

## FOCUS ON HONDURAS 2003

### 1. Introduction

Honduras, a country stricken by recurrent natural disasters such as hurricanes, droughts, floods and landslides, has seen a dramatic improvement in the Honduran Red Cross (HRC) capacity since hurricane Mitch hit the country in 1998. The National Society now has a well-disseminated national development plan with clear strategic objectives guiding its work at all levels, revised Statutes, a national disaster plan, a new organization chart and a fundraising department. The HRC has an international presence through its President who sits on the Federation's governing board; the National Society also benefits from a new category of "programme" or "community" volunteers. A network of 49 branches covers the country and committed Red Cross as well as non-Red Cross partners coordinate their work through a participatory country agreement strategy (CAS) process. Nevertheless, the challenges that the National Society faces are tremendous. Latin America's third poorest country suffers from an economic recession; youth violence is on the rise (some 30,000 youth are said to be registered members of youth gangs, called "maras", and some 60,000 more are thought to be supporters); 60 % of all HIV + cases in Central America are in Honduras, and there is major inequality of access to resources.

### 2. National Context

Indicator	Honduras
Country ranking HDI	116
Total population (millions)	6.4
% of the population living below \$ 1/day	24.3
% of the population living below national poverty line	53
GDP per capita (US \$)	\$2,453
Infant mortality per 1,000 live births	32
Under 5 mortality per 1,000 live births	40
Maternal mortality rate per 100,000 live births	110
% of births attended by skilled health staff (1995 - 2000)	54
% of total population undernourished (1997/99)	21
% of population using improved water sources	90
% of population using adequate sanitation facilities	77
% of people living with HIV/ AIDS	1.6
Annual population growth rate %	3
% of population under 15 yrs of age	41.8
% of population aged 65 and above	3.4
Net primary school enrollment ratio %	-
Adult literacy rate % (2000)	74.6

Source: Human Development Report 2002 - UNDP

Over the last decade, Honduras has made important political and economic progress, forming the basis for continued growth, improved participation of civil society and more equality. Women have better access to education and the labour market. The national education system has made inroads in reducing illiteracy and increasing the educational coverage across the country at all levels. However, two interlinked factors impede further major advances: poverty and deterioration of the environment.

### **3. National Society Priorities**

The Honduran Red Cross has clearly defined its strategic priorities in its national development plan which covers six areas, including governance, management, volunteer management, humanitarian values, disaster management and health, together with its strategic plans per programme and its plan of action for 2003. Please refer to such documents, available on the internet at [www.honduras.cruzroja.org](http://www.honduras.cruzroja.org) for full information on the National Society's priorities. The following priorities refer to 2003 with a projection to 2004:

#### **Health**

- Produce a comprehensive health strategy, in line with the strategy for the Americas, through the National Society's health commission.
- Strengthen the HRC health department, including improved coordination with the ambulance system and the national blood programme.
- Strengthen strategic alliances with the Ministry of Health, and the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO) in the framework of the global agreement with PAHO.
- Strengthen the HRC's standing in the national AIDS forum, and continue to strengthen the HIV/AIDS project in close collaboration with the humanitarian values programme and volunteering.
- Continue coordination of all Red Cross partners within the framework of the health strategy.

#### **Disaster Management**

- Apply, disseminate, monitor and evaluate the national disaster plan; monitor and evaluate the national response plan, the national contingency plan as well as the contingency plans drawn up by the 49 branches.
- Continue active membership within the governing board of the national governmental authority for disaster management, COPECO; strengthen collaboration with such disaster management authorities in all departments and branches.
- Strengthen the operational and logistic regionalization process, including training of NITs.
- Establish protocols of intervention with neighbouring National Societies.
- Revise and standardize, as part of the regional process, the community based disaster preparedness programme, including the successful "Family Plan".

#### **Humanitarian Values**

- Apply the ICRC co-sponsored programmes (Exploremos el Derecho Humanitario; Uso progresivo de la Fuerza "Let's explore international humanitarian law" and "Progressive use of Force") in schools and the police force respectively.
- Identify strategic alliances and a pilot project addressing violence amongst the youth.
- Strengthen the existing tracing network in the branches.

