

ANNUAL REPORT



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

PAN AMERICAN DISASTER RESPONSE UNIT

31 May 2006

In Brief

Appeal No. 05AA040; Appeal target: CHF 2,439,411 (USD 1,923,019 or EUR 1,581,564); Appeal coverage: 74.4%.

[Click here to go directly to the attached Financial Report.](#)

This Annual Report reflects activities implemented over a one-year period; they form part of, and are 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, please access the Federation's website at <http://www.ifrc.org>

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Overall analysis of the Programme

In early 2005 the Pan American Disaster Response Unit (PADRU) worked in coordination with the Panama Regional Delegation and the Port of Spain Sub Regional Office on ongoing emergency operations, as well as the closing of emergency operations relating to the 2004 Caribbean hurricane season, primarily the emergency operations for Hurricane Jeanne in the Bahamas and for the operations related to response to Hurricane Ivan in the Cayman Islands, Grenada and Jamaica. The emergency operation for Hurricanes Ivan and Charley in Cuba was extended until July 2005, and the operation for Tropical Storm Jeanne in Haiti was extended until September 2005. In the first six months of the year PADRU also provided support to five National Societies for minor emergencies, mostly due to floods. In the months preceding the 2005 Caribbean hurricane season, a disaster management delegate from PADRU was assigned specifically to the Caribbean region to coordinate preparedness and response activities, while another disaster management delegate was assigned to the Lima Regional Delegation to respond to emergencies in the South America region.

During the second part of the year, PADRU focused on responding to one of the most active and destructive hurricane seasons the region has known. The 2005 hurricane season saw a total of 27 named storms, eight of which made landfall in the Central America and Caribbean regions. PADRU worked with the affected National Societies to provide immediate response in the wake of these disasters, which included appealing for funds from the Federation's Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF) and deploying disaster management experts to the field. Four emergency appeals were launched in response to hurricanes to assist some 171,000 affected families in the 10 worst affected countries: Bahamas, Costa Rica, Cuba, El Salvador, Guatemala, Haiti, Honduras, Jamaica,

Mexico and Nicaragua. In addition, PADRU responded to a number of other emergencies, including volcanic eruptions in Colombia and El Salvador, floods in Colombia, Costa Rica and Guatemala, earthquakes in Chile and Peru, drought in Paraguay, and fire and social unrest in Bolivia. PADRU continued its on-going work in the area of disaster response preparedness, strengthening the Regional Intervention Teams (RITs), supporting the development of contingency and disaster response plans, and encouraging National Society staff to carry out internships within PADRU to promote exchanges and information-sharing. Work was also carried out in reinforcing National Intervention Teams (NITs) within the National Societies in the region, and RIT members specialized in public health in emergencies and IT and telecommunications were trained.

PADRU continued to strengthen its cooperation with the United Nations system, as well as with the European Union. In mid 2005 PADRU received programmatic funding from ECHO through a programme which seeks to strengthen the Caribbean National Societies and Overseas Branches. The Spanish International Cooperation Agency (AECI) also provided funding for PADRU activities. PADRU has also been working to improve disaster response capacity in areas such as logistics and disaster preparedness, including provision of support for the implementation of a DIPECHO funded disaster preparedness project in the Caribbean.

Objectives, Progress, Achievements, Impact and Constraints

Goal: Red Cross National Societies in the Americas receive significant benefit through support, services, coordination, resources and training from an efficient and effective disaster management unit that contributes to increasing the capacity to successfully help people reduce risk, respond to and recover from disasters, thus alleviating human suffering.

Disaster Response

Programme Objective 1: Upon the request of the Regional Delegations on behalf of National Societies affected by disasters, PADRU will provide a professional, effective and technically competent delivery of disaster response services and resources through well-coordinated and integrated planning.

Progress/Achievements (activities implemented within this objective)

During first several months of 2005, PADRU's work focused on concluding the final stages of relief operations begun during the 2004 hurricane season. In particular, work focused on reconstruction and capacity building activities with the Cuban Red Cross following the two hurricanes, Charley and Ivan, which hit the island in August and September 2004. The relief operation in response to Hurricane Charley was extended due to logistical and funding difficulties and concluded in July 2005. Operations responding to the 2004 hurricanes were still ongoing when the region began to be affected by the 2005 hurricane season.

Tsunami operation

Following the tsunami that struck Southeast Asia on 26 December 2004, PADRU provided support to the Federation's global response system and provided human resources to support the relief effort. Two disaster management delegates from PADRU were deployed to Indonesia and Sri Lanka as part of a Federation Field Assessment and Coordination Team (FACT) and an Emergency Response Unit (ERU). A third disaster management delegate was assigned to provide logistics support for the first six months of the year. PADRU also provided support in communications as PADRU's information officer was deployed to the Secretariat's headquarters to work with the media service.

Floods in Panama and Costa Rica

CHF 90,000 was allocated from the Federation's Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF) to assist 1,000 families in areas of Panama and Costa Rica that were affected by floods in January 2005. The Red Cross Society of Panama drew up a plan of action to respond to this emergency and to assist 400 families affected by the floods. The Costa Rican Red Cross drafted a plan of action and launched a national appeal to collect relief items and clothes to support the affected population. The CRRC also supported inter-institutional relief activities through coordination at the national and local level. Both National Societies worked closely with PADRU and the Panama Regional Delegation in coordination, monitoring and response to the emergency. A satellite phone was provided by PADRU to the Red Cross Society of Panama to guarantee communication in the area.

