

Annual report



International Federation
of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

Southeast Asia

Appeal No. MAA51001

30 April 2009

This report covers the period 1 January to
31 December 2008



The regional programme strives to be relevant for the national societies of Southeast Asia right down to branch level.

In brief

Programme purpose: To coordinate and support International Federation (i.e. secretariat and partner national societies) efforts to assist host national societies to scale up their work in line with the Global Agenda.

Summary: The Southeast Asia team based in Bangkok has:

- Strategically supported and guided country office teams (Cambodia, Myanmar, Philippines, Timor-Leste, Thailand, and Viet Nam);
- Provided technical support to national societies with no secretariat country presence;
- Strengthened institutional memory and the sharing of good practice and lessons learnt;
- Coordinated Red Cross Red Crescent Movement work in the region within the Federation mandate, including strengthening relations with partner national societies.

Appropriate support at country level is being strengthened based on a good understanding of the needs of Southeast Asian national societies. Regional network capacities and partnership relations, both within and outside the Movement, have improved. The stronger focus of the organizational development forum, the ART HIV/AIDS network and the Southeast Asia leaders' forum are three examples. The second half of the year was dominated in many respects by the response and recovery operation in the wake of Cyclone Nargis in Myanmar. Major support was provided to Myanmar Red Cross and all Movement partners. To view more extensive operation reports on this, [please click here](#).

For 2009, the regional team will strengthen its approach to communicating with all interested Movement partners. The previous ad hoc approach has not contributed enough to increasing confidence and providing more information and opportunities to supporting vulnerable people.

Financial situation: The total appeal budget for 2008 was CHF 3,549,062 (USD 3.1 million or EUR 2.36 million), of which 95 per cent is covered. Expenditure overall was 61 per cent for the same year.

[Click here to go directly to the financial report.](#)

No. of people we help: The programme supports the 11 national societies of Southeast Asia, who, in turn, work with millions of people. The plan also supports Red Cross Red Crescent partners active in the region.

Our partners: The primary partners are the 11 Southeast Asian national societies as well as relevant government ministries, such as health and disaster management bodies. Within the Movement, there has been strong and loyal support from multilateral supporters, which include: Australian Red Cross/government, Austrian Red Cross, Danish Red Cross/government, Japanese Red Cross, Netherlands Red Cross/government, New Zealand Red Cross, Norwegian Red Cross/government, Spanish Red Cross Swedish Red Cross/government, and Capacity Building Fund (CBF). Contributions have also been received from the Asian Disaster Preparedness Centre/Asian Development Bank and the European Commission for Humanitarian Aid Office (ECHO). Outside of the Movement, UN OCHA (through the inter-agency standing committee), UNESCAP, WHO and several UN agencies are important partners in addition to non-government organizations, such as CARE and Oxfam.

The International Federation would like to thank all donors and partners who have contributed to the support of the Southeast Asia regional office.

Context

Cyclone Nargis in **Myanmar** dominated 2008 in Southeast Asia. The scale of the disaster was immense with official figures recording 84,500 people killed and 53,800 missing. The actual toll is probably higher. The response of the Myanmar Red Cross, particularly through existing as well as 'spontaneous' volunteers, was inspirational. The Movement support of this response was mostly high calibre, not ignoring some significant challenges, some of which are the subject of an evaluation (due end of January 2009). The CHF 74 million (USD 65 million or EUR 49.2 million) three-year operation is now in the early recovery phase and proceeding well in challenging circumstances.

In its more usual, month-to-month work, the Bangkok regional team supported national societies through its country offices or directly in those countries with no Federation presence. This approach strengthened:

- Volunteer programming in the **Philippines**
- Disaster management strategic planning in **Cambodia**
- Disaster management, and water and sanitation work in **Lao PDR**
- Planning processes and coordination in **Thailand**
- National preparedness planning and the beginnings of overall strategic planning in **Timor-Leste**
- National society avian influenza preparedness planning in several countries including **Lao PDR, Cambodia, Timor-Leste** and **Viet Nam**
- Psychosocial support in **Indonesia, Philippines, Viet Nam, and Thailand**
- Response to the massive Cyclone Nargis in **Myanmar**
- Finance development in **Lao Red Cross** and **Malaysian Red Crescent**

The effective mapping, coordination and deployment of national society resources underpinned this success. One example of this was the deployment of Southeast Asian national society personnel trained in regional disaster response teams (RDRT).

There were significant challenges through the year, particularly as a result of Cyclone Nargis. In addition, an expanded representational role saw the regional team engage with the UN (UN OCHA mainly on coordination for Cyclone Nargis, UN Reform, UNDP, UN ESCAP), governments and regional organizations. It also supported the December 2008 ministerial conference on disaster risk reduction in Malaysia.

In addition to Nargis, the region was hit by significant disasters that resulted in International Federation emergency appeals for assistance to the respective host national society. It is important to note that day-in day-out the region's national societies responded to vulnerability without recourse to external assistance. One disaster where support was sought was Typhoon Fengshen, which hit the **Philippines** in June, significantly earlier than the usual storm season. The International Federation continues to support the Philippine National Red Cross primarily in shelter as part of a CHF 2 million (USD 1.7 million or EUR 1.3 million) operation. In **Lao PDR**, a CHF

200,000 (USD 176,000 or EUR 133,000) DREF operation in August helped the Lao Red Cross respond to century-high flooding of the Mekong in and around the capital Vientiane.

The national societies in the region, such as those in **Lao PDR, Indonesia, Philippines** and **Thailand**, continued to integrate the adaptation to climate change into existing programmes/activities as agreed at the Movement's statutory conferences in November 2007.

Progress towards outcomes

Disaster management

Global Agenda Goal 1: Reduced deaths, injuries and impact from disasters.