#### **Organizational Development**

- Continue leadership training for HRC leaders countrywide.
- Disseminate thoroughly the National Society's new Statutes and regulations.
- Revitalize the Statutory and consultative commissions.
- Complete sectoral policies in addition to those on fund raising, volunteering, training and health.
- Draft and approve policies on gender and disasters.
- Increase and diversify sources of funding within the country, promoting self-sustainability.
- Strengthen capacities of the management team (eg. training in the planning process), establish and implement human resource development plans.

- Apply new integrated administrative tools (budgeting and financial analysis, accountancy, inventories) and extend these to branches, as recommended by the external consultancy.
- Support the network of 49 branches in management capacities and image building.
- Promotion of the Honduran Red Cross model as an example of positive change for peer National Societies in the region.

### **Volunteering**

- Ensure an updated database and provide access to information.
- Promote a comprehensive strategy to attract, retain and upgrade volunteers (traditional and non traditional) who are able to respond to programme priorities and vulnerabilities.
- Disseminate and apply the new volunteering regulations.
- Establish an insurance programme for all volunteers.
- Implement the basic training plan for volunteers.

### **AT A GLANCE**

	<b>YEAR</b>	<b>COMMENT</b>
Statutes	2002	Approved by General Assembly in September 2002, and ratified by the government of Honduras.
NDP	2001	5-year plan, 2000 - 2005. Yearly evaluation performed. Quarterly monitoring by management team. 2003 mid-term overall evaluation scheduled.
Regulations	2002	Statutes regulations in progress and scheduled for the end of 2002; volunteer regulation (reglamento unico) approved mid 2002.
CAS	2002	Second version, process ongoing. First generation completed in 2000
Self Assessment	2000	Completed in 2000
Elections	2002	Scheduled in 2004. All branches and national level.
Yearly audit	2002	External audit. Additionally, the HRC has an internal auditor.
Annual Report	2002	Presented at its 2002 General Assembly.

### **Main strengths**

- The organizational development process generated a strategic vision and a planning, monitoring and evaluation culture within the organization.
- Highly committed governance, promoting the change process.
- Good image and strategic positioning.
- Network of 49 branches.
- Decentralization process, resulting in an active local networks of branches.

### **Main challenges**

- To ensure sustainability in relation to the strategic vision, goals, objectives.
- To optimize use of the network of branches.
- To sustain growth and retention of volunteers, both in quantity and quality.
- To establish strategic alliances with key partners.

## **4. Red Cross/Red Crescent Priorities**

The Red Cross partners present in Honduras work together in a coordinated manner. Instrumental to this coordination is the clear priority granted to strategic planning within the National Society. As a result, in 2002, PNSs started presenting their assistance to the HRC under the NDP format, contributing toward the National Society's strategic objectives. The Federation has provided computerized support to facilitate the compilation of data on this assistance.

Plans foresee the ongoing presence of the American Red Cross until 2006, with a limited presence of one expatriate, and support from its regional structure. The Spanish Red Cross anticipates reduced presence of expatriates; the Canadian Red Cross will retain a presence until 2004 with one expatriate, supporting the HRC in the implementation of the community health project; the Swiss Red Cross will also remain with one expatriate until 2004, conducting health projects in the south of the country. Both the Italian Red Cross and the Netherlands Red Cross Societies submitted project proposals for approval to various donors: should they be approved, presence will be retained until 2004 with one expatriate in each case.

Partner	Health	Disaster Management	Humanitarian Values	Organizational Development	Other
ICRC		Tracing	EDH	HRC change process, governance and management training	CAS; NS bulletin
Federation*	HIV/AIDS project. Support to the health department			Support to the OD coordinator, change process, training in project management.	
American Red Cross	IMCI	CAMI		Branch development support, development of micro projects.	
Canadian Red Cross	Community health				
Spanish Red Cross		CBDP		Branch development	
Netherlands Red Cross	(X)			Branch development	
Swiss Red Cross	Community health			Branch development	
Italian Red Cross	Support to the blood bank		Anti stigma initiatives.		

\*The Federation Secretariat is supported by the British Red Cross, the British government (DFID), the Finnish Red Cross, the Italian Red Cross, the Japanese Red Cross, the Norwegian Red Cross, the Spanish Red Cross and the Red Crescent Society of the United Arab Emirates.