Guyana Floods

PADRU deployed a water and sanitation delegate to Guyana and four RITs members specialized in water and sanitation, logistics and disaster management travelled to Guyana to ensure support for the National Society following floods in January. PADRU chartered three flights to Guyana, which included blankets, kitchen kits, rolls of plastic sheeting, hygiene kits, collapsible jerry cans, raincoats, rubber boots and Federation visibility items. At the end of February, PADRU handed over the operation to the Federation's Port of Spain Sub Regional Office, although PADRU continued to follow up on technical activities, such as telecommunications. The RITs members from the American Red Cross, the Barbados Red Cross Society, the Red Cross Society of Panama and the Saint Kitts and Nevis Red Cross Society completed their missions by 15 March.

Floods in Colombia

The rainy season in Colombia began in February, just as the country was recovering from its worst rainy season in eight years at the end of 2004. The rains caused considerable damage in 10 departments and 63 municipalities. The official figures of the Colombian Red Cross Society listed the number of families affected as 17,108, including 5,862 houses that were totally destroyed and another 4,481 houses that were seriously damaged. PADRU sent a disaster management delegate to the country to provide technical support to the Colombian Red Cross Society.

Floods in Venezuela

In February, various states in Venezuela were seriously affected by flooding, which prompted government authorities to declare a state of emergency. The Venezuelan Red Cross, in coordination with the Civil Protection Agency, provided humanitarian assistance to 1,000 families in seven of the affected states. PADRU supported the work of the Venezuelan Red Cross in the design of a plan of action, which included food and non-food relief items for 1,000 families, and water and sanitation and health activities.

Galeras Volcano (Colombia)

Together with the Colombian Red Cross Society, the Lima Regional Delegation and the Federation representative in Colombia, PADRU continued to follow up on activities to help the National Society prepare for possible emergency relief activities in response to a potential eruption of the Galeras Volcano. The Colombian Red Cross Society's contingency plan was revised.

Mudslides in Guatemala

Mudslides brought on by heavy rains killed at least 22 people and injured 40 in northern Guatemala in June. The region was pounded by heavy rains for several days, which caused large portions of the Calvario Hill to slide onto houses in eight communities in the municipality of San Antonio Senahú, in the department of Alta Verapaz. The Guatemalan Red Cross (GRC) dispatched National Intervention Team members from the local branch in Cobán to support search and rescue efforts, provide first aid care, conduct damage and needs assessments and manage shelters. Additional NITs teams were also sent to the area to relieve those volunteers that had been working almost round the clock. Throughout the operation, PADRU was in contact with the GRC, helping to monitor the situation in order to support the National Society and the people affected by the mudslides.

Earthquake in Chile

After an earthquake registering 7.9 on the Richter scale struck the Iquique region in the province of Tarapacá in northern Chile in June, PADRU, in coordination with the Federation's Lima Regional Delegation, supported the Chilean Red Cross (CRC) with a request for CHF 30,000 from the Federation's DREF to cover the National Society's operational costs. The disbursement of DREF funds made it possible for the CRC to carry out first aid education activities in remote communities which usually receive very little assistance. A camp was built by the volunteers to better coordinate actions, workshops and activities with the communities. PADRU also supported the CRC in monitoring and follow up of the operation and helped to publish reports on the disaster management information system (DMIS).

2005 Hurricane Season

Hurricane Adrian: In May, the first hurricane of the Eastern Pacific hurricane season, Hurricane Adrian, affected the coastal regions of El Salvador, Guatemala and Honduras. PADRU activated its monitoring system and

maintained constant contact with these three National Societies, as well as with the Costa Rican and Nicaraguan Red Cross Societies. PADRU pre-positioned a disaster management delegate with expertise in water and sanitation in El Salvador prior to the event. PADRU's information team was also placed on alert to follow up on the operation and provide support to the Salvadorean Red Cross Society.

Hurricanes Dennis and Emily: CHF 250,000 were released from the disaster relief emergency fund (DREF) to assist 6,000 families affected by Hurricanes Dennis and Emily in Grenada, Jamaica and Haiti in July 2005. The Federation launched an emergency appeal on 15 July for CHF 758,000 to assist 3,000 families in Grenada, 500 families in Haiti and 1,000 families in Jamaica. A disaster management delegate from PADRU was deployed to Grenada to support the National Society's relief efforts and another was deployed to Haiti in order to provide support to the Federation's Country Delegation and the Haitian National Red Cross Society. A Regional Intervention Team alert was issued on 12 July and eight trained members were available for deployment.

The Pan American Disaster Response Unit organized two airlifts of relief materials to Grenada, the first of which arrived on 16 July, and the second on 18 July. The first contained 950 hygiene kits, 1,705 pieces of plastic sheeting, 950 jerry cans (10 litres) 50 first aid kits, 100 raincoats (for volunteers) and 100 pairs of rubber boots (for volunteers). The second airlift contained 1,000 hygiene kits, 2,590 pieces of plastic sheeting and 1,000 jerry cans (10 litres). In anticipation of the passage of Hurricane Emily, PADRU also pre-deployed relief materials by airlift to Jamaica, which arrived on 10 July. The airlift contained 750 hygiene kits, 664 kitchen sets, 750 plastic buckets, 1,500 plastic sheets, and 25 family tents. Following this, an ocean freight shipment of relief supplies was sent to Jamaica and arrived on Monday, 18 July. This shipment contained 750 blankets, 86 kitchen sets and 6,077 sleeping mats.

