan and Norwegian Red Cross Societies to define a three-year continuation of the Norwegian Red Cross’ support towards the health programme. The workshop was very productive and resulted in a clear three-year plan of action in each of the three key programme activity areas – IMCI, HIV/AIDS and water and sanitation. The Norwegian Red Cross intends to support the GRC for another 3 years in a more bilateral manner and they have since put a delegate in place. It is hoped that this will help resolve the long-standing issues regarding the timely financing of the programme through 2006 – 2008.

The Guatemalan Red Cross is doing excellent work in HIV/AIDS and has shown a lot of initiative in anti-stigma/anti-discrimination, as well as in prevention. Apart from the Norwegian Red Cross-supported projects, funding has come from the Spanish Red Cross. In water and sanitation there is a lot of potential, but the National Society’s water and sanitation technical unit needs financial support to realize this potential. The same can be said for mother and child health. The GRC has also committed to getting involved in psychosocial support programmes, and the Hurricane Stan emergency operation is giving them a great opportunity to experiment and learn in this area.

Impact

The commitment of the GRC at the headquarters and branch level to carry out high-impact health programmes has been very impressive.

Constraints

Unfortunately, a lack of funding has caused a problem with implementation. This has had serious implications for programme impact and for the credibility of the National Society.

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

Progress/Achievements (activities implemented within this objective)

Due to a lack of funding, no activities have been carried out towards this objective. However, the regional health team has continued to give active support to the Honduran Red Cross through other regional programmes. The Honduran Red Cross is making positive progress across its health portfolio.

Impact

The Honduran Red Cross has done much during the reporting period to improve its health programme in mother and child health, voluntary non-remunerated blood donation and HIV/AIDS. They have also completed a process leading to the implementation of their national health plan and HIV/AIDS strategic plan.

Constraints

No funding towards this objective has been received to date.

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)

The regional water and sanitation delegate departed the Regional Delegation during the reporting period and has not been replaced due to funding constraints. As a result, no activities have been carried out towards this objective.

Disaster Preparedness

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)

In July the Regional Delegation completed a Regional Strategy for Disaster Preparedness that will aid in the implementation of the Plan of Action of the Inter-American Conference. This strategy attempts to consolidate and implement an integrated disaster management system by: strengthening the concept and operation of the disaster network; establishing adequate coordination; improving communication and information mechanisms; increasing and strengthening ties with community systems; strengthening the Red Cross network through cooperation with other organization; adopting minimum standards in risk management for disasters at local and global levels and harmonizing methodologies and training guides.

The regional centre of reference for disaster prevention in El Salvador was created to further strengthen disaster preparedness in National Societies of the region. Since the creation of the centre, two National Intervention Teams

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(NITs) training sessions have been held, one in El Salvador in August and the other in Guatemala at the beginning of October. The centre has completed the development of a NIT's facilitator's manual with the purpose of harmonizing training methodologies in the region. This manual was drafted after several meetings in Guatemala, El Salvador and other National Societies, and internships in the Honduran and Salvadorean Red Cross Societies. The manual was introduced in a pilot phase for its evaluation in a NIT training workshop in El Salvador. This evaluation improved the facilitator's manual and a revised version was presented during the NITs training in Guatemala in October. The regional disaster preparedness programme will continue to work with the National Societies of the region to further improve the facilitator's manual.

The purposes of NITs initiatives were disseminated throughout the eastern region of El Salvador in June and were well received. In July, the regional centre of reference for disaster prevention developed the necessary tools for the cultural and psychological evaluation of NIT candidates, allowing for a more standardized approach to candidate selection.

The presidents of the Central American National Societies signed an important agreement on mutual collaboration in case of disaster during the Presidents Meeting and Technical Seminar held in May. This meeting led to the approval of REDCAMP-Disaster, a regional network that lends support to National Societies in disaster preparedness by promoting communication and the exchange of information. In July the Regional Delegation signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Coordination Centre for the Prevention of Natural Disasters in Central America (CEPREDENAC) with the objective of establishing the guidelines for bilateral cooperation in order to disseminate the Social Vulnerability Reduction Strategy in Central America, in accordance with the Strategy 2010.

In May and June two meetings were held in El Salvador with the Community Disaster Response Teams (CDRT), the Salvadorean Red Cross and the national response system institutions to assure the sustainability and coordination of the Early Warning System Network. This network aids at-risk communities by allowing them to identify early warning signs and be prepared for disaster situations. Training in early warning systems through the Regional Centre has been finalized in several departments in El Salvador.

The Regional Delegation worked with the regional centre of reference for disaster prevention and the National Society to promote the dissemination of the National Emergency Plan in El Salvador. In May, dissemination initiatives covered 7 departmental branches, 20 local committees, and 27 departmental offices for a total of 207 participants; in June dissemination efforts were carried out in the department of Sonsonate with the assistance 31 staff members and volunteers; and in July assistance in dissemination initiatives was provided to 43 branches from the eastern region of El Salvador. This National Emergency Plan has also been presented to the National Society headquarters, and the San Salvador Brigade. This National Emergency Plan was put to use and contributed to reducing the impact of Hurricane Stan.