Programme objective: Vulnerable communities are effectively supported by national societies through timely and high calibre disaster operations, and guidance in reducing their risk to natural and man-made hazards.

Achievements

The regional disaster management programme continued to follow the priorities set jointly by the national societies' regional disaster management committee (RDMC) and the Federation's regional disaster management unit (RDMU). This cooperation has continued to guide the regional programme helping national societies to focus their resources to address the risk profile of the communities which they support. Through the ongoing development of national and regional capacities, there has been much achieved in identifying risks, measures to mitigate these and preparation for future disasters. In particular, the following results have been achieved.

A DIPECHO proposal to European Commission Humanitarian Aid Directorate General (ECHO) addressing disaster risk reduction (DRR) at the regional level has been approved. This proposal complements those developed at country level such as Cambodia, Indonesia, Lao PDR, Philippines and Viet Nam. In addition, it is in line with the overall objective of strengthening national society capacity and support to vulnerable populations through DRR holistic approaches implementation within the region. The action plan will focus on promoting national societies in addressing different key components of DRR Framework tools such as vulnerability and capacity assessment (VCA) and early warning systems (EWS) and mainstreaming DRR into the education sector and Southeast Asian regional cooperation.

The regional office published its DVD titled "Prepared Communities are Safer Communities" with examples of good practices from national societies to promote DRR as a holistic approach to build safer and more resilient communities (supported by ECHO, the UK Department for International Development (DFID), AusAID through Australian Red Cross, Swedish Red Cross and the Red Cross Red Crescent Climate Change Centre).

2008 saw much of the regional office's capacities oriented towards initially managing, and later supporting the Cyclone Nargis operation in Myanmar. With an estimated 2.6 million affected and 136,000 dead, it accounts for the most severe disaster during 2008. The operation is now ongoing. Ten Southeast Asian regional disaster response team (RDRT) members were deployed to work side by side with Myanmar Red Cross Society (MRCS) and the International Federation. They were sent to regional hubs in the delta to assist MRCS in assessment, logistics and relief. The RDRTs did a good job in helping to link MRCS with affected communities through coordination of the nine regional hubs set up in the delta. The appeal launched seeks to support 100,000 families over 36 months to recover, regain livelihoods and incorporate risk reduction measures to strengthen the resilience of the communities. A further aim is to strengthen MRCS's human resource capacity and overall operational effectiveness in the short, medium and long term.

Support to Viet Nam Red Cross (VNRC) in assisting 193,000 beneficiaries affected by 2007's Typhoon Lekima continued. There is also further ongoing support to the current operation in response to the major flooding across northern provinces as a result of Typhoons Hagupit and Kammuri, and heavy rains since August to November 2008 to support 293,860 beneficiaries. Further, a short-term consultant (supported by Australian Red Cross) has been hired to assist VNRC in developing the contingency planning

There is ongoing support from the regional office to the Philippine National Red Cross' (PNRC) response following the effects of Typhoon Fengshen in June 2008. An international emergency appeal was launched in support of 6,000 families to recover from the effects of the disaster. The original appeal has been revised and

while including support of non-food items and emergency drinking water, current work is focused on building 1,000 typhoon-resistant houses. As response, the Spanish and Swedish Red Cross societies deployed water and sanitation emergency response unit (ERU) capacities to support the affected populations in Iloilo province. In support of the damages and needs assessment, 12 Southeast Asia RDRT members from Malaysian Red Crescent, Cambodian Red Cross and Indonesian Red Cross were deployed for a ten-day mission to further strengthen the ten PNRC RDRT-trained members in the worst affected provinces. Finnish Red Cross has provided substantial contributions to the shelter components.

The heavy rains triggered by Typhoon Kammuri caused serious flooding in several provinces of Lao PDR. A DREF of CHF 200,000 (USD 176,000 or EUR 133,000) was released to support Lao Red Cross to assist 10,000 beneficiaries. In support of the operation, a short-term relief delegate was recruited and deployed, financed by Danish Red Cross. The main focus of the operation was to provide food and non-food items to those severely affected and the operation was concluded end of November with remarkable efforts demonstrated by Lao Red Cross in handling the operation.

In order to strengthen the response capacities in the region, a series of workshops and training events took place through 2008: the 8th and 9th RDRT induction courses focusing on disaster management and specializing in health in emergencies respectively (hosted by Singapore Red Cross and supported by Swedish Red Cross and AusAID through Australian Red Cross); a specialized emergency training workshop supported through by ECHO; and a climate change workshop conducted with financial and technical support from the Federation Secretariat in Geneva and the Climate Change Centre. Further, a regional disaster response planning workshop (supported by AusAID through Australian Red Cross and Swedish Red Cross) was held in Bangkok. It brought together focal points from the national societies of Cambodia, Lao PDR, Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, Timor-Leste and Viet Nam to consolidate the developing process of a regional disaster response/contingency plan for Southeast Asia and set the future direction. The workshop also gained consensus around the purpose of a regional plan and the level of detail needed for both a regional response plan (RegRP) and a regional contingency plan (RegCP). Also, to strengthen the response capacity cooperation among agencies in Southeast Asia, an ASEAN regional disaster emergency response simulation exercise 2008 (ARDEX-08) was hosted by Thai government in Rayong province of Thailand. ARDEX-08 focused on the coordination of regional disaster rescue and relief operations performed jointly by Thailand as the host country, participating ASEAN member states as well as invited teams from the United Nations and international organizations.

Challenges

In line with providing support and achieving the 2008 objectives, two issues during 2008 have strongly influenced the capacity of the RDMU to deliver:

- 1) The second half of the year was dominated in many respects by the response and recovery operation in the wake of the Cyclone Nargis in Myanmar. Major support was provided to Myanmar Red Cross and all Movement partners.
- 2) 2008 was further marked by a high turnover of staff in the RDMU. Only in January 2009 was the unit finally up to intended numbers while having been short of staff for a third of the year.