Hurricanes Katrina and Rita: The largest natural disaster relief effort in the 125-year history of the American Red Cross (ARC) was launched in response to the devastation wreaked by Hurricane Katrina in August 2005 and the subsequent flooding in New Orleans. The Federation, through PADRU, provided support to the ARC by deploying a disaster management delegate to Alabama immediately after Katrina struck. Some 100 RITs members were available to assist the relief effort. PADRU personnel specialized in logistics, disaster management, water and sanitation, telecommunications and communications were placed on alert, and PADRU's information officer was mobilized to Washington, DC, for two weeks to support the ARC's public affairs unit by working with Spanish-language and international media. Following Hurricane Rita, which struck the United States in September, the information officer was also deployed to the ARC's operations centre in Texas to perform similar duties. This communications support filled a critical need as ARC press officers had been deployed to the affected area to facilitate and disseminate preparedness and safety messages, conduct interviews with national media, and manage response messages. In its coordination role, the Federation served as a focal point for the operation with Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies interested in supporting the operation; PADRU served as the focal point for the Latin American region while the Secretariat in Geneva served as a coordinator and facilitator for the other regions of the world.

Hurricane Stan: Hurricane Stan, the 18th named storm of the 2005 Atlantic hurricane season, struck the region in early October. The storm caused heavy rains in Belize, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua and south-eastern Mexico and killed more than 747 people. The storm also caused heavy rains as far away as Haiti. On 7 October, the Federation launched an emergency appeal for Central America, Mexico and Haiti, which was later revised on 17 October to assist 10,050 families in these countries. Four staff members from PADRU specialized in water and sanitation, logistics, communications and disaster management were deployed to Guatemala to support the relief activities being carried out by the National Society. A RITs member working as operations coordinator arrived in Guatemala on 11 October to work with the Federation and the GRC, as did two Federation FACT team members: one specialized in water and sanitation and the other specialized in logistics. In addition, two RITs members from the Costa Rican Red Cross were mobilized to Guatemala. Federation personnel from the Panama Regional Delegation, the Regional Reporting Unit and the Regional Finance Unit also provided support to the relief operation from Panama. This relief operation, which had a particular focus on Guatemala as the country which was hardest hit, provided food and non-food relief items, shelter, health and sanitation services, psychosocial support and capacity building activities to affected communities.



Distributions of goods shipped by PADRU take place in Guatemala to families affected by Hurricane Stan

Hurricane Wilma: Hurricane Wilma, the 12th hurricane and 21st named storm of the Atlantic hurricane season, battered Mexico's Yucatan Peninsula, Cuba, the state of Florida in the United States, and the Bahamas between 20 and 24 October, causing widespread destruction. Hurricane Wilma virtually decimated the Mexican resort town of Cancun and the island of Cozumel, destroying hotels and homes and littering the streets with debris. Prior to the hurricane, Mexican officials had declared a state of emergency in 18 municipalities in the state of Yucatan and 5 municipalities in the state of Quintana Roo. On 25 October, relief assistance shipped by air from PADRU reached Merida airport; these relief goods, comprising 1,000 hygiene kits, 2,000 plastic sheets and 1,000 kitchen sets, benefited 1,000 families. A second shipment was sent on 27 October with 5,000 hygiene kits donated by the American Red Cross, 1,000 additional hygiene kits, 397 kitchen kits, 1,500 mosquito nets and 2 gas generators for use in the response operation. Two disaster management delegates from PADRU were deployed to Mexico to support the relief activities carried out by the National Society.

Hurricane Beta: The 13th hurricane and 23rd named storm of the Atlantic hurricane season, strengthened to a category 1 storm on 29 October, causing damages to the Colombian islands of Providencia and San Andres and to the eastern coast of Nicaragua. At least 30 people were injured on Providencia. In response to the damages caused by Hurricane Beta on Providencia and San Andres, the Colombian Red Cross Society activated its hurricane contingency plan. In Nicaragua, PADRU coordinated with the National Disaster Response Agency and UN agencies to arrange an aerial assessment of the eastern coast of the country. Two disaster management experts from PADRU were deployed to Nicaragua to support the National Society's relief activities.

Tropical Storm Gamma: Tropical Storm Gamma, the 24th named storm of the record breaking Atlantic hurricane season, killed 14 people in Central America, including 11 in Honduras and 3 in Belize. Another 15 people were reported missing in Honduras. Gamma brought high winds and torrential rains to Honduras on 19 November, cutting off several communities on the country's Caribbean coast. According to the Honduran government, the storm destroyed 48 homes, damaged 264 and forced more than 11,000 people to evacuate. In Belize, search teams blamed bad weather associated with Gamma for the crash of a private plane that killed three people. Throughout the emergency, the Honduran Red Cross maintained close coordination with PADRU in order to assess the situation and formulate an adequate response. A disaster management delegate from PADRU was deployed to

Honduras to assist with the relief operation. The following relief items were distributed in the affected areas of Honduras: 1,000 hygiene kits, 1,000 kitchen sets and 1,000 food parcels.

Earthquake in Peru

In Moyobamba, the Peruvian Red Cross (PRC) team, led by a member of the National Intervention Team, worked with the community in the damage assessment and in the setting up of a camp with 21 tents to provide shelter to the people affected by the earthquake which struck the country in late August 2005. Some 200 water filters were provided by the German Red Cross and continuous coordination work was carried out with the Ministry of Health for the distribution of more water filters to the population. In addition, hygiene kits and diapers were sent to the region to assist 500 families. Funds from the Federation's DREF were used to purchase 300 hygiene kits. This was complemented with workshops on hygiene and disaster preparedness. DREF funds were also used for the PRC response to the earthquake in Moquegua on 1 October.