In June, the first information meeting with staff and volunteers of the San Miguel department branch was held to begin drawing up the departmental emergency plan, with the participation of the National Society president, branch chief and various volunteer group representatives (relief, lifeguard, youth and women). The San Miguel branch emergency plan was completed in July with the support of the Regional Delegation, and specific duties were assigned to different work groups. This plan was evaluated through two simulation exercises in the San Miguel and San Vicente branch emergency plan awareness-raising workshop held in August. In October an analysis of lessons learned in San Miguel was conducted with the participation of the NITs.

Also in June, the regional centre of reference for disaster prevention held an Information Tools in Case of Disaster Specialization Workshop, which consisted of training NITs members in the use of internet and web pages such as those of the Salvadorean Red Cross Society, the Federation, FedNet, DMIS and partner organizations. In total, 47 NITs members were trained. After this meeting it was decided that this training should be reinforced through these types of workshops in the following year.

Training in First Aid techniques has also continued in El Salvador with 575 people trained in 6 communities in two departments (La Libertad, La Union). This process was under the leadership of volunteers from various branches of the SRC.

Impact

The fact that National Societies now have trained NITs has made them better prepared to respond to and recover from disaster situations. NITs training methodology has also been harmonized through the efforts of the regional centre of reference for disaster prevention in El Salvador, and the creation of regional NITs facilitator guides.

Constraints

A major constraint for the regional centre of reference for disaster prevention in El Salvador is the fact that its director is also the relief director of the Salvadorean Red Cross Society. Since the relief director has to give priority to an emergency when it takes place, the centre would greatly benefit from an assistant that could carry out duties as director of the centre in case of an emergency.

The onslaught of Hurricane Stan delayed the planning process and limited the effectiveness of the NITs training sessions in Guatemala.

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 regional centre of reference for community based disaster management education in Costa Rica carried out several workshops and internships during the reporting period that have helped improve methodology and project management.

The centre has worked in creating community based disaster preparedness modules that have been printed and are being used in the region. The first five modules of the series “Better be ready...” have been printed and copyrighted with the support of the Regional Delegation: Risk Reduction, Protected School, Community First Aid and Prepared Family. These modules have been validated by all the National Societies in the region and have become an integral tool during Vulnerability Capacity Assessments (VCA) training and workshops in the past few months. In October, the first version of an interactive CD that will complement the first four modules was created in the regional centre of reference in Costa Rica. This CD will continue to be updated as more modules are produced. During the first week of October, consultants from PAHO and the Federation travelled to Costa Rica to revise and comment on the water and sanitation modules that the regional centre of reference in Costa Rica is working on.



First four “Better be ready...” Modules

The regional centre of reference in Costa Rica has been working on a communication and marketing plan for the modules in conjunction with the Regional Delegation and the Costa Rican Red Cross. The centre is also working on the creation of a webpage that will make materials available online, and a business plan for the centre to sell services to donors and NGOs. There have been at least 7 internships in the regional centre of reference in Costa during the reporting period.

VCA methodologies are continually being strengthened through meetings between National Societies in the region and groups of VCA methodology facilitators. Five VCA training sessions were carried out by the centre in El Salvador, and the centre in Costa Rica carried out a training session in Cuba in early July.

The ProVention project is being carried out in four countries: Belize, Costa Rica, Guatemala and Honduras. This project aims to provide Red Cross Societies, communities and local authorities with a simple methodology with

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which to develop community based VCA, which will help them identify and develop community-based activities to reduce vulnerability to floods, drought, hurricanes, landslides and earthquakes, with a special focus on schools, primary health care facilities, community centres and potable water supply systems. Additionally, this project will provide the Federation, through its Regional Delegations and PADRU, the basis for a system for collecting all vulnerability maps produced by the different communities involved in the project. These maps will be posted on the Federation's regional website for the Americas and will also be shared with PAHO's Regional Disaster Centre for Latin America and the Caribbean (CRID), located in San José, Costa Rica. The four modules currently being produced by this project are Early Warning, Flooding, Shelter Management and School Maintenance.

Impact

The regional centre of reference for community based disaster management education in Costa Rica has had a positive impact on the improvement of disaster preparedness throughout the region, carrying out a series of VCA workshops and completing the first four "Better be ready..." modules. The "Better be ready..." modules are aiding in building up resilience in local communities, providing important information for reducing impact and improving risk recovery.

The ProVention project has been useful in the dissemination of information modules for communities and partner organizations and will result in the digitalization of the vulnerability maps of participating communities. These maps will be available online on the Federation's regional website for the Americas and the Pan American Health Organization website by the end of the year.

Constraints

There has been difficulty finding funding to accomplish all activities planned for this 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)

As mentioned in the organizational development section of this report (please see below), the Guatemalan Red Cross was developing a strategic plan which includes a focus on strengthening their capacities in disaster preparedness and response. The programme has also continued to fund the important position of national secretary for disaster management within the National Society, a key position in this disaster-prone country.

The Regional Delegation facilitated a NITs training session during the month of October, as part of the effort to harmonizing the NITs methodology in the region.

Constraints

Efforts to strengthening planning and human resources were interrupted by the onslaught of Hurricane Stan and emergency efforts undertaken by the Guatemalan Red Cross.

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 is strengthened.

Progress/Achievements (activities implemented within this objective)

Despite having received very few dedicated funds, the humanitarian principles and values programme has continued its important role in promoting the dissemination of the Principles and humanitarian values and strengthening the capacities of the National Societies of the region in this regard. A key strategy adopted has been to work through the other core area programmes to ensure that the principles and values are applied transversally to all Red Cross action.