Throughout the year, further challenges faced involved clarifying working relations around disaster management in the secretariat structure; and improving communication within the Movement around programming. Slowly, this is increasingly cleared, and shortcomings are overcome more as a result from personalities willing to adapt than structural clarifications.

Working in Partnership

The needs of the Southeast Asian national societies are increasingly better understood resulting in more appropriate support offered at country level. Regional network capacities and partnership relations, both within and outside the Movement, have improved. Designs on how to approach national societies with Movement partners in a structured and orderly manner are also improving. 2008 saw much of such partnerships being formed, where national societies are increasingly in the driver's seat and indicating what they want and need, rather than being presented with externally driven programmes.

In the areas of community-based disaster management, ongoing support has been provided to Lao Red Cross (supported by Japanese Red Cross) and the Philippine Red Cross (supported by RDMU) in the development of general understanding and awareness of disaster management and community-based approaches and response capacity nationwide.

RDMU continues to enhance national response capacity by providing financial and technical support to Cambodian Red Cross and Timor-Leste Red Cross (supported by AusAID through Australian Red Cross) to train and equip national disaster response teams (NDRT) to deliver more effective and timely response to those in need. This initiative will be continuous in the long term action plan.

In particular, Lao Red Cross has seen a boost in support received, with a more structured and integrated programmatic approach from the regional office. From the RDMU, this engagement is ensured particularly through financial support from Japanese Red Cross.

Contributing to longer term impact

Much time has been devoted to strengthening the capacities of Southeast Asian national societies in disaster risk reduction (DRR). This has included consultations and also learning from South Asia and the Americas regions as well as contributed to a global process of defining the scope of DRR for the Red Cross Red Crescent. While this is the case, each national society faces its own internal shortcomings in retaining human resources and ensuring engagement with those who remain. But what is clear is a faster and clearer response in emergencies from those responding – notably Lao Red Cross and Viet Nam Red Cross. Also, 2008 saw a much improved utilization of information tools such as the disaster management information system (DMIS) to better inform and broadcast activities.

Climate change: The national societies of Lao PDR, Indonesia, Philippines and Thailand continue their efforts with the integration of adaptation to climate change into existing programmes/activities. All four national societies have respectively concluded a report covering a nationwide analysis of climate-induced risks and impacts with the aim to disseminate information and conduct contingency planning. Several country-level workshops have been carried out to share the results and recommendations within and outside the national society. This process culminated with a regional workshop on climate change adaptation hosted by Indonesian Red Cross (supported by Red Cross Red Crescent Climate Change Centre) in Jakarta from 3-5 September. Further, a climate change workshop was later hosted as a joint venture between health and disaster management to further generate understanding. These efforts aimed at integrating climate change into DRR are considered crucial in order to promote enhanced resilience from disasters in communities. Supported by the climate change centre, it aimed at gaining better understanding of the disaster (epidemic) risk reduction and adaptation strategies for climate related health threats such as floods, storms, droughts, and famine; and to agree on appropriate follow-up steps and action plans between national society Health and disaster management departments.

Looking ahead

Reinforcing the contingency planning process is a primary objective as a vital approach to saving lives. AusAID through Australian Red Cross has been very supportive in this work, and work will focus on completing the processes in Timor-Leste, Cambodia, Lao PDR and Viet Nam. The latter has embarked on a good path and the International Federation engaged a short-term consultant to assist Viet Nam Red Cross in this process. The aim is to engage more directly with national societies to perform these tasks, and further the readiness of national societies to respond using the well-prepared national society (WPNS) as a central information tool to update and improve capacities in respective national society.

Conducting regional training and workshops are effective ways in terms of attracting staff from different national societies and engage in knowledge transfer and exchange processes. However, what is frequently observed is a shortcoming in the information chain as participants return to their respective national societies. The RDMU will thus adopt a policy of better engaging with the national society on their home turf, meaning that there will be better follow-up after a workshop/training to ensure that the national society as a whole better benefit from the capacity building events. The objective is to again utilize the WPNS as an information resource into the national society and develop a tailored approach to supporting the national society in its internal capacity building processes. The aim is further that these seminar-type engagements with the national society will be done across departments – i.e., when there is added value, both health and disaster management will jointly receive capacity building support during these approaches.

As mentioned, joint ventures have proven very successful to allow for a more effective use of resources, but also to encourage inclusion in the programmatic approach with the national society taking the lead.

For 2009, the regional team will strengthen its approach to communicating with all interested Movement partners. The ad hoc and piecemeal approach of the past, while in some ways adequate at times, has not contributed enough to providing more information and opportunities to supporting vulnerable people. The 2008 component of the plan has been revised downwards (*see below*) reflecting both regional programme capacity to deliver and national society capacity to receive planned support. The above approach naturally invites all Movement partners

to jointly contribute to this as the Federation, as a regional Movement, has access to much of the required information upon which to build strong support mechanisms.

Having said that, it is also in the Federation's interest to link up with various academic institutions and information platforms, and to draw/benefit from these resources, as well as to actively contribute to the same in order to make the work of the Red Cross Red Crescent Movement further respected and recognized.

Health and care

Global Agenda Goal 2: Reduce the number of deaths, illnesses and impact from disease and public health emergencies.

Programme Objective: Strengthen national societies to deliver relevant and effective health services to vulnerable communities.