Floods in Costa Rica

Heavy rains affected Costa Rica in mid September and caused flooding in several regions of the country, especially in the southern Pacific coastal area. Some 198 communities were affected and more than 1,500 people were obliged to evacuate their homes. 398 houses were reported as damaged by the rains, water and electricity supplies were affected in some areas, 48 bridges, 4 dikes and 28 sewerage systems were damaged, and over 100 roads were waterlogged. CHF 30,000 was allocated from the DREF to support the National Society, through PADRU and Panama Regional Delegation.

Fire in Bolivia

Disaster struck Bolivia in late September when a large fire destroyed more than 160,000 hectares of tropical forest near Riberalta, close to the Brazilian border. Although fire fighters were able to control the fire several days later, approximately 527 families, most of them farmers from Riberalta whose yucca, banana, rice and almond plantations were destroyed, were left with no food or shelter and, in many cases, suffering from respiratory infections. The greatest needs identified were for food, as most of those affected were subsistence farmers whose crops had been destroyed. PADRU and the Lima Regional Delegation supported the Bolivian Red Cross with an allocation of CHF 30,000 released from the Federation's DREF to respond to the immediate relief needs of the most vulnerable members of the population. Food relief was provided via the BRC and the Federation for more than 300 families. Each family received a food package, along with sheets and towels.

Floods and Volcanic Activity in El Salvador

In October, El Salvador was struck by two natural disasters, causing much suffering, hardship and, in many cases, separating individuals from their families. Firstly, the Ilamatepec volcano began hurling out hot lava rocks on 1 October, killing at least two people and forcing more than 2,000 to flee. Secondly, the country experienced heavy rains, flooding and landslides as a result of the passage of Hurricane Stan through the region in early October. Rains brought on by Hurricane Stan killed at least 69 people in 11 departments of El Salvador; 26 in La Libertad 22 in San Salvador, 5 in La Paz, 4 in Usulután, 3 in Sonsonate, 2 in Cuscatlán, 2 in San Vicente, 2 in Santa Ana, 1 in Ahuachapán, 1 in La Unión and 1 in Morazán.

The Salvadorean Red Cross Society (SRC) prioritized 4,200 families to receive essential relief items. In the longer-term, given that many vulnerable families' homes were damaged or destroyed, together with their possessions and/or crops, beneficiaries have received assistance with housing, water and sanitation, health, psychosocial support and telecommunication. The SRC worked in close coordination with the Panama Regional Delegation and PADRU, as well as Partner National Societies present in the country. This operation is ongoing and is expected to conclude in September 2006.

Drought in Paraguay

A period of prolonged drought affected 4,900 families in the department of Boquerón in Paraguay during 2005. The western region of Paraguay, called the "Paraguayan Chaco", which includes the department of Boquerón, has a population of 160,214 inhabitants. This region experiences droughts on an almost annual basis. On 26 September 2005, the Paraguayan National Conference declared a state of emergency in the Chaco region for six months. An estimated total of 11,518 families (52,990 people) in 265 communities in the 3 departments in the Chaco region have been affected. Based on surveys carried out in the affected departments, the Paraguayan Red

Cross provided food supplements to 1,150 families in 22 communities in the department of Boquerón. Communities that were reliant on locally grown crops, had exhausted their food reserves and were located far from urban centres were prioritized. The local communities were organized in order to better manage these food distributions, which were carried out with funding provided by the Federation's DREF.

Floods and Volcanic Activity in Colombia

Colombia was affected by three major disasters in November. The country's annual rainy season was particularly heavy in 2005, leaving 80 people dead, 93 injured and 4 missing. In total, 58,359 families (268,944 people) were affected. Floods caused major damage in 26 departments destroying 709 houses, damaging another 23,479 and forcing 5,000 people into shelters. In addition to these floods, the 913 families on the Colombian island of Providencia were affected by Hurricane Beta. The third disaster occurred when the Galeras volcano erupted on 24 November. The National Disaster Preparedness and Response System (SNPAD) ordered the immediate evacuation of about 9,000 people living on the slopes of the Galeras volcano. DREF funds were allocated to respond to the floods and volcanic activity in the country. The Colombian Red Cross Society worked in close coordination with PADRU in response to these emergencies.

Impact

A large number of National Societies in the Americas received support for their relief operations from PADRU during the year. PADRU's monitoring system was put to the test during the situation in Colombia following increased activity of a local volcano, and the system proved successful in keeping National Societies and the Federation up-to-date on any developments. Monitoring and exchange of information with National Societies has allowed PADRU to make better use of the DMIS and to provide information for the drawing up of information bulletins to alert donors to new emergencies. PADRU has also improved its efforts in applying for DREF funding, which has allowed for faster response operations to support the National Societies. PADRU has also achieved a high level of coordination with PNS and other donors working in the region, particularly ECHO.

In order to respond to the devastating hurricane season and other disasters which struck the region in 2005, the Federation mobilized some CHF 1,438,000, providing essential funds to National Societies which allowed them to immediately implement much needed emergency response activities. In total, four emergency appeals were launched for more than CHF 10 million to assist those most severely affected by the recent disasters.

Constraints

One of the most significant constraints during the year was the limited financial resources available to PADRU. In addition, there was an almost constant rotation of human resources in PADRU, which disrupted the continuity of the unit's programmes. In particular, the severity of the 2005 hurricane season stretched the capacities of PADRU and the National Societies to the limit, which served to highlight the financial and staffing issues within PADRU.