As well as supporting the health and care programme (see below), the humanitarian principles and values coordinator also supported the organizational development programme during the reporting period. This includes participating actively in the planning and facilitation of the community integrated programming forum held at the end of October, providing valuable input into the volunteer management programme and supporting the implementation of the "system for information and follow-up on projects" (SISPRO) in the region. More details of all these projects can be found in the organizational development section of this report.

The regional communicators' network (REDICOM) and the regional humanitarian principles and values coordinator have worked closely in producing a number of television spots, training manuals and brochures that will be distributed to National Societies in Central America to highlight the importance of applying humanitarian principles and values in their work. This regional network also assisted in workshops facilitated in Costa Rica, Honduras, Nicaragua and Panama during the reporting period.

In October, the REDICOM website was launched with the purpose of strengthening the regional network and providing a common platform for information exchange. Although some of this website is still under construction, once it is complete it will serve as an important tool for disseminators and communicators, containing information about the different National Societies of the region and putting together into one place the different manuals and projects undertaken for the humanitarian principles and values programme.

Impact

The humanitarian principles and values coordinator is working with the respective delegates in each of the programme areas in order that principles and values are more and more integrated into all areas of National Society work.

Constraints

As mentioned above, the main problem faced by the humanitarian principles and values programme has been the lack of funding. The problem of funding a core programme which all agree is vital but few are prepared to fund, is not unique to this region. This constraint, together with the importance of ensuring that principles and values are not dealt with in isolation but as part and parcel of the work of the Red Cross has resulted in the transversal manner in which the programme is being implemented. However, with only 45 percent of the requested funding received the programme was forced to reduce its staffing to one person, which clearly limits the impact of the programme. At times the capacity of the coordinator has been stretched since, as well as managing the humanitarian principles and values programme he also acts as the focal point for Federation involvement in Honduras.

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 humanitarian principles and values programme has continued to carry out campaigns that promote advocacy in the areas of youth violence, non-discrimination and the rights of migrant populations. Included in this work is the support that has been provided to the Spanish Red Cross in the establishment of a Regional Strategy for Violence Prevention which was developed in Central America during the year and was presented to the National Societies' president during a meeting in Honduras at the end of August 2005 for their approval. The programme has also been involved in the facilitation of various workshops to raise awareness of the problem of youth violence and with regard to the continued implementation of a project to promote tolerance and anti-discrimination of people living with HIV/AIDS in various countries of the region. In September the humanitarian principles and values coordinator began to work closely with various National Societies of the region in developing a regional strategy for advocacy.

Humanitarian principles and values workshops contributed to the development of an awareness-raising and violence prevention programme by the Costa Rican Red Cross and national youth leaders. The CRRC also worked on the Zero Percent project, which consisted of 5 television spots promoting zero tolerance for violence, which was shown on national television.

In July the regional humanitarian principles and values coordinator worked with the regional health team, in the development of a pilot project that uses taxi drivers to transmit key messages on HIV/AIDS prevention and anti-stigma and anti-discrimination. This campaign is managed by the humanitarian principles and values coordinator and has proved to be an unqualified success. The campaign currently consists of working with 50 taxi drivers in Honduras and over 160 in El Salvador. During this pilot phase, and in Honduras alone, up to 400 passengers are reached per day with these key messages. Unfortunately it was not possible to run the pilot project in Guatemala due to the National Society having to invest all its energy in the Hurricane Stan operation. It is anticipated that this project will begin in Guatemala in early 2006.

The regional humanitarian principles and values and the regional health teams, along with the Honduran Red Cross, produced a CD with key information about HIV/AIDS that the taxi drivers play for their clients as well as a hand out of information that allows them to discuss stigma and prevention with their customers. Taxi drivers who complete the programme receive free first aid classes and a first aid kit for their vehicle. Funding allowing, this project will continue in the three pilot countries in 2006 and will be extended to Panama and Costa Rica.

In September the results of this pilot project in Honduras were published in an article for *Noticias de America* in an effort to communicate the importance of this initiative. This same month the coordinator and the Honduran Red Cross began a campaign of anti-stigma and respect for people living with HIV/AIDS in the Audio and Video Chain of Honduras.

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.

The focus of this objective during the reporting period has been working with a number of National Societies in the processes of strategic planning, review of statutes, organizational restructuring and the continued development of tools to support National Societies' organizational development.

The Red Cross Society of Panama (PRC) completed the first draft of its strategic plan and submitted it for review and validation by the central committee, which represents all the branches of the National Society, and is now being

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reviewed by the national programme coordinators. The strategic plan was drafted in accordance to the objectives set out in the Plan of Action of the XVII Inter-American Conference for 2003-2007. This plan includes a detailed strategy in the area of disaster preparedness. This plan was drafted in conjunction with branch representatives, members of the governing and managing bodies, volunteer group representatives and national programme coordinators. Members of this National Society also received training on strategic planning and project planning processes (PPP). A project for the strengthening of the National Training Centre has been submitted to the Capacity Building Fund and a respond is awaited.

Three proposals for the organizational structure of National Society were drafted by the PRC headquarters and branches, with the participation of branch representatives on a regional level, volunteer representatives and national programme coordinators. These proposals will be submitted for study to the PRC, and decisions about any changes to organizational structures will be taken once the strategic plan is approved.

