

**Second Meeting of the Steering Committee of the  
Humanitarian Supply Management Project (SUMA)**

**WHO Headquarters, Geneva, 3 December 1997**

**Report on the First Phase of the Project** (Dr Edgardo Acosta, SUMA coordinator):

SUMA, the PAHO/WHO humanitarian supply management project, was established in the Region of the Americas in 1991 with the objective of improving national and regional ability to manage the flow of humanitarian supplies at the site of a complex or natural disaster. At the end of Phase I (March 1997), over 1,600 nationals in Latin America and the Caribbean were trained to sort, classify, and inventory humanitarian supplies

Successive versions of SUMA software were produced and distributed at no cost to over 2,000 agencies and individual users worldwide. Version 5.0, the most recent software version, includes a Warehouse Management Module that assists local authorities and NGOs to maintain a record of the flow of commodities and stock balances. SUMA methodology and software have been used extensively in actual disaster situations (hurricanes, earthquakes, tsunamis, border conflicts in South America, complex emergency in Haiti) and proven to be user-friendly

**Findings of the External Evaluation Team** (Dr. J. Wouda and Mr. E. Haegglund):

The overall conclusion of the external evaluation is that the SUMA Project has helped the target countries in the organization and management of incoming relief supplies. The evaluation team identified the following strengths, weaknesses, and opportunities presented by SUMA:

***SUMA Strengths:***

- Capacity to manage large volumes of incoming supplies
- Feasibility of an international SUMA team to mobilize at short notice and at low cost
- All levels of participants easily understand the user-friendly software

***SUMA Weaknesses:***

- Efforts should be made to bring SUMA to the peripheral and local levels
- High turnover of personnel at the country level

***SUMA Opportunities:***

- Potential to become a comprehensive supply management and tracking system
- SUMA can be adopted as a standard outside the Region of the Americas
- Capable of being expanded for normal, non-emergency applications

### **Revision of SUMA Version 5.0 (Dr. Edgardo Acosta):**

In addition to the three modules currently available in Version 5.0 (CENTRAL, FIELD UNIT and WAREHOUSE MANAGEMENT modules), the Caribbean Disaster Emergency Response Agency, in conjunction with PAHO/WHO, is developing the independent Pre-arrival Module for release in March 1998. This module will manage information on pledges and requests at the site of the disaster.

The Steering Committee supports the recommendation from the Secretariat to design a Windows 95 version. It should be completed and released in 1998.

The Committee also offered the following suggestions:

- Improve SUMA links with different types of telecommunication systems;
- Conduct global discussions on the current categories,
- Provide briefing/training for donors;
- Design a LAN version; and
- Simplify the list and presentation of the printed reports.

### **Financial Report (Dr. Claude de Ville de Goyet):**

- The Phase I Financial Report (1991-1996) was distributed
- The Government of the Netherlands approved four-year funding for Phase II of the Project (effective March 1997).
- ECHO approved a one-year grant for training NGOs and ECHO partners in South America (October 1997-September 1998).

Mr. Georges Maghioros, the ECHO representative, announced that ECHO would support SUMA with approximately US\$ 350,000 per year, with an extension for three additional years.

Dr. de Ville expressed the gratitude of PAHO/WHO. He will follow up the suggestion from WHO/HQ and Mr. Dorsman that, upon formal notification of the ECHO decision, discussions take place between PAHO, the Government of the Netherlands, and ECHO regarding the use of some of the available funds for adapting SUMA for use in other regions. The provision of technical support at the global level by Latin American and Caribbean experts is another topic that would be addressed in these discussions.

### **FUNDESUMA**

FUNDESUMA is a foundation established in accordance with Costa Rican statutes to contribute to the management of humanitarian supplies both in the Region of the Americas and globally. PAHO is finalizing an agreement for this NGO to implement SUMA activities in Latin

America. The overall and political responsibility for SUMA activities will remain with PAHO/WHO. FUNDESUMA is an alternative mechanism for conducting technical activities and independent fund-raising to meet the objectives shared by PAHO/WHO, the SUMA Project, and the donor community.

A copy of the forthcoming contract with FUNDESUMA was distributed.

### **Proposed SUMA Activities in the Region of the Americas**

The following SUMA activities projected for 1998 were presented to the Steering Committee:

- Develop training material and activities for Master Instructors
- Publish a Technical Guide and Quick Reference
- Create a translation module
- Provide training for operations outside the Region of the Americas
- Assist countries to define national strategies
- Improve the SUMA Web site
- Establish connections with existing computer training centers
- Disseminate SUMA features worldwide
- Develop a self-study module (to be prepared by the National Training Center of the Costa Rican Red Cross)

The Committee recommended that a new video be prepared for training purposes to complement the public information video currently available. They also recommended improving the SUMA Web site.

### **SUMA in Other Regions**

Other WHO Regional Offices, SEARO and EMRO, in particular, expressed interest in including SUMA in their emergency preparedness programs in selected countries that have the need and ability to absorb it.

EHA will promote SUMA technology among UN agencies and humanitarian NGOs, and will collaborate by identifying new funding sources. A more detailed plan of action proposed by EHA/DAC is attached.