Disaster Response Preparedness

Programme Objective 2: At the request of the Regional Delegations, PADRU will contribute through technical support to the strengthening of the capacities of National Societies to reduce risk, prepare for, respond to and recover from disasters. Disaster preparedness and response mechanisms will be improved through systematic early warning, disaster monitoring and information sharing mechanisms.

Progress/Achievements (activities implemented within this objective)

Training for Regional Intervention Teams (RITs)

One of the major successes of the RITs programme is that the National Societies now consider the RITs as invaluable, and are more committed to the concept and to the strengthening of RITs; it is hoped that the momentum will be sustained in 2006. There is the need to create a global RITs database in order to be in a position to identify the mobilization of RITs members. It is also important to analyze how best the RITs can contribute during periods when there are no disasters and how they can support PADRU and their own National Societies. A general RITs workshop was held in 2005, as well as a logistics workshop, both in Trinidad. Of the RITs members who undertook missions during the year, one was mobilized to Cuba, 5 to Guatemala and 2 to the

United States. PADRU's internship programme also continued throughout the year, with 10 National Societies taking part, as well as Ericsson Response.

Improvement of the RITs system

In addition to promoting human resources through the RITs, PADRU has succeeded in developing a reference document which outlines the processes for this tool to boost human resource expertise, based on training, promotion, activation and follow up. Although the concepts have not changed, it has been possible to define standards which guide and ensure the relevance of the work of the RITs. This can be seen more clearly if we compare numbers of RITs deployments, either for operations, internships or training courses; between 1999 and 2003, statistics indicate a total of 17 missions, whereas in 2004 alone 21 RITs missions took place.

The Federation, through PADRU and together with the Panama and Lima Regional Delegations, carried out the IT and Telecommunications RITs Workshop in Panama between 21 and 27 February 2005. The objectives were to strengthen the response capacity of the Red Cross in the Americas through the telecommunications network, preparing people with training in the Federation's response systems in the area of IT and telecommunications. The participants are now in a position to use and install necessary equipment for successful communication in disaster areas and to use the Federation's response system tools for efficient response during disasters.

Public Health in Emergencies

The Panama Regional Delegation and PADRU held two workshops for RITs members with an emphasis on public health in emergencies. A workshop was held between 11 and 16 April for National Societies of Central America, Mexico and the Spanish-speaking Caribbean; four participants from the South America region were also invited. The workshop for the English-speaking Caribbean took place from 13 to 19 March. Both workshops succeeded in strengthening the response capacity of the Red Cross system in the Americas through the health network and increasing the number of people trained in Federation response systems, focusing on health in emergencies. Each participant now has an understanding of how the components of the response system interact and is able to recognize major diseases as well as indicators in an emergency situation. In total, 18 National Societies took part in the workshops.

Finance in Emergencies Workshop

PADRU supported the Regional Finance Unit (RFU) in the definition of contents and facilitation of the sessions dealing with the response system, which was a major theme in this workshop. In collaboration with the RFU and the Regional Delegations, finance and administration personnel from the Regional Delegations, Sub Regional Offices and country offices received not only training in their area of specialization, but also underwent a day of training in management of the response system, the tools of which it is composed, and its implementation in times of disaster with a view to ensure optimum preparation in the event of future emergency situations. On the basis of this workshop, as appropriate, contingency plans in the area of finance are being updated; this is a task shared between PADRU, the Regional Delegations and the Regional Finance Unit.

FA HUM 2005

During the first week of April, PADRU represented the Federation in the meeting of the Humanitarian Allied Forces (FA HUM) in Trinidad. The FA HUM is a seminar held to maximize opportunities to exchange personal and professional experiences among participants and examine the challenges of responding to and mitigating disaster in the region. It is organized by the US Army Southern Command, based in Houston, Texas. This seminar is designed for military personnel involved in regional response. Non military, UN and Red Cross Movement representatives are invited to give their perspective in this area. The main topics covered in this meeting were as follows: multinational and regional disaster response coordination; the promotion of multinational and inter-regional disaster response interoperability, and discussion of operational response capabilities and limitations at multinational, regional, international, and interagency levels.

Pre Hurricane Season Meeting

Representatives of National Societies in Central America and the Caribbean, including the overseas branches of the British and French Red Cross Societies, as well as other members of the Federation and of international organizations and PNS working in the region, met for a week in early June in Panama to review and update plans in anticipation of the 2005 hurricane season, as well as to draw up new contingency plans and define coordination

mechanisms between the various actors. The objective of this meeting was to consolidate an overall response strategy for the region in coordination with external actors and donor organizations. PADRU was responsible for the organization of this meeting, in coordination with the Panama Regional Delegation and the Port of Spain Sub Regional Office.

Container Project

PADRU has continued providing support, together with the Port of Spain Sub Regional Office, to the container project, funded by the Japanese Red Cross Society, which consists of pre-positioning stocks in key areas in the Caribbean in order to support the National Societies in the region so that they are in a position to ensure rapid and effective response to disasters as soon as they occur. These pre-positioned relief items were used several times during the 2005 hurricane season.