The Costa Rican Red Cross approved its annual operational plan for 2006 during the reporting period. The plan was drafted by the governing board together with all branches, national volunteer representatives, management team members and national programme coordinators in a participative process. The governing board also approved the proposal to begin the revision process of the national development plan in November. This first stage will deal with diagnostics and identifying trends at the national and regional level. In addition, members of the governing and managing bodies, national volunteer representatives, branch representatives and national programme coordinators received PPP in training.

The Guatemalan Red Cross drafted a first version of its new strategic plan, which was revised by the national Society's governance during the reporting period. However, further work on the finalization of this plan was interrupted by the impact of Hurricane Stan in October.

The process of revising the statutes of the Nicaraguan Red Cross (NRC) was completed following the holding of a General Assembly. The final version of the by-laws was sent to the Joint Commission and the government entity in charge of the official registry. The cooperation process for organizational development was interrupted due to serious internal difficulties in the NRC, which prevented the main topics contained in the agenda for the change process from being adequately dealt with by governing and management bodies. The head of the Regional Delegation has communicated the Federation's concern about the ongoing situation to the National Society president and the ICRC, keeping in mind that the complexity of this situation does not only affect the organizational development programme.

The Regional Delegation and the Salvadorean Red Cross Society signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) that will promote the completion of the following objectives: revision, update and approval of the National Society's statutes by the executive council; validation and dissemination of the development and strategic plan; analysis and approval of the volunteer policy by the executive council; and dissemination of the "Manual for Well Functioning Branches". Additional organizational development activities were carried out in the branches of Unión and Inipucá, facilitated by the Regional Delegation, within the framework of the community integrated programmes (please see community integrated programming section below).

The Organizational Development Project Information System (SISPRO) is a software programme aimed to be used as an organizational development tool for National Societies, collecting together in one place information to be used in project development, as well as proposals and projects already developed. The regional organizational development programme coordinated the promotion and validation of SISPRO in Geneva and with the Red Cross Societies of Costa Rica, Cuba, Spain and Panama. In Honduras an additional training session was held, jointly sponsored by the Regional Delegation, through the efforts of the regional humanitarian principles and values coordinator, and the Honduran Ministry for International Cooperation. An evaluation summary reveals that SISPRO is a valuable tool that the Red Cross can offer other organizations and international cooperation agencies in their quest for better project planning and project management.

The Continental Forum on "Comprehensive Community Programmes, Social Volunteering Programmes and Branch Development", which was held in Panama in October with the participation of the National Societies from the

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region, provided National Societies with new elements for the development of branches through the exchange of knowledge and experiences.

Impact

Almost all of the National Societies involved in the statutory revision process and/or the drafting/revision of strategic plans are in compliance with their objectives and there is an acceptable level of commitment, participation and appropriation both in the headquarters and branches.

Constraints

Some National Societies are experiencing delays in complying with results because their timetable of activities have been affected by disasters, such as the hurricane season, and internal governing and/or management problems.

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)

The terms of reference for the organizational development regional network, its regional objectives, and the location of its regional headquarters, in compliance with commitments approved during the Presidents and Technical Seminars Meeting in Panama, were approved by all National Society members during the follow up meeting in Tegucigalpa in September. The document "Common Focus on Development" was introduced to presidents, directors general and members of the regional network. All National Societies have responded to consultations carried out by Geneva's organizational department.

The organizational development regional network coordinator and three other members assisted in the drafting of the network's regional youth programme, and a webpage for the organization development network is currently under construction.

In addition, the regional youth network has been reactivated, with a revised regional action plan and a new coordinator.

Impact

The commitments acquired during the XVIII Regional Meeting of Presidents and Technical Seminars for the drafting, adoption and approval of the network's terms of reference have been complied with, and the network is actively participating in the consolidation of monitoring tools for these commitments. There was also active participation by network members in designing the agenda and case studies for the Continental Forum "Comprehensive Community Programs, Social Volunteering Programs and Development of Branches", and an increased level of communication and consultation between network members.

Constraints

The understandable priority given to disaster preparedness for the hurricane season has interfered with the ability to carry out regional network meetings and exchange activities amongst members.

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)

The National Societies in the region established the role and manner of participation of social volunteers in integrated community programs during the Continental Forum held in Panama in October. This was an important opportunity for National Societies to share experiences of working with volunteers at the community level.

Volunteer policies were approved by the Honduran Red Cross national council, and directors and volunteers from eight branches received training and defined strategies for follow-up and application of the volunteer policy. The Honduran Red Cross continued to implement volunteer strengthening activities in four branches in the south of the country (Yuscarán, Teupasenti, Danlí and Paraíso) with funding from the Capacity Building Fund (CBF) and have benefited from the participation of Red Cross directors, volunteers and staff, as well as leaders of key sectors of the population. In addition, workshops for directors and volunteers were carried in the Honduran Red Cross branches of Catacamas and Juticalpa.

With the approval of the national council, the Mexican Red Cross (MRC) established a national volunteer coordination office and defined its duties according to the Federation's volunteering policy and guidelines in the document "Management Cycle for Volunteers." The (MRC) national council approved the development of a national volunteering strategy and agreed to hold a national meeting to prepare this strategy in November.