Expected result 1: Strengthened and improved cooperation, coordination and support mechanisms within national societies and the International Federation

The annual regional health team meeting was held in Bangkok in March 2008 with the participation of national society health managers and health delegates from partner national societies and the Federation. The meeting objective was to provide a platform for regional health team members to discuss and share learning, and to be updated on recent developments within technical and management areas. The focus was on avian influenza and avian human influenza (AHI) as well as on dengue. The Federation–WHO collaboration was put into practice by inviting an avian human influenza specialist from the WHO Western Pacific regional office to provide updated technical information. To get a picture about national societies' contribution to the overall global picture key indicators related to health programmes and progress on policy, agreement and relationship issues were monitored; the results were presented at the national society leadership meeting.

Along with CARE, International Rescue Committee and the Asian Disaster Preparedness Centre, the Federation regional health unit was a partner of the Asian Development Bank-funded project "Strengthening community-based management of avian human influenza" November 2007-February 2009. Countries selected for the project were Cambodia, Indonesia, Lao PDR, Myanmar, Philippines and Viet Nam. The project contributed to building national society capacity in project management as well as partnering with other organizations through the participation of national society AHI focal persons in the project activities such as study tours and workshops.

The regional avian influenza USAID partners' meeting aimed to enhance the coordination between activities managed in the field and USAID/Washington-managed activities, particularly the Human Pandemic Preparedness activities of the Federation, CARE, the UN, etc. This was attended by the zone AHI Coordinator and the regional health delegate. A senior USAID Washington representative presented the human pandemic preparedness grant to the International Federation. The meeting covered USAID bilateral/regional managed activities in the following countries: Cambodia, China, Indonesia, Lao PDR, Myanmar, Thailand, Viet Nam, and South Asia regional. USAID staff from Bangladesh, India and Nepal also attended.

An Asia Pacific "zone health team" consisting of the four regional health coordinators based in Bangkok, Beijing, New Delhi and Suva was established; the deputy head of zone is the health focal point. The HIV delegate in Southeast Asia was selected as focal point for HIV. The team meets bi-annually.

Expected result 2: Reduced vulnerability to HIV and its impact

The Southeast Asia Global Alliance on HIV was launched in June 2008. Five national societies: Cambodia, Indonesia, Lao PDR, Myanmar and Philippines, have committed to the initiative and developed their Global Alliance programmes including scaling-up plans. The national societies in Timor-Leste and Viet Nam plan to join the HIV Global Alliance in 2009.

Representatives from the Thai and Indonesian Red Cross Societies and the regional HIV delegate participated in the International AIDS Conference in Mexico City. The annual Federation HIV Global Alliance Forum was held prior to the conference. Topics discussed were the standard for implementing HIV peer education programme, best practices from Africa and an update of the global HIV situation. The Red Cross Red Crescent positive network (RCRC+) was established during the conference in connection to the Positive Living forum.

The 20th annual Asian Regional Task Force on HIV/AIDS (ART) meeting was hosted by Hong Kong branch of Red Cross Society of China (HKRC) with support from the Norwegian and Australian Red Cross societies. HIV coordinators/managers from the 13-member national societies in addition to representatives from APN+ (Asia Positive Network), RCRC+, the Norwegian Red Cross and the regional health unit participated. A workshop on monitoring and evaluation of HIV programmes, and the HIV Global Alliance followed the meeting. Study visits were made to organizations involved in HIV work in Hong Kong including an HKRC blood bank and the city branch youth department. The regional health unit provides ongoing technical support to the ART management team including development of the operational plan for 2009.

The ART network was evaluated by an external consultant with the participation of the regional HIV delegate. Some findings were: ART has a reputation as a strong network and the members clearly inspire and motivate each other by sharing information on their HIV programmes; the network helps build capacity. Whether ART functions as an effective network in practice is subject to debate. The report is available upon request.

Expected result 3: Improved access to safe water and sanitation

The regional water and sanitation meeting/workshop in Hanoi was attended by national society water and sanitation focal persons, partner national societies and Federation delegates. Topics discussed during the meeting included planning, monitoring and evaluation of water and sanitation projects, water testing and participatory hygiene and sanitation transformation (PHAST).

Input into planning and prepositioning of the water and sanitation disaster response kits/emergency response units (ERU) in the Asia-Pacific zone and Southeast Asia region was given by the regional health unit and discussions were held with Thai Red Cross regarding using the society as a hub for storage and deployment of these kits. National societies were supported in the promotion of PHAST, and the integration of water and sanitation, health in emergencies, community-based first aid and other community activities.

The regional health unit supported the Cyclone Nargis operation in Myanmar through the deployment of the regional water and sanitation delegate as a member of the field assessment and coordination team (FACT). The delegate supported the coordination of the Nargis water and sanitation response and facilitated the recruitment of water and sanitation delegates. The support included the review of the 2008–2011 Nargis draft plan of action.

The Southeast Asian water and sanitation network was established (through Google groups) and the Federation was represented in the regional water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) level cluster meetings.

Expected result 4: Improved community health/community-based first aid (CBFA) services including first aid and health in emergencies delivered to vulnerable communities.

The USAID-funded initiative human pandemic preparedness (H2P) was introduced in the region. The goal is to increase at the district and household level, the state of preparation for and the capacity to respond to a pandemic. The national societies eligible for this grant were invited to respond to a request for proposal to determine their level of interest, understanding of need and readiness to implement the programme. The request for proposal process was supported by the regional health unit that also acted as a liaison between the zone office and the national societies. The national societies of Indonesia, Lao PDR, Philippines and Viet Nam received this award.

The regional health unit has technically supported a number of national societies in the development of project proposals such as the prevention and control of avian human influenza and dengue/dengue haemorrhagic fever, health baseline survey questionnaires, terms of reference for the evaluation of national society health programmes, monitoring and report writing. Technical support was also given to the Federation country offices upon request.