Contingency and Response Plans

The National Societies in the region expressed the need to revise and update the “Contingency Planning Guidelines and Recommendations” during 2005, including a practical and participatory methodology which describes the full process for the implementation of contingency plans. In the same way, they expressed their interest in creating a document with a simple methodology for the development of response plans, ensuring coherence in the region in line with the Plan of Action 2003 – 2007 and the “Reducing Risks and Improving Coordination” strategy of the XVII Inter American Conference. As a result, PADRU facilitated a workshop together with the Regional Delegations and the National Societies. From 22 to 25 May a meeting was held in Bogotá to ensure the revision and updating of the planning guidelines and the development of guidelines and recommendations for the design of response plans. Four National Societies: two from Central America and two from South America took part in this meeting, as well as two representatives from PADRU and a representative from OXFAM who acted as the facilitator. With the support of the International Committee of the Red Cross, PADRU also worked with the Nicaraguan Red Cross in the process of revising the National Society’s contingency plans with a view to being prepared for the 2006 election period.

Another workshop on Piloting Response and Contingency Plans, promoted by PADRU, was held in the city of Pasto, Colombia from 30 November to 3 December in order to strengthen response and contingency planning, validate the material on this topic, and exchange experiences among the affected countries in order to improve future operations. This important event was carried out with 11 participants from the Colombian Red Cross Society, 5 participants from the Ecuadorian Red Cross, 2 participants from the Mexican Red Cross, 2 participants from the Salvadorean Red Cross Society, 1 consultant, 1 participant from OXFAM and a disaster management delegate from PADRU.

Pre-Inventory System

PADRU worked on the pre-positioning of humanitarian relief goods in its warehouses as a preparedness measure in anticipation of the dispatch of humanitarian aid required during the hurricane season. The Regional Logistics Unit ensured pre-stocking, the management of virtual warehouses, as well as pre-stocking of goods for UNICEF, in line with a cooperation agreement between this UN agency and the Federation. In addition, improvements were made to the new warehouse premises in the Free Zone in Colon, Panama, as a result of the relationship between the Federation and the Colon Free Zone, with the vital support of the Red Cross Society of Panama.

Logistics

The RLU purchasing processes improved during the 2005 hurricane season, in particular through the signing of a service agreement with the British Red Cross. The RLU was able to consolidate its inventory and establish a goal of 10,000 families to receive assistance in case of an emergency. The vehicle leasing programme has 24 vehicles rented and 17 more available; however, there is still a problem with recovering costs. Work will continue in 2006 to make National Societies aware of the advantages of leasing vehicles through the vehicle leasing programme. PADRU’s warehouse in Panama’s Colon Free Zone is now fully functioning and a person has been hired to manage the building and supplies. Half of the stocks in the Colon warehouse are reserved for UNICEF, which is shouldering a large portion of its costs. One of the areas of logistics that still requires further work is the mapping of logistics capacities in the National Societies in the region. A new logistics officer was hired in PADRU who distributed questionnaires to the National Societies as a means of identifying their needs; however, very few National Societies responded. In 2005, the RLU shipped 273,981 kilograms of relief items to El Salvador,

Grenada, Guatemala, Guyana, Haiti, Jamaica, and Mexico, primarily kitchen sets and mosquito nets. Despite the large number of relief items shipped in 2005, costs for 2005 were less than in 2004 due to the fact that in 2004 large quantities of construction materials were sent.

IT and Telecommunications

The installation of a new communications antenna was finalized, which made the VHF and HF radio installed in the telecommunications centre completely operational. This centre now allows for radio communication between PADRU and the National Societies in the region. PADRU received the selection criteria from the National Societies to participate in the Caribbean telecommunications network. It has been proposed that the Red Cross Societies of Antigua and Barbuda, Belize, Dominica, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia and Trinidad and Tobago participate in this project, which is being financed by the Spanish Red Cross. During 2005, the telecommunications unit participated in the monitoring efforts for developing emergency situations in the Bahamas, Costa Rica, Cuba, the Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Grenada, Guyana, Jamaica, Nicaragua, Panama and Suriname and also provided technical support to Chile, Colombia, Venezuela and the Sub Regional Office in Trinidad. The telecommunications system currently includes three telecommunications kits pre-positioned in PADRU, each containing a laptop, wireless, HF, VHF and repeater, among other equipment. In addition, with the installation of a new data server, work progressed on the creation of a virtual library, which will contain all the products and information produced by the response system. Work on this project was carried out with technical assistance from the Regional Disaster Centre for Latin America and the Caribbean (CRID).

The IT and telecommunications programme provides important support for disaster response operations, as well as ensuring appropriate telecommunications capacity for PADRU. It is essential that the team in PADRU works closely with telecommunications in the different programme areas. The Ericsson GSM container used in the operation in response to Hurricane Katrina was pre-positioned in PADRU and an Ericsson response programme volunteer was working to facilitate its use. During the last few months of the year, work was carried out on the installation of a new telephone switchboard donated to PADRU by Ericsson. In addition, a mapping exercise of telecommunications resources was carried out in Central America and in the Caribbean countries of Grenada, Jamaica, Bahamas, Cuba, Guyana, Dominican Republic, Anguilla, the Cayman Islands and Trinidad and Tobago.

Ericsson Response

With the collaboration of Ericsson, work was done to improve PADRU's telephone lines, and the installation of the telecommunications centre in PADRU was completed. This centre is now managing the radio communications network, pre-positioned cellular and satellite phone equipment, and PADRU's monitoring system. Within the framework of the cooperation programme with Ericsson, pre-positioned cellular telephones have been sent from PADRU to the Bahamas, Costa Rica and Grenada. In addition, 500 GSM cellular phones will be distributed throughout the region. In January 2005, all the equipment for the Ericsson Response programme was checked, at which time, technical problems were detected in one of the containers. This container was replaced with a new container containing GSM technology. This was done with the assistance of an Ericsson Colombia volunteer who carried out an internship in PADRU in March.