Work in volunteering is also ongoing within other National Societies in the region. The Salvadorean Red Cross is preparing a draft document regarding National Society volunteers with the participation of volunteers from various branches. The draft has been submitted to governing and management bodies for approval. In the Dominican Republic, the volunteer management cycle was revealed at the national planning meeting of the Dominican Red Cross and included in the revision of the National Development Plan. Finally, in the drafting process of the strategic plan, the Red Cross Society of Panama continues to disseminate the volunteer policy and management plan amongst volunteer groups and branches.

Within the Regional Delegation's 2006-2007 plan, a strategy for the development of volunteers is defined based on the following: support for approval and implementation of the volunteering policy and management plan; regional study on qualitative and quantitative composition of volunteer groups; preparing the form for the formative/development itinerary for the career of volunteers; preparing and approving the protocol on volunteering during emergencies; and advocacy before governing offices for volunteering matters. In coordination with the ICRC and with the support of the national coordination of volunteers, the Mexican Red Cross and family linking officers of National Societies in the region received training on the subject of emergency volunteering. Family linking is one of the key areas to take into consideration when preparing the regional volunteering protocol.

The regional volunteer strategy was presented to all PNSs and the ICRC at the cooperation meeting of the Americas Department. The Regional Delegation started a dialogue with the Spanish Red Cross in search of support for the implementation of the regional volunteer strategy through direct contact with national volunteering and planning officers at the headquarters in Madrid.

Another key part of organizational strengthening for National Societies is in the area of financial management. During the reporting period, the regional delegation organizational development team worked with the regional finance team to support the first regional meeting of National Society finance officers in the area of development and selecting financial advisors for the development network, to be held in December

Impact

Most National Societies are committed to the approval and implementation of the volunteering policy and management plan as expressed during the Presidents' meeting. This positive environment has generated other important institutional initiatives, such as the dialogue between National Society presidents in the region to support those National Societies who lack insurance for volunteers.

Constraints

Different factors have delayed the preparation of awareness and training materials on volunteering policies and management plans. However, the importance of these plans will continue to be stressed throughout the rest of the year. The regional meeting of finance officers was delayed until the beginning of December because the date initially set coincided with the VCA forum.

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 (GRC) is working towards having the characteristics of a well-functioning National Society by making important advancements in their management and volunteering policy. The GRC strategic plan was approved by the national council and is in the process of being published, and drafts of the volunteering policy and management plan were prepared.

These initiatives to strengthen the institutional framework and policy showed immediate results during the Hurricane Stan relief operation and was reflected in: the recognition given by the National Society's governance to the volunteers who took part in the immediate disaster response phase; the humanitarian emergency aid that was planned and delivered to volunteers affected by Hurricane Stan; and the planning and support activities carried out for branches which took part in the disaster response.

Impact

The impact of the Regional Delegation efforts to improve the functioning of the GRC through changes in governance and management can be observed in the quality of the strategic plan. The commitments acquired at a regional level for changes in volunteering policy and management plans, and the immediate results observed during the Hurricane Stan relief operations with the recognition and humanitarian aid given to emergency volunteers is a good precedent and an institutional example that should be followed by other National Societies.

Constraints

The emergency operation implemented in response to Hurricane Stan has resulted in the suspension of important activities, such as the National Volunteers' Meeting and General Assembly for elections to fill vacancies in the council and presentation of the strategic plan.

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)

Progress in strengthening the organizational capacity of branches through community integrated programming initiatives within the National Societies in the region. In particular, the Continental Community Integrated Programming Forum proved valuable in harmonizing the National Societies' approaches to community integrated programming and establishing several regional commitments regarding the organizational structure of branches.

An analysis of needs and capacities in relation to telecommunications had been carried out earlier in the year in the El Real branch of the Red Cross Society of Panama, with the participation of both the National Society headquarters and the branch, with the intention of improving communication with local communities in the event of disasters, such as floods. During the reporting period, the radio communications system in the branch was installed with the participation of the community, a group of volunteers, the branch directors, and representatives from the headquarters, with the support of the IT coordinator from the Regional Delegation. This project is also strengthening links between the disaster management and humanitarian principles and values programmes as the former provided technical support in training and installation of equipment and in VCA training for volunteers and the community, while the later provided training in humanitarian principles and values. It is expected that in 2006 a

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series of early warning and first aid micro-projects will be executed in the community with the purpose of optimizing the radio-communication system and strengthening the organizational development components of the branch.

The Salvadorean Red Cross Society began a community integrated program to strengthen the La Union departmental branch's capacity to reduce disaster vulnerability. This project consisted of organizational development, dissemination and disaster preparedness initiatives, and worked with the administrative and volunteering offices to strengthen the capacity of local authorities and communities by improving organizational structures and preparing VCA workshops. The project benefited 10 communities and has allowed the La Union branch to develop a water and sanitation project that will create absorption wells, treatment wells and absorption networks and will carry out training in the "Healthy House Water" campaign.

Additional activities in community integrated programming were carried out in Cuba, with the support of the Regional Delegation; information on these activities can be found in the Caribbean Programme Update.

Continental Community Integrated Programming Forum: Social Volunteers and Branch Development

The regional community integrated programming meeting that took place from 27 to 29 October in Panama was expanded to include National Societies from South America, thus expanding the scope of the meeting. Representatives from several National Societies in the region participated in this meeting, including: Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, the Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Jamaica, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama and Venezuela. Several PNS were also present: French Red Cross, Netherlands Red Cross and Swedish Red Cross. Members of the Federation Secretariat included the Lima Regional Delegation, the Panama Regional Delegation and the Geneva organizational development department.