National societies' AHI focal persons and representatives from the regional health unit participated in study tours arranged by the AHI partnership project in Cambodia, Thailand and Viet Nam; exchange of experience among community-based AHI practitioners were facilitated. The study tour to Cambodia was coordinated by Cambodian Red Cross. The project developed a toolkit for community-based management of AHI in Asia based on case studies and best practices from the region, and a training package on community based management of AHI for practitioners based on this toolkit. Representatives from the Indonesian, Lao and Thai Red Cross societies and Philippine National Red Cross participated in the pilot training workshop. One day of the workshop was co-facilitated by the regional disaster management unit, and the regional health unit carried out the evaluation of the entire workshop.

A workshop on “Climate Change and Health”, with the objectives to understand the meaning of climate change versus normal weather patterns, to identify key issues relevant to national society mandate and to develop response strategies to the specific issues identified, was organized by the regional health and disaster management units. Geneva- and Kuala Lumpur-based health-in-emergency staff, the Red Cross Red Crescent Climate Centre health specialist and a representative from Stockholm Environment Institute facilitated the workshop. Participants were national society health and disaster management managers. The workshop was funded by the Finnish Red Cross.

The national societies in Timor-Leste and Indonesia expressed interest in carrying out social mobilization activities during the national measles vaccination campaigns in 2009. The initiation of the planning process for the campaigns was supported by the regional health unit. National society visibility is likely to increase through participation in the campaigns. The Measles Initiative goal is to reduce global measles mortality with 90 per cent by 2010 compared to 2000; today the reduction is 74 per cent.

The regional health unit was involved in the development of the new community-based health and first aid CBHFA in Action – Learning by Doing - materials and contributed with feedback on the draft guides. The final version is expected to be available for the regional CBHFA master facilitators’ workshop in April 2009.

Expected result 5: Increased voluntary non-remunerated blood donor recruitment.

The region was represented by nine participants from five national societies in the bi-annual colloquium on recruitment of voluntary non-remunerated blood donors, co-sponsored by the International Federation and the WHO that was held in Egypt. World Blood Donor day was celebrated 14 June by announcing the winning national society image, produced by the Thai Red Cross, in the first Southeast Asia regional banner competition that was supported by the regional health unit. The regional competition complements the global tagline and aims to raise awareness on the collection of safe and adequate blood supply by encouraging more people to donate blood regularly.

The 6th regional workshop on voluntary blood donor recruitment took place in Manila with the attendance of 18 representatives from nine Southeast Asian national societies. The Philippine National Red Cross (PNRC) hosted the workshop that was co-facilitated by the director, blood donor recruitment programme, the Singapore Red Cross and the regional health unit with support from the director of the national blood centre, PNRC. Besides sharing information, experience and lessons learnt, attention was given to progress made in achieving “100 per cent voluntary non-remunerated blood donation” by 2010, the joint International Federation/WHO goal and strategy that was released in June 2007. There is still work to be done to reach the goal.

Through an agreement with the regional office, the Singapore Red Cross provided technical support to regional activities related to voluntary non-remunerated blood donation.

Expected result 6: Lao Red Cross community-based first aid and water and sanitation programme.

Selected communities in Sekong, Saravanh and Attapeu districts have increased access to safe water and sanitary facilities, and have adopted healthier behaviours related to prevention and common diseases. Lao Red Cross has capacity to manage and implement community-based health programme.

The regional water and sanitation delegate spent 25 per cent of his time in support of the society in the implementation of the integrated health/water/sanitation programme. Progress was made in the water and sanitation components in three provinces in southern Lao PDR since the recruitment of a programme coordinator and field technician. The rainy season, which lasts for around six months, made the roads impassable and contributed to increased transport costs of materials. Gravity-fed water systems were successfully installed in seven of the 10 target villages, and wells with hand pumps were dug in one village. The hygiene promotion activities continued throughout the year. The water and sanitation team supported by the regional health unit held quarterly water and sanitation meetings with the province and district branch staff and representatives from partner national societies in-country involved in water and sanitation.

Challenges

Capacity limitations at national level remain a challenge. National societies are overwhelmed by multiple donor programmes and various reporting demands. The capacity to plan, implement, monitor and report on programmes remains a challenge. The competition for both financial and human resources is becoming harder; limited capacity makes it difficult for national societies to tap available funding outside the Movement. Many national societies have moved from project to programme approach but are still being caught up in project support from partners for various reasons. Integration of projects and programmes needs to be strengthened at all levels, and mechanisms for enhanced collaboration between disaster management, health and organizational

development departments elaborated. The regional health unit needs to strengthen its support of strategy and operational alliance development within the national societies. Stronger leadership commitment in particular towards the HIV Global Alliance is required.

The gap between regional delegates together with an almost completely new regional health team in 2008 was a challenge not the least out of a continuity point of view as well as institutional memory. The establishment of new working relations was delayed due to the ever increasing workload and broad range of expectations on the regional health unit. Funding for delegates remains a challenge as well as for certain components of the regional programme. Furthermore, the roles and responsibilities of the Asia Pacific disaster management unit versus the regional health unit in relation to both disaster response and in-between disasters need further clarification.

Working in partnership

During the reporting period, the key partners supporting the regional health programme were the Danish, German, Japanese, New Zealand, and Norwegian Red Cross societies.

Along with CARE, International Rescue Committee and the Asian Disaster Preparedness Centre, the International Federation is a partner of the AHI-NGO-RCRC¹ Partnership in Asian implementing the Asian Development Bank (ADB) funded project "Strengthening community-based management of avian human influenza". National societies' benefits from this regional partnership project have been in the form of capacity building, collaboration and networking with organization involved in AHI projects. The project ended February 2009. The project was highly evaluated by the participants in the various activities such as study tours and workshops, including the toolkit that was developed. In view of this positive feedback, a proposal for a second phase of the project was submitted to the ADB. Also, the regional health unit organized monthly half-day interagency forums on AHI from March 2006 to October 2008, among representatives from regional and country international non-governmental organizations, UN organizations, donor communities, media, academia and private sector organizations based in Bangkok.