### **Implementation of SUMA in Complex Disasters**

PAHO/WHO, the SUMA coordinator, and country representatives from the Region of the Americas expressed confidence that SUMA could contribute in future, large-scale, complex

emergencies occurring outside the Region of the Americas. The Caribbean countries (through the Regional Security Services) are developing a reservoir of English-speaking experts in SUMA, who could be mobilized at short notice to assist the UN or WHO in complex emergencies.

The Steering Committee agreed that international donors should encourage and support the use of SUMA in order to improve the management of humanitarian supplies. The cost of mobilizing SUMA in an environment without infrastructure is low in comparison with the total cost of the international humanitarian operation.

It was recommended that WHO, in consultation with other agencies, promote the use of SUMA in the next event of this kind.

The Steering Committee suggested that an examination be made of new ways of cooperating and coordinating with security and military forces that are active in humanitarian operations.

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**PROGRAMME**

- 9:00 - 9:10: Opening of the Meeting by Dr. J P. Menu and Dr. de Ville
- 9:10 - 9:20: Adoption of the Agenda and Election of the President
- 9 20 - 9:30: Presentation of video
- 9:30 - 10:00: Progress report for 1992-1996  
By Dr. Edgardo Acosta, SUMA Project Coordinator
- 10:00 - 10:30: Report and recommendation of the external evaluation team  
By Mr. E. Haegglund, DHA, and Jan Wouda, Consultant
- 10:30 - 10:45: Coffee Break
- 10:45 - 11:30: Presentation of SUMA version 5.0 and features of the next version  
By Dr. Edgardo Acosta
- Software Issues
    - Pre-arrival Module by CDERA
    - Copyrights and distribution
    - Revision of version 5.0 (timing, review mechanism)
    - Windows 95 version
- 11:30 - 12:30: Discussions
- 12:30 - 14:00: Lunch
- 14:00 - 14:45: Phase in the Americas II (1998-2000)
- Financial projections by Dr C. de Ville de Goyet
  - Projected activities for 1997 by Dr. E. Acosta
  - Inter-agency cooperation (UN, CDERA, CEPREDENAC, Red Cross)
  - Training objectives, targets and strategies
  - Promotion (traditional and Internet)

- Disaster Response (Roster, stockpile, procedures) by Mr. R. Cícero, CENAPRED, Mexico
- Implementation Mechanisms: FUNDESUMA 's role and other issues

14:45 - 15:30: SUMA in other Regions

- Proposed priorities and activities
- Training, promotion and mobilization in case of a disaster
- SUMA in complex disasters
- Support from AMRO and FUNDESUMA (technical and/or material)
- Interagency cooperation: UN/DHA, UNDAC, IFRCs, NGOs
- Mobilization of resources

15:30 - 15:45 Coffee Break

15:45 - 17:00 SUMA in other Regions (continued)

17:00 - 17:30 Membership of the Steering Committee and venue of the next meeting

17:30 - 18:00 Conclusions

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**Members of the Steering Committee:**

Sr. Guillermo Rueda Montaña  
President of the Colombian Red Cross Society  
Santafe de Bogota, Colombia

Mr. Walter Cotte  
Chief of Relief Operations  
Colombian Red Cross Society  
Santafe de Bogota, Colombia

Mr. Rolando Durán  
Executive Director of CEPREDENAC  
Panama City, Panama

Lt. Colonel Florence Gittens  
Regional Security Services (RSS)  
Bridgetown, Barbados, WI

Mr. Ricardo Cícero  
Director of Training, National Center for Disaster Prevention  
Mexico City, Mexico

**Secretary of the Committee:**

Dr. Edgardo Acosta  
President of FUNDESUMA and SUMA Coordinator

**Representatives of Funding Agencies:**

Mr. Dorsman  
Government of The Netherlands

Mr. Georges Maghioros  
ECHO

**WHO Headquarters EHA Officers:**

Dr. J.P. Menu

Dr. R. Flores

Dr. M. Thieren

**WHO Regional EHA Officers:**

- AMRO                      Dr. C. de Ville
- EMRO                      Dr. N. Mojadidi
- EURO                      Dr. J. Theunissen
- SEARO                    Dr. J. Lárusdóttir
- WPRO                    Dr. S. Asahi

**External participants:**

Mr. Eric Haegglund  
DHA, Geneva

Mr. André Mollard  
EU Office, Geneva

Mr. C. Kaye  
DHA, Geneva

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**List of Working Documents and other material**

1. Progress report for the period 1992-1996
2. Report of the external Evaluation
3. Financial report Phase 1 (Summary)
4. Regional Project document phase II
5. Promotional material incl. home pages and video
6. SUMA software and manuals (English and Spanish)
7. Agreement between PAHO and the Colombian Red Cross
8. Agreement between PAHO, ResponseNet and Delorme Inc.
9. Agreement between PAHO and the Caribbean Disaster Response Agency (CDERA)
10. By-laws of FUNDESUMA
11. Proposed technical services agreement with FUNDESUMA