The expected results for this forum were completed in their entirety and in accordance to the Plan of Action of the Inter-American Conference in Chile. A consensus regarding the concept of community integrated programming, the adoption and implementation of this programme, and key factors to keep in mind when working in community development were discussed. The participants of the forum agreed on mechanisms and commitments that should be adopted by branches to guarantee that beneficiaries are involved in the planning, implementation and evaluation of community integrated programming and to establish alliances with local authorities and organizations. The forum also served to define roles and mechanisms of cooperation between PNS, the Federation, and the ICRC in promoting community integrated programming within the National Societies of the region.

The Costa Rican Red Cross, with the support of the centre of reference in community based disaster management education, the Regional Delegation and the regional organizational development delegate, attended a workshop organized by the Lima Regional Delegation to develop a guide to community development. This workshop served as a follow up to important topics discussed in the continental forum and further strengthened communication and coordination efforts between the Regional Delegations and National Societies regarding community integrated programming.

Impact

The Panama Regional Delegation, in particular the disaster preparedness programme, worked on the design and organization of the continental forum, which proved important since it gave participants, and members of Regional Networks of all Programmes the opportunity to meet and exchange methodologies and tools used in Community Health (PHAST), Disaster Preparedness (VCA), OD (FOA) and Humanitarian Principles and Values (BPI) through case studies extracted from the projects implemented in NS, with complete bibliographies and materials translated from Spanish to English. This led to a substantial increase in the quantity and quality of bibliography, didactical materials and case studies, which are available in electronic and print versions for CIP.

Constraints

Emergency relief operation implemented in response to Hurricanes Wilma, Stan and Gamma delayed the work plans for El Salvador and Cuba.

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 (CAS) are in place and strategic alliances and National Society programme networks are reinforced.

Progress/Achievements (activities implemented within this objective)

Cooperation and Coordination

The onset of the hurricane season demonstrated the extent to which cooperation has improved in recent years between National Societies of the region and those working within the region, either multilaterally through the Federation or bilaterally, with the facilitation of the Federation. The very first hurricane – Adrian – which struck Central America, principally Honduras, before the official onset of the hurricane season, proved not to have a serious impact on the country. However, before the onset of the storm, the Honduran Red Cross, with the active support of the Federation (through PADRU) and the PNS working in the country collaborated in disaster preparedness measures undertaken by the National Society. Following the passage of the storm, a “lessons learned” activity was carried out and the Federation and Honduran Red Cross used this in order to strengthen their disaster response system in preparation for the remaining months of the hurricane season.

At the beginning of October countries from Guatemala to Costa Rica were hit hard by devastating rains caused by Hurricane Stan. The excellent collaboration between the different National Societies in the region demonstrated the capacities developed in the last two years as Regional Intervention Team (RITs) members and equipment from non affected National Societies were mobilized in a timely manner. The information flow was constant yet the challenge remains in pooling the appropriate information in the required formats to share with donors and external audiences. The cooperation agreement developed in mid-2004 between the Guatemalan Red Cross and its key Red Cross Movement partners (the Federation, the ICRC and a number of PNS) is being used to guide operations to respond to the hurricane at the national level, with all PNS, including the German, Netherlands, Norwegian and Spanish Red Cross Societies, working together within a common plan of action being led by the National Society.

The Guatemala cooperation agreement was adopted by the presidents of the Central American National Societies at their meeting in Panama in May as an indication of how they would wish to work with their partners in the future. All National Societies were reminded of the pertinence of this agreement during the various operations mounted during the hurricane season. It is the intention of the Regional Delegation to continue to build a joint vision of cooperation from this agreement, and these intentions have been built into the plans for 2006-07, to involve a participative review of cooperation experience within the region. This review will attempt to better understand the different models of cooperation operating in the region in the last few years (such as consortia, branch twinning, bilateral project funding), give space to the views and opinions of the Central American National Societies regarding their perception of these different experiences and build a common vision of the forms of cooperation that the Central American National Societies would like to develop for the future.

The Regional Delegation continued to maintain contact with and receive visits from PNS, both those active in the region and those wishing to strengthen their commitment with the National Societies in the region. Building alliances between partners in programme implementation is vital to turn theory and good intention into action and is a focus of the work of the Regional Delegation. The centre of reference for community based disaster management education continues its support to the Guatemalan and Nicaraguan Red Cross Societies in their implementation of DIPECHO IV projects together with the Italian, Netherlands and Spanish Red Cross Societies, through the development of community methodologies and materials in disaster preparedness. A similar approach is being undertaken in the area of HIV/AIDS, where Central American National Societies and PNS work in HIV/AIDS prevention and anti-discrimination projects using the “Together We Can” methodology and materials. In October, Panama hosted a Latin American regional meeting together with the American and Canadian Red Cross Societies, which focused on the need to scale up in community health and specifically maternal and child health. One of the

decisions of this meeting was to develop a common scale up strategy for the region, involving National Societies and their supporters. This scale up approach is reflected in next year's plans.