(X) : projects and activities proposed and not yet approved.

**The ICRC** promotes IHL, “exploremos el derecho humanitario”, “let’s explore humanitarian law”, a programme implemented in collaboration with the Ministry of Education, which also targets Red Cross volunteers. Training of IHL disseminators has recently introduced the “uso progresivo de la fuerza” (progressive use of force) programme with the national police. The ICRC has continuously supported, through its cooperation delegate, the process of revision of the HRC Statutes. Together with the Federation, it has been providing leadership training to the governance of the branches.

### **American Red Cross**

Integrated management of childhood illnesses (IMCI) and the Central America Mitigation Initiative (CAMI) are two ongoing projects. The first is the result of an American Red Cross (ARC) / PAHO joint initiative, with funds until 2006. CAMI is funded by OFDA, as are CARE and other implementing partners until 2003. The ARC is also funding the HRC national training centre and is supporting the ambulance system. ARC supported the establishment of a specialized course (diploma) in psychosocial support. The focus for the ARC in 2003 will be health, disaster management, and promotion of self-sustainability (source: ARC Honduras 2002 - 2005 Strategic Plan).

### **Canadian Red Cross**

Under an agreement with the MoH, and funds from CIDA, the Canadian Red Cross (CRC) is implementing a large community health project in four branches of the country, in one department, until 2004, with possible extension. The CRC also supports the health department of the HRC.

### **Italian Red Cross**

The Italian Red Cross has submitted a joint proposal to the European Union together with the Netherlands Red Cross for a 2-year project in community health. Additionally, with its own funds, it will co-finance HRC activities in AIDS prevention, as well as provide support for youth activities.

### **Netherlands Red Cross**

After completion of the Mitch projects, the Netherlands Red Cross submitted a proposal, jointly with the Italian Red Cross, for the Regional Reconstruction Programme for Central America “Programa Regional de Reconstrucción de América Central” (PRRAC) European Union Managua, for a 2-years project in community health. It has submitted a second proposal for a branch development project for a three year duration.

### **Spanish Red Cross**

After completing its largest and final reconstruction project (Ciudad Espana), forming part of an investment of USD 60 million in support of the reconstruction of the country, the Spanish Red Cross delegation has been considerably reduced in size. The project portfolio for 2003 is being discussed with donors in Spain. The Spanish Red Cross has presented a project proposal to DIPECHO for intervention in 13 branches in the north of the country.

### **Swiss Red Cross**

The Swiss Red Cross (SRC) is implementing a community based health project in the southern departments of the country. Recently, the National Society received authorization to extend the project for an additional two years, until the end of 2004. The SRC has submitted a project proposal to work with ethnic groups (Pesc) in the eastern part of Olancho. The project is initially intended for three years, with a possible extension for a further five years.

## **5. Priority Programmes for Secretariat Assistance**

The Federation delegation opened in 1998. Since July 2000, it has focused on promotion of assistance in the field of organizational development and disaster preparedness, with the results highlighted above. After achieving most of its objectives, the delegation will be closed as of 31 December, and from 1 January 2003, presence will be limited to a Federation representative until May 2003. The exit strategy includes plans for support to be provided by the regional office for Central America and the Caribbean based in Panama.

### **Health and Care**

In 2003, the Federation will continue to support the implementation of the HIV/AIDS pilot project which encompasses the areas of prevention, anti-stigma and the building of relations with organizations working with people living with AIDS. Support to the health department of the Honduran Red Cross will be provided in accordance with the health strategy for the Americas, and regional exchange of experiences and best practices together with the coordination of PNS support through the CAS process, will be promoted. It is hoped that PNS supported activities in HIV/AIDS and community health will be more closely coordinated and that a standardization of methodologies will be achieved in 2003.

**Disaster Management**

Follow up will be given to the disaster preparedness work achieved between 1999 and 2002. The experience gained in community based disaster preparedness will be further developed within the framework of a DIPECHO proposal put forward by PNS and to be coordinated by the Federation.

**Humanitarian Values**

The Federation will support the further development of the HIV/AIDS anti-stigma campaign, as well as the ICRC's implementation of EDH courses.

**Organizational Development**

Organizational development support will be provided based on priorities identified during the change process and ensuring coordination of support through the CAS process.