The collaboration with APN+ was further strengthened through their involvement in the HIV programme activities and active participation in the ART meeting.

The memorandum of understanding between the International Federation and WHO/Southeast Asia regional office concentrates on emergency health and HIV. Efforts have been made to make this memorandum a living one, but the work plans that are part of the regional agreement in 2007 still remain to be implemented.

Contributing to longer term impact

With the launch of the Global Alliance on HIV in five countries in Southeast Asia, the programme is expected to expand and double its reach by 2010. Community-based health programmes help to increase community ownership, making programmes more sustainable. At the same time, communities are empowered. Working with vulnerable communities will enable them to attend to their own health needs and to provide care. The creation of a regional pool of specialized resource persons who will act as facilitators in their own countries as well as regionally, will facilitate national society capacity building and expansion of programmes to reach and serve the vulnerable communities.

Looking forward

In a rapidly changing environment, national societies continually adjust their strategies and activities to deliver relevant services to the most vulnerable communities. Consequently, the focus of the health programmes varies from country to country. The regional health unit support to national societies' health programmes in 2009-2010 will continue to focus on technical and management capacity development. The strengthening of regional/zone Red Cross Red Crescent technical teams and networks and the establishment of new ones will be supported as well as partnerships and operational alliances including the implementation of the Federation Global Alliance on HIV. An integrated programme approach will be promoted; exchange of expertise and knowledge sharing across the region/zone and among stakeholders will be facilitated. Community-based prevention programmes aimed at reducing diseases with epidemic and pandemic potential including dengue fever and vaccine preventable diseases will be in focus. National societies will be assisted in the rolling-out of the CBHFA in Action – Learning by Doing – approach.

In-country support will continue to be prioritized as well as regional workshops and the facilitation of national society participation in regional and global events.

¹ Avian Human Influenza-Non-governmental Organizations-Red Cross Red Crescent

Organizational development

Global agenda goal 3: Increased local community, civil society and Red Cross Red Crescent capacity to address the most urgent situations of vulnerability.

Purpose: Southeast Asian national societies are better functioning organizations in the institutional areas they have prioritized.

Expected results

1. Priority organizational issues have been addressed in individual national societies through specific organizational development and capacity building initiatives.
2. Improved sharing of lessons learned and best practices in capacity development across all Movement components.
3. Increased integration of capacity development within health and disaster management programmes.

Achievements

One of the major highlights for the organizational development team in 2008 was being closely involved in the Cyclone Nargis operation from its beginning in May. This provided an opportunity to feed in lessons and reflections learned from the Asian Tsunami operation. The Federation thinking about 'organizational development in emergencies,' has been tested and developed through the early months of the operation. A strong case can now be made for including strong organizational development input in future operations to explore the question of how a national society can complete a major disaster operation in a stronger situation.

Other national societies in the region that received organizational development services in 2008 tailored to their requirements included Cambodia, Lao PDR, Malaysia Thailand, Timor-Leste, Viet Nam (and Myanmar pre-Nargis). These ranged from work in finance development, human resource development, volunteering and youth, legal base revision, branch development and middle management training. All this work has involved the careful cultivation of relationships with national society counterparts and is ongoing.

While Singapore, Philippines, Indonesia and Brunei did not receive any tailored organizational development assistance, they all actively participated in regional organizational development networks. Three of these networks featured in 2008. The regional organizational development forum debated its purpose at length and proposed a new format for 2009 which would focus on three small working groups focusing on the following three topics: corporate fundraising, branch development and 'organizational development in emergencies'. This proposal was supported by the Southeast Asian Leaders meeting. Strengthening the links between these two forums has been a significant development in 2008.

A meeting of regional finance directors took place in 2008 which helped to establish the direction of the work of the regional finance development delegate. The finance development work carried out in 2008 has been outstanding. In 2009, this group will reconvene together with the finance directors of South Asia. The third network, the regional youth directors meeting, met in Viet Nam. This is the most 'mature' of the three networks, mainly due to the fact that the same people have been attending since its inception. It continues to contribute to extensive cooperation across the region between Red Cross Red Crescent youth organizations.

The organizational development unit continued to create case studies as a part of the Asia Pacific zone initiative. The new print run of case studies will feature 15 (out of 39) from Southeast Asia, five of which were written by the unit.

A final highlight to mention in 2009 was the re-launching of the branch development game. This has proven a useful tool for encouraging debate on branch issues in a non-hierarchical and enjoyable atmosphere. It has proven very popular with national societies.

Challenges

Funding of organizational development work continues to be a challenge. 2008 saw continued support from the Japanese Red Cross and Swedish Red Cross for organizational development activities. The Swedish Red Cross and the New Zealand Red Cross provided funding for the two delegates who work in the organizational development unit. In addition, the Danish Red Cross, German Red Cross, ICRC, Singapore Red Cross and Viet

Nam Red Cross funded various activities carried out by the organizational development unit although none of this is recorded in the Federation accounts.

In July, the organizational development delegate in Lao PDR finished the work. The regional unit still provides ongoing technical support and encouragement to the organizational development delegates based in Timor-Leste and Myanmar, although 'face-to-face' time is limited.

It has been a strong year for the regional organizational development unit. However, it has become clearer that the Red Cross Red Crescent Movement would greatly benefit from some reflection on some key issues. How do we believe capacity develops in national societies? How can external actors (like international delegates) help foster the development of capacity? And what do we mean by 'capacity'?