The Regional Delegation is currently engaged in digitalizing its library of Red Cross materials and products that have been developed with support of the regional delegates, in order to facilitate access for all National Societies. This virtual library will contain all newly revised Statutes, National Development Plans, Strategic Plans, educational tools and so forth. In the future this library could be expanded to include all materials that are being developed and used by Red Cross in the region. The collaboration with the Regional Centre for Disaster Information (CRID) in San Jose Costa Rica, where the Federation holds a seat on the board, has provided the centre of reference as well as the Regional Delegation with valuable methodologies for the production of CD based educational and informational tools.

It is worth noting that through the efforts of the Regional Delegation, high level meetings among international organizations present in Panama were held to review and discuss the common issues around the challenges in responding to the Haitian humanitarian crisis. Discussions with the Haitian Ambassador co-sponsored by Ciudad del Saber and the Regional Delegation helped build the integration of information managed by all international organization present in Panama. Some of this information has been useful in the cooperation effort the Regional Delegation manages in the cross border project in Hispaniola which will be referenced in the programme update for the Caribbean. UNICEF's Regional Management Team for the Americas participated in an orientation and coordination meeting in Geneva that was arranged by the Regional Delegation. The Regional Delegation continues to have presence and membership in different coordinating groups to further enhance the Red Cross programmes and services. Such is the case with the inter-agency steering committee task force managed by OCHA, where issues pertaining to disaster relief operations and disaster risk reduction are discussed and agreed upon.

Cooperation with the ICRC

The Federation and the ICRC continue to meet and share information on on-going work. At the end of August a joint meeting was held with the National Societies of the region to prepare for the forthcoming General Assembly and Council of Delegates meeting in Seoul, South Korea. In September a joint mission of the Federation and the ICRC visited the Nicaraguan Red Cross to continue work on contingency planning and continue support to the finalization of the Statutes revision.

Exchanges with the ICRC focus on the sharing of plans, particularly with regard to areas of mutual interest, such as leadership training, issues of integrity and communication and information. Meetings were held in the regional office of the ICRC in Mexico to align the Federation's plan of action for 2006-2007 with the ICRC's expected results for the same period.

Programme Networks

The four networks active in the region have continued to meet and work together in key thematic areas, as mentioned in the different programme areas above. The concept of National Societies within a region offering support to their sister National Societies in areas where they have a strength is not new; what is new is the attempt to systematize the approach and ensure high quality support is provided at all times. The development of networks is a key strategy for the region, particularly at a time when funds are limited. Taking stock of experience, the Federation aims to ensure the building in of safeguards to ensure that networks maintain their loose and flexible structure. This initiative also aims to bring together the coordinators of the different networks in order to share best practice and identify weaknesses to be addressed.

Building on the presidents' meeting held in May 2006, a follow-up meeting between presidents was held in Tegucigalpa in late August, to take stock of decisions made and ensure that implementation was on track in a number of key areas. The work supported by the Spanish Red Cross on a regional strategy for violence prevention resulted in the adoption of the strategy by the presidents at the Tegucigalpa meeting. The Spanish Red Cross will continue to work with the National Societies in the roll-out of this strategy, in close coordination with the Regional Delegation. The Regional Delegation intends to transfer the coordination of meetings with UNICEF, PLAN International and the International Organization for Migration (IOM) to the Spanish Red Cross for the purpose of developing a regional thematic proposal to be funded whereby all four agencies will provide a hotline service to

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children migrating through central America who are at risk of sexual exploitation, nutritional impairment, and or physical or psychological threats.

The Regional Delegation has included, as part of its strategy of enhancement of coordination and cooperation among international organizations and international NGOs, a session in all its planning meetings and network annual activities with representatives of such organizations. These sessions will help ensure exchange of information and knowledge. These efforts must be continued in 2006 and 2007 as it is anticipated that mutual trust and information could result in joint projects and the co-management of proposals.

Strategic Alliances and Advocacy

In mid September, following a joint initiative of the Regional Delegation and Latin American/Caribbean ECHO support office, ECHO convened a joint meeting of all Red Cross components in the Americas. The meeting enabled the different components to make presentations of their role and priorities in the region and also to carry out mutual strength/weakness/opportunities/threats analysis to improve the performance of the different programmes in 2006.

The Regional Delegation continues to be requested to participate as key note speakers/facilitators in training activities and regional conferences hosted by the organizations in the region. In the reporting period the Regional Delegation participated in the OCHA pre-hurricane meeting in Cuba which led to the four month integration of the Red Cross Movement into UN agency plans to further involve the Red Cross in the area of global response along with the United Nations. The donor meeting in Jamaica sponsored by the Caribbean Disaster Response Agency (CDERA) was useful in reaffirming the role of the Federation in disaster response in the Americas with donors such as DfID, ECHO, and USAID; and the meeting in Miami, sponsored by the US Army's Southern Command, was useful in clarifying the role of the ICRC in conflict situations and the Federation's role in disaster response. This participation promotes humanitarian considerations in the planning of disaster response and relief assistance provided by the United States government to other governments in the region. Bilateral meetings have also been held with the embassies of donor countries to provide updates on the work of the Federation, also including the work of the PNS.

