

**Quarterly Activity Report
Post-Hurricane Reconstruction Project
CD/EPO/Division of International Health
January-March 2002 (Quarter 2, FY02)**

**Report of the Project Reconstruction Post Hurricane Mitch/Costa Rica
January–March 2002**

Administration

1. The funds of the IR1 have been reprogrammed to finalize implementation of activities by July 2002.
2. The percentage of budgetary execution is of 96%.

Intermediate results

IR1: Strengthening of epidemiological surveillance

1. The operational and managerial aspects of the surveillance information system are being tested. The software is being validated by the members of the technical committee.
2. Epidemiological weekly bulletins of the National Health Surveillance System were published for weeks 52 (2001) to 13 (2002). Financial resources for printing future issues should become definite on the part of interested institutions.
3. Health authorities decided that both the Ministry of Health and the CCSS would develop the ability for data storage and would give support to and maintain the information system, as required
4. A preliminary proposal for the organization and operation of the surveillance information system was developed (AVISA). The system would help in establishing the documentation, institutionalization and implementation of the system at the national level.
5. Local team staff members who are taking the Applied Epidemiology Courses for the Local Level in the Huétar Atlántica and Brunca Regions are already in the final stage of the intervention projects and are in the process of evaluating the course.

6. Training materials in epidemiology were developed and published; they include national practices and experiences, and will be used in future training programs in epidemiology.
7. A Subregional Meeting of the Central American Network of Emerging and Reemerging Diseases Prevention and Control and Reemerging (RECACER) was held in San Jose in February. Progress by the National Technical Groups was shared and a follow-up agenda for the Coordinating Committee of the Network was prepared. Using Dengue to ground activities, specific responsibilities were assigned to each country in order to prepare project proposals for research, surveillance, control, training, and laboratory capacity. These proposals will be delivered to the network coordinating group by 31 May.
8. Two national meetings were held (Emerging and Reemerging Diseases Surveillance, Prevention and Control and Inter-institutional Proposal Workshops). Thirty national experts attended presentations on the national situation of emerging diseases; in addition, strategies and lines of action were identified, and working groups prepared an inter-institutional proposal with the following components: organization and management; surveillance; promotion and prevention; research, and evaluation.

IR2: Training of field epidemiologists

1. The incorporation within its programming of a training plan in epidemiology was coordinated with the CENDEISSS in order to strengthen the analytical and epidemiological surveillance capacity of health services.
2. An observation visit by the Division of International Health of the CDC was hosted. Its purpose was to learn from Costa Rica's experience in training. Among the strengths recognized by the observers are the documentation generated by the experience, and the continuous evaluation processes aimed at improving the program.
3. Field projects under way:
 - a. Investigation of the diarrhea outbreak on Los Santos.
 - b. Investigation of a rash and fever outbreak in Cartagena, Guanacaste.
 - c. Evaluation of surveillance and nosocomial infection information systems.
 - d. Trend analysis and characterization of HIV/AIDS in Costa Rica.
 - e. Trends of mortality and incidence of diarrhea in Costa Rica.
 - f. Assessment of the impact of vaccination against *Haemophilus influenzae* in Costa Rica.
 - g. Evaluation of vaccination coverage in Costa Rica.
4. Medium-term investigation projects:

- a. Monitoring vaccination coverage using multiple purpose household surveys.
 - b. Monitoring of pregnant women inadvertently vaccinated with SR.
 - c. Retrospective case-finding of SRC in Costa Rica from 1996 to 2000.
 - d. Vaccination coverage and immunity to measles and rubella among schoolchildren/
 - e. Community intervention for dengue prevention and control.
5. Three epidemiological research papers were submitted, and accepted, to the International Congress of Field Epidemiology Programs that will be held in Madrid in June, 2002

IR3: Strengthening of surveillance based on public health laboratories

1. Building of the virology and leptospirosis laboratories, storage room, and Client Service Unit was completed.
2. Laboratory equipment for virology, tuberculosis and enteropathogens was provided.
3. The implementation of the Laboratory Information System was completed for INCIENSA laboratories, as agreed in the contract and work plan.
4. A project is being formulated for the implementation of an information system for the laboratory network. External and national resources will finance this project.

IR4: Community-based interventions

1. The community intervention project was executed for dengue prevention and control. Three community networks were strengthened in the Great Puntarenas (Barranco, Chacarita and Puntarenas Centro). Most relevant activities include the training of health and community teams, the production of educational materials, the sharing of experiences, and the preparation of strategies and plan of activities for 2002 in communication and education. A map of social actors was prepared, as well as the systematization of experiences in prevention and control of dengue.

Critical success factors

- The project is in the last stage of execution of funds. The objectives set off in the work have been fulfilled. During 2002, Costa Rica will be responsible for coordinating the Central American Network for Emerging and Reemerging Disease Prevention and Control (RECACER) and the Regional Technical Committee of the Field Epidemiology Program. Management mechanisms for an adequate implementation of activities should be established during the continuity phase of the project.
- Costa Rica should also prepare a national project for the four intermediate results of the project, so as to ensure sustainability of achievements. In this project, national efforts to assume the continuity of the project and the need for external financing should be

envisioned. This will make it possible to have an integrated proposal that consolidates the achieved progress.

Future activities

1. Implement the operational and managerial component of the information system for surveillance in the Central Pacific Region.
2. Define management mechanisms to give sustainability to the Epidemiological Bulletin.
3. Hold a workshop on monitoring and presentation of intervention projects as part of the Applied Epidemiology Course for the Local Level in the Huetar Atlántica and Brunca Regions.
4. Evaluate the learning experiences of the Huetar Atlantica and Brunca Regions.
5. Finalize the training of the first FETP group in September, 2002, and continue the learning process with participants in the second FETP group.
6. Prepare a sustainability plan for the project, with a proposal for national institutionalization.

PROJECT POST HURRICANES IN HONDURAS

JANUARY-MARCH/2002

IR1: INTEGRATED HEALTH INFORMATION SYSTEM

ADMINISTRATION

As of 30 March, 2002, the project has obligated a total of US\$83,908.72 or 37,6% of the funds allotted to Honduras.

ACTIVITIES CARRIED OUT

1. Preparation of the timetable of activities of the 2002.
2. Implementation of the new instruments in Health Region No.7
3. Monitoring and follow-up activities on the use of instruments.
4. Training in the management of computer programs for the unit of analysis teams.
5. Training in biostatistics and statistics to area teams.
6. Training of statisticians in data analysis and interpretation.
7. Preparation of the plan of implementation of the network in health region No.7.
8. Review of hospital reporting instruments (clinical history of obstetric care).
9. Workshop on standardization of criteria for the implementation for units of analysis in health region No.7.
10. Coordination with SIGAF for the complementation of both projects.

ONGOING ACTIVITIES

1. Training in biostatistics and epidemiology.
2. Validation of data collection instruments.

3. Software design for various applications.
4. Redefinition of diseases subject to epidemiological surveillance.
5. Review and adjustment to the epidemiological surveillance system.

FUTURE ACTIVITIES

1. Monitoring and evaluation of the units of analysis.
2. Formal implementation of the system.
3. Generation, collection, and storage of data.
4. Transfer, analysis, and interpretation of data.
5. Use of data in decision-making.

PROBLEMS ENCOUNTERED

There are two main problems in the development of project activities:

- a) Lower operational capacity to carry out activities as programmed.

Little interprogrammatic coordination among the different areas of the Ministry of Health, i.e., Epidemiology, Statistics, and Health Services.