In the absence of rigorous thinking around these issues, 'capacity' and 'capacity building' have sometimes become vacuous, 'catch all' phrases that mean whatever the speaker wants them to mean. At times, it has been used for activities and approaches that have actually weakened national societies. The organizational development unit will continue to reflect on these important questions in 2009.

Working in partnership

The organizational development unit has been carefully fostering partnerships within the Red Cross family in 2008. This has been seen in cooperative work with the ICRC in Viet Nam, with the Danish Red Cross in Lao PDR and with the regional health and disaster management units in Bangkok. As mentioned earlier, cooperation with several disaster management colleagues during the Cyclone Nargis operation was a highlight of the year.

Another issue worthy of note is the increased work integration of the 'zone OD team' consisting of the OD team based in Kuala Lumpur and the regional teams based in Delhi, Suva and Bangkok. This group assembles twice a year to share planning, ideas and mutual critique.

Gaps in the recruitment of regional health and disaster management delegates limited close integration of programmes in the Bangkok office for a period of time. However overall, the teamwork in the office in 2008 both between programmes and with PNS partners was strong.

Contributing to longer term impact

All organizational development work is designed for longer term impact. In the Cyclone Nargis operation, the 'organizational development in emergencies' work should help the Myanmar Red Cross to negotiate the scale-up and scale-down of operations as a stronger national society.

The human resource strategy created for the Cambodia Red Cross will enable them to organize core staff and 'project staff' more effectively. The youth work in Lao Red Cross ensures a new generation of young people develop an allegiance to the Red Cross, as well as provides a new supply of volunteers to current programmes. The harmonized volunteer management system in Thai Red Cross should reduce duplication of efforts by the different bureaus.

The finance development work in Myanmar, Timor-Leste, Viet Nam and Lao PDR will enable these national societies to use their funds more effectively and engender trust from the public and their international partners. Also, the branch development game has helped branch committees in the Malaysian Red Crescent to consider a range of branch issues.

The regional forums facilitate the sharing of ideas and forging of relationships across the region. This has proven valuable with the youth directors and the finance directors. The organizational development forum is evolving to ensure it facilitates practical and supportive networks in strategic subject areas.

Looking ahead

The regional organizational development team remained stable in 2008 and this will enable them to continue building on relationships developed with national societies. Much ongoing work will 'roll-over' into 2009. However, in the absence of a third donor committed to organizational development activities, and in light of the significant fall in the value of several world currencies, several activities in 2009 risk being cut back. Nevertheless, a number of national societies have expressed an interest in lending 'expertise' in various organizational development activities.

One of the major initiatives in the first half of 2009 will be the production of a 'yellow pages' directory' made up of national societies representatives with specific skills and experience. The regional office will monitor how effective this simple tool is at promoting the sharing of ideas across the region.

In 2009, the Bangkok office is set to resume a line management role with the Federation's office in Indonesia. This will provide a unique opportunity for the organizational development team to explore the tsunami operation as it scales down in Aceh and share those experiences directly with the Cyclone Nargis operation. This is anticipated to result in many fruitful and timely lessons for 'organizational development in emergencies' in Myanmar and for the Red Cross Red Crescent Movement more generally.

In 2009, it is also hoped for engagement in more dialogue with organizations carrying out organizational development work outside the Red Cross context to see what can be learnt from their approaches.

Communications

Global Agenda goal 4: Reduce intolerance, discrimination and social exclusion and promote respect for diversity and human dignity.

The programme gained momentum with the recruitment of a regional communications delegate in mid-July. The main focus has been to provide continued information support in connection with the Cyclone Nargis operation. The struggle continues though to adequately forge ahead confidently around principles and values. The programme has developed into a more authentic communications programme focusing on building strategic capacity in communications, in both host national societies and the Federation secretariat.

The following was achieved in 2008: contact to main international media agencies in Bangkok, response to national society requests, production of regular facts and figures for media departments, and the organizing of two media visits to Myanmar for donor national society communications staff: one trip to Labutta in September and one to Bogale in October. These trips resulted in numerous articles and video footage used for feedback and fundraising. Additionally, these two trips served to produce a "six-month-commemoration" package with press release, photos, video footage, questions and answers, statistics and key messages for national societies worldwide, many of whom have taken an active interest and made a significant contribution to the work of Myanmar Red Cross Society and the Federation in the wake of the cyclone. The head of country office from Myanmar was in Bangkok for the six-month commemoration of Nargis (in November) and held interviews with many high profile media representatives.

The material provided was appreciated and used by many national societies and many media interviews were conducted. However, an opportunity was missed to deliver and promote a strong advocacy message. The anniversaries of Nargis and the China earthquake provided an opportunity to push a strong humanitarian message – for instance the importance of the principles and message of IDRL – but this did not happen.

The communication initiatives in relation to Cyclone Nargis led to closer cooperation with the communications department of MRCS. The department has been instrumental in assisting with the two media visits and has provided additional photos and video footage to be used by the Federation.

A documentary about the relief operation has been produced with financial but very little editorial support from the Federation. The closer cooperation led to a joint plan of action up to the one-year anniversary in May 2009 as well as serious talks about a communications capacity building programme.

Contact has also been made with communication staff of a number of other national societies; specific follow-up and initiatives will follow in 2009.

The regional communications delegate has also been involved in a number of other projects, i.e. preparing and designing exhibitions, providing support to and training of fellow delegates and staff in use of video cameras and video production, and producing compilation videos (i.e. on disaster risk reduction), calendars and planners.

Guidelines for taking good photos, use of video cameras and writing stories have been compiled and distributed among delegates as well as some donor national society staff based in Bangkok; in addition, powerpoint presentations for regional disaster response team (RDRT) training and similar courses have been prepared.