The strategic alliance brokered by the Federation between the Red Cross Society of Panama and MacCann Erickson, which resulted in the launch of a nationwide anti-stigma campaign has been taken up by a number of other National Societies in both Central America and the Caribbean, and campaigns are being planned for World Aids Day and for 2006 in several countries. The Costa Rican Red Cross alliance with Saatchi-Saatchi, developed with the Federation to promote the work of the centre of reference in Costa Rica in community based disaster management education, aims to create a regional wide disaster education campaign to be published in the different newspapers of the region for a period of two months, with a desired outcome of generating revenue for the centre and the National Societies where these educational campaigns are launched.

The proposal for a region-wide resource mobilization project which was prepared for the presidents meeting in May, looking for 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, was further developed during the period, with a meeting planned to take place between National Societies at the beginning of the year 2006. The National Societies expressed concern over the financial implications of attendance at the next Inter American Conference to be held in Guayaquil in 2007, and the next General Assembly, International Conference and Council of Delegates also to be held in 2007.

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)

A number of events took place during this reporting period to prepare National Societies to participate in the statutory meetings of the Federation and the Red Cross Red Crescent Movement. In June a full Americas meeting took place in Buenos Aires, and at the end of August/early September the National Societies of Central America met in Tegucigalpa to focus on the key issues to be debated at the General Assembly and Council of Delegates.

The Secretariat's protocol manual to assist National Societies and the secretariat itself to manage international representation was translated into Spanish by the Regional Delegation and made available globally on FedNet. In addition, the Regional Delegation has balanced the effort to allow National Societies to have access to knowledge and training on how to lobby, advocate and influence decision makers at all levels, by field testing an advocacy manual, the product of the input of many international organizations and NGOs in the region. This manual, field tested through the principles and humanitarian values programme, will be complemented with a quick reference tool containing points of view, speeches and all policies of the Movement. This quick reference tool is being produced by the Red Cross Society of Panama with support from the Regional Delegation and is expected to be finalized in early 2006.

The Regional Delegation is seeking to provide Red Cross leaders with tools and information that will enhance their ability to present Red Cross causes to government and private sector stakeholders. Along with the ICRC, the Regional Delegation seeks to improve the level of participation of National Society presidents in Red Cross international meetings, with the purpose of presenting major trends and issues concerning the development of Red Cross Societies in the region, as well as the major challenges faced by their nationals in the humanitarian context.

Impact

The Regional Delegation is reinforcing links with international organizations and NGOs and is succeeding in making the work of the Red Cross known and boosting the credibility of the Federation in the region. Work with the private sector has also been enhanced with a number of fruitful partnerships under development. The Regional Delegation will continue to promote the use of networks which are proving a valuable tool to boost the exchange of knowledge and expertise. Cooperation with the ICRC is on-going and has produced positive results, as well as contacts with donor organizations, particularly ECHO. As a result of the efforts of the Regional Delegation, Red Cross leaders have access to a wealth of useful information to enhance their participation at Red Cross and other meetings and fora.

Constraints

Funding continues to be the major constraint in this programme area and the delegation has had to cut back its ambitions to fit the limited funding available. The work of promoting the Federation's membership in the region was further held up by difficulties in recruiting a communications officer to provide the support to raise the image and profile of the Federation through publications and other communications tools.

A major issue under resolution currently is the nature of the international representation for the Federation with all countries with which it has signed legal status agreements. This issue is being resolved through high level discussions with Foreign Service ministries and their ambassadors in Panama to change the nature of the representation figure for the Federation from a single country representative to the figure of a regional representative resident in Panama. These concurrent representations will allow the next head of regional delegation to be fully credentialed in all countries and to maintain the current legal status agreements active.

[Revised 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	0	0	0	10,000	0	0	10,000
Construction	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
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	44,668	78,200	0	3,000	3,000	0	128,867
Utensils & tools	2,000	0	0	1,500	0	0	3,500
Other Supplies & Services	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
SUPPLIES	58,668	78,200	0	34,500	3,000	0	174,367
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 Equipment	0	11,000	0	0	0	0	11,000
LAND, VEHICLES & EQUIPMEN	0	13,400	0	56,665	0	0	70,065
Storage	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Distribution & Monitoring	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Transport & Vehicles cost	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
International Staff	259,476	140,000	0	108,000	136,565	0	644,040
Regionally Deployed Staff	97,740	134,252	0	84,125	12,098	0	328,215
National staff	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
National Society Staff	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Consultants	61,800	34,660	0	42,804	20,000	0	159,264
PERSONNEL	419,016	308,912	0	234,929	168,663	0	1,131,520
Workshops & 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	51,172	0	299,270
Information & Public Rela	74,380	71,840	59,500	52,043	7,000	0	264,762
Office Running Costs	39,881	190,800	7,840	19,843	0	0	258,363
Communication Costs	45,926	600	0	11,811	6,000	0	64,337
Professional Fees	40,010	0	0	23,071	0	0	63,081
Other General Expenses	67,560	39,000	0	0	0	0	106,560
GENERAL EXPENDITURE	342,737	359,840	75,890	213,736	64,172	0	1,056,375
Asset Depreciation	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
DEPRECIATION	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Contributions & Transfers	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
CONTRIBUTIONS & TRANSFERS	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Programme Support	78,411	70,690	16,177	77,497	20,221	0	262,996
PROGRAMME SUPPORT	78,411	70,690	16,177	77,497	20,221	0	262,996
TOTAL BUDGET:	1,222,254	1,087,542	248,872	1,192,255	311,096	0	4,062,019