Database

The new database was finalized and was presented during the pre-hurricane meeting in June. The tool automatically generates e-mail alerts and contains multiple selection criteria assist in making decisions as to the deployment of personnel during emergency operations.

Water and Sanitation

With the support of three volunteers from the Red Cross Society of Panama, including a RITs member with expertise in water and sanitation, all the water and sanitation equipment pre-positioned in PADRU was reviewed and inventoried to ensure that it was in working order for use in any emergency operation. Supplies such as water pumps, tanks, piping and generators were inventoried according to the Federation's logistics standards. Equipment such as water tanks, tents and pipes were also routinely cleaned. Finally, a final list was drawn up of all water, sanitation and hygiene supplies available to the Federation's response system.

In September a volunteer from the Red Cross Society of Panama who has received both RITs and FACT training and has been deployed to the field to assist in various emergency operations, was hired as the new water and

sanitation officer to work in PADRU. During the hurricane season, assistance was provided to the Guatemalan Red Cross in evaluating water and sanitation needs. A water system was sent to the country to provide clean water to 2,000 families along with two water pumps. In addition, 10 volunteers were trained in the cleaning of wells. The water and sanitation officer also assisted the Honduran Red Cross in its emergency response activities following Tropical Storm Gamma.

Information Management for Disasters

Together with the Americas' Communicators' Network, the contingency plan for management of information during disasters was reviewed during the Inter-American Communications Forum. This document was shared with all National Societies, who committed to adapting the plan to their response plans. The most significant changes to the document were regarding monitoring of emergency situations, activating alerts and activating the communicators' network. The document clearly outlined the support National Societies provide to the regional response system during times of disaster. Similarly, the Americas' information team reviewed the regional communications strategy for emergencies, which was presented during the pre-hurricane meeting in June. In addition, the information team completed a video and brochure highlighting all of the work carried out in response to the 2004 Atlantic hurricane season in the Caribbean. The video was created in both English and Spanish, and is accompanied by a CD containing reference documents.

Throughout the busy 2005 hurricane season, a constant and steady flow of information was maintained through the Federation's DMIS. The PADRU website was updated to include all of the latest information regarding the events of the hurricane season and other disasters that occurred during the period. In addition, work was done to promote the image of the Red Cross, in particular PADRU, during all emergency operations. The information programme has facilitated better visibility for PADRU and has made National Societies more aware of the importance of sharing information regarding their activities.

Internships

During 2005, PADRU continued to strengthen its internship programme. During the first months of the year, the regional information delegate from Lima and the regional information officers from Panama and Trinidad worked in PADRU to strengthen its communications programme. The team was also strengthened by the presence of a member of the Mexican Red Cross, who produced the 2004 hurricane season video. Leading up to the pre-hurricane meeting in June, PADRU's team was also strengthened by two volunteers from the Cuban Red Cross and one volunteer from the Jamaica Red Cross.

ECHO: Strengthening disaster management capacity in the Caribbean:

In 2005, PADRU received programmatic funding from the Humanitarian Aid Department of the European Commission, which is supporting PADRU's activities in the Caribbean region, in particular with regard to its mandate to support the National Societies in reducing risk, and preparing for, responding to and recovering from disasters. The need to have effective disaster response capacity in place in a region as exposed to disasters as the Caribbean is obvious and undisputed, and the Red Cross is well placed to provide disaster response. This is particularly true in the many Caribbean states where governments do not have sufficient capacity to manage response in the event of a disaster. The main objective of this project, which will continue in 2006, is to reduce the impact of disaster on the most vulnerable populations in the Caribbean through the establishment of efficient and coordinated regional response capacities. Several activities were carried out within the framework of this project, including the 2005 Pre Hurricane Meeting, the Red Cross Disaster Management Directors' Meeting, two Regional Intervention Team workshops, and work on the contingency and response planning guide.

Impact

The activities carried out in disaster response preparedness have resulted in better coordination between PADRU, the National Societies in the region and the Regional Delegations. The regional disaster response system, specifically within the National Societies, was strengthened by the efforts of PADRU to provide equipment and training and support during times of emergency. Through the series of meetings in which PADRU participated, PADRU was able to link the United Nation's system with the Federation's response system in the region. This relationship is providing the Federation with access to donors and other organizations such as OXFAM, OCHA

and Ericsson Response. PADRU is holding joint meetings on a regular basis with UN agencies present in Panama to ensure that this relationship remains strong.

The emergency response operations carried out during the reporting period have demonstrated a high level of motivation and commitment among Federation and National Society staff and volunteers, which resulted in well-managed emergency operations. The use of DREF and PADRU's pre-deployment strategy for positioning disaster management experts in country prior to a disaster worked well and was well received by the National Societies. The acceptance of PADRU's proposal to ECHO for programmatic funding represents a major step forward for the unit as this ensures funding for vital disaster response preparedness activities. Communication and coordination also significantly improved during the reporting period, both within PADRU itself as well as with other Federation offices, National Societies and Partner National Societies in the region. Finally, PADRU's image has improved significantly both within and outside the Movement and is increasingly seen as a valuable participant in inter-agency activities.

Constraints

Some work scheduled to be carried out during 2005 was affected by the limited funding available to PADRU. This made it necessary to reschedule or cancel some activities. In addition, the severity of the 2005 hurricane season stretched the capacities of PADRU and the National Societies to the limit, which served to highlight staffing issues within PADRU, where the constant rotation of specialized personnel, for the most part expatriates who are in the region for an average of one year or less, does not allow for continuity within the disaster response programme and decreases the efficacy of projects and operations.