Media advisories and press releases have been produced in connection with smaller natural disasters in the region, and national societies have been encouraged and assisted to provide information for an “every time disaster response” document, which is a zone initiative.

Most activities have been carried out in close cooperation with the zone communication manager. This working relation is good. This cooperation has additionally led to discussions about a more strategic and proactive approach to communication in the zone (and the regions), in terms of emergency response communication and general promotion as well as a serious programme for communication capacity building in close cooperation with OD. This will use regional, zone and global capacities.

A zone communication forum in Kuala Lumpur in November provided valuable ideas, and planning in 2009 should produce a tangible plan in this regard.

Working in partnership

The most critical partnership of the Federation is with the region’s national societies, followed by relations with partner national societies and ICRC. The secretariat country offices and the Bangkok team base engage with national societies in two ways:

- first, a ‘step forward’ in terms of more targeted support (i.e. provision of appropriate membership services) to the national society as well as scaling up of humanitarian support; and
- second, a ‘step back’ in terms of creating the space and necessary backup for national societies to rightfully assume a leading role within their borders as well as their contribution regionally and internationally as Federation members.

Cooperation with partners and ICRC are overall strong and improving. In terms of ICRC, support to national societies towards adoption of the restoring family links (RFL) strategy is one consistent meeting point for the Federation’s efforts. More explicit cooperation is emerging particularly in terms of Cambodia, Lao PDR, and Viet Nam. In each country, the Red Cross Red Crescent Movement communicates more often than not with one voice. This did not always happen before and contributes to more effective support to national societies as well as less confusion (and burden) for them.

Three partner national societies remain integrated with the International Federation at the Bangkok regional office. One more national society is based in Phuket and focused on the tsunami recovery programme. The scale of operation of these partners, along with the Global Road Safety-hosted programme, increased dramatically in 2008. Austrian Red Cross is due to establish a regional presence late 2009.

Outside of the Movement, the profile and presence of the International Federation and its member societies is strengthened. The active participation in the UN ESCAP discussions on disaster risk reduction in March is one such example. Such forums see the Federation representing the comparative advantages of national societies within their own countries. Better partnership is emerging on the bigger issues i.e. disaster risk reduction (including climate change), pandemic preparedness, and HIV/AIDS via the Global Alliance. This is happening both within and outside the Movement. The key challenge is the time, effort and resource needed to develop such partnerships. Relations with ECHO, for instance, are strong and indeed ‘living’ within the Federation in Southeast Asia: both parties agree on the need to improve but finding the necessary resource and space to do this on the Federation side is indeed a challenge. Bangkok is a major focus for a great many events, forums and partners.

Contributing to longer-term impact

The governing board of the International Federation approved a proposal from the secretary-general to integrate the secretariat country presence within the national society structures in November 2009. In Southeast Asia, the regional team has long taken this issue seriously and has been active in having appropriate and non-parallel country-level support structures for host national societies. Indeed, parallel structures are not only less cost effective; they often hamper national society capacity building.

The regional office has been feeding its experience into an evolving Asia Pacific-wide approach with the objective of realigning the Secretariat role in supporting host national societies to expand their respective ‘humanitarian business environments’.

Several key principles are emerging; such as whereby a Federation office should not implement core area programming in place of a host national society, except in an emergency to save lives; and a Federation office

should always work to develop the capacity of the host national society, while providing services and support while that capacity develops.

Looking ahead

The secretaries-general and leadership meeting hosted by Malaysia Red Crescent in November 2008 provided a good guide to national societies on how they will work together as well as what kind of support is appropriate from the Southeast Asian secretariat team (i.e. Bangkok regional office and country office teams) for 2009. National society managers and leaders took strong ownership of their discussions, and the decisions and messages that emerged.

The regional office is working hard to strengthen its approaches to integrated programming while delivering technical support to country offices and national societies. This approach is in the initial stage but is showing progress as witnessed in the joint discussions and action points at the March 2009 annual regional health meeting. The regional office will maintain its representation support to Lao Red Cross (progress has been slow but as of March 2009, shows indications of being on the right track), Viet Nam Red Cross (until a head of office is identified), Philippines (again until a new head is identified) and CVTL in Timor-Leste where a new head of office starts in April 2009.

The management line from the Myanmar office returned to Bangkok in February 2009 after an eight-month break because of Cyclone Nargis when the management line was directly to the zone office in Kuala Lumpur. The February 2009 Nargis partnership meeting indicated a strong working relationship from the Myanmar Red Cross and the International Federation country office to Bangkok. The management line for non-tsunami programming in Indonesia is due to return to Bangkok on 1 April. This new arrangement requires discussions on both sides to clarify issues; these will begin when the regional office team travels to Jakarta en masse in April 2009.

The regional office has begun 2009 with a much more structured and proactive approach to communication to build confidence and relations among Movement partners working in Southeast Asia. Monthly updates – already highly appreciated – are being sent out by the regional office. Quarterly coordination meetings have begun - with the first one held on 13 March, and the second due on 12 June - again to build up the spirit of cooperation so that partners can challenged each other individually and to improve collectively.

How we work	
<p>The International Federation's activities are aligned with its Global Agenda, which sets out four broad goals to meet the Federation's mission to "improve the lives of vulnerable people by mobilizing the power of humanity".</p>	<p>Global Agenda Goals:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduce the numbers of deaths, injuries and impact from disasters. • Reduce the number of deaths, illnesses and impact from diseases and public health emergencies. • Increase local community, civil society and Red Cross Red Crescent capacity to address the most urgent situations of vulnerability. • Reduce intolerance, discrimination and social exclusion and promote respect for diversity and human dignity.
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