International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

PAN AMERICAN DISASTER RESPONSE UNIT

Selected Parameters	
Year/Period	2005/1-2005/9998
Appeal	M05AA040
Budget	APPEAL

All figures are in Swiss Francs (CHF)

I. Consolidated Response to Appeal

	Health & Care	Disaster Management	Humanitarian Values	Organisational Development	Coordination & Implementation	TOTAL
A. Budget		2'023'128			416'284	2'439'411
B. Opening Balance		-63'904			5'146	-58'758
Income						
Cash contributions						
American Red Cross		256'000				256'000
British Red Cross		118'625			31'976	150'601
Canadian Red Cross Society					2'418	2'418
ECHO		624'200				624'200
Ericsson		20'401				20'401
Norwegian Red Cross		4'493				4'493
Spanish Red Cross		5'740				5'740
Swedish Red Cross		82'450				82'450
C1. Cash contributions		1'111'909			34'394	1'146'303
Outstanding pledges (Revalued)						
ECHO		155'650				155'650
Ericsson		18'444				18'444
Spanish Red Cross		68'894				68'894
C2. Outstanding pledges (Revalued)		242'988				242'988
Reallocations (within appeal or from/to another appeal)						
Irish Government		310'500				310'500
C3. Reallocations (within appeal)		310'500				310'500
Inkind Personnel						
Canadian Red Cross Society					74'400	74'400
Spanish Red Cross		88'100				88'100
C5. Inkind Personnel		88'100			74'400	162'500
Other Income						
Service Agreements		5'019			6'944	11'963
C6. Other Income		5'019			6'944	11'963
C. Total Income = SUM(C1..C6)		1'758'516			115'738	1'874'254
D. Total Funding = B + C		1'694'612			120'884	1'815'496

II. Balance of Funds

	Health & Care	Disaster Management	Humanitarian Values	Organisational Development	Coordination & Implementation	TOTAL
B. Opening Balance		-63'904			5'146	-58'758
C. Income		1'758'516			115'738	1'874'254
E. Expenditure		-1'194'592			-101'813	-1'296'406
F. Closing Balance = (B + C + E)		500'019			19'071	519'090

Selected Parameters	
Year/Period	2005/1-2005/9998
Appeal	M05AA040
Budget	APPEAL

All figures are in Swiss Francs (CHF)

III. Budget Analysis / Breakdown of Expenditure

Account Groups	Budget	Expenditure					TOTAL	Variance
		Health & Care	Disaster Management	Humanitarian Values	Organisational Development	Coordination & Implementation		
A							B	A - B
BUDGET (C)		2'023'128					416'284	2'439'411
Supplies								
Shelter			5'714			76	5'790	-5'790
Water & Sanitation			-0				-0	0
Medical & First Aid			3'842				3'842	-3'842
Teaching Materials	19'000		102				102	18'898
Other Supplies & Services	149'369		13'489				13'489	135'880
Total Supplies	168'369		23'146			76	23'222	145'147
Land, vehicles & equipment								
Land & Buildings	22'550		3'924				3'924	18'626
Vehicles			-33'338				-33'338	33'338
Computers & Telecom	5'000		29'619				29'619	-24'619
Office/Household Furniture & Ec			4'629			-2'922	1'707	-1'707
Others Machinery & Equipment			12'944				12'944	-12'944
Total Land, vehicles & equipment	27'550		17'778			-2'922	14'856	12'694
Transport & Storage								
Storage	11'180		5'321			4'643	9'964	1'216
Distribution & Monitoring			4'703			543	5'246	-5'246
Transport & Vehicle Costs	60'876		21'961			6'049	28'010	32'866
Total Transport & Storage	72'056		31'984			11'236	43'220	28'836
Personnel Expenditures								
Delegates Payroll	850'000		119'857			-18'956	100'901	749'099
Delegate Benefits			304'405			63'427	367'832	-367'832
Regionally Deployed Staff	367'040		1'007				1'007	366'033
National Staff			60'579			14'069	74'648	-74'648
National Society Staff			11'960				11'960	-11'960
Consultants			16'393				16'393	-16'393
Total Personnel Expenditures	1'217'040		514'201			58'540	572'741	644'299
Workshops & Training								
Workshops & Training	296'000		218'733			20'330	239'062	56'938
Total Workshops & Training	296'000		218'733			20'330	239'062	56'938
General Expenditure								
Travel	232'100		155'469			291	155'761	76'339
Information & Public Relation	16'839		29'812			17	29'830	-12'991
Office Costs	124'753		44'270			2'897	47'167	77'586
Communications	100'600		26'801			-479	26'323	74'277
Professional Fees	10'222		7'120			368	7'488	2'734
Financial Charges	15'321		2'945			369	3'314	12'007
Other General Expenses			-51			178	126	-126
Total General Expenditure	499'835		266'366			3'642	270'008	229'826
Depreciation								
Depreciation			18'154				18'154	-18'154
Total Depreciation			18'154				18'154	-18'154
Program Support								
Program Support	158'562		77'276			6'304	83'580	74'982
Total Program Support	158'562		77'276			6'304	83'580	74'982
Operational Provisions								
Operational Provisions			26'953			4'609	31'562	-31'562
Total Operational Provisions			26'953			4'609	31'562	-31'562
TOTAL EXPENDITURE (D)	2'439'411		1'194'592			101'813	1'296'406	1'143'006
VARIANCE (C - D)			828'535			314'470	1'143'006	