The initial implementation of the programme was delayed due to a lack of funds. The more recent response from donors has provided the means to proceed with the planned procurement of food parcels for Kamchatka oblast, Koryak autonomous okrug, and Magadan oblast. The funding however remains insufficient for the procurement of clothes, medicine, food for children, and hygiene and nursing kits.

The context

The combined effect of the recent economic crisis and poor harvest in Russia has been particularly devastating on the population of Far North-eastern regions (Chukotka, Kamchatka, including Koryak okrug, and Magadan), leading to unemployment, inflation, lack of fuel, and the steady disintegration of social and medical services. Due to a lack of funds for the transportation of regular winter supplies (fuel, medicine, etc.) which are normally delivered by the Northern shipping route during ice-free months, the needed supplies for the winter period were never sent.

Tuberculosis, venereal disease, and more common ailments have increased infant mortality, and anaemia among nursing mothers is also increasing while hospitals have few remaining medicines and medical equipment for treatment. Hygiene is also a problem with melted ice often providing the only source of drinking water, leading to a surge of digestive disorder. Sewage systems are poor and become easily blocked during the winter, resulting in raw sewage freezing in the permafrost, thereby compounding health and sanitation problems.

To respond the situation, the Federation launched an Appeal to provide assistance to:

- alleviate the impact of cold, malnutrition, disease, stress, and lack of medical care to 82,000 people;
- maximise the use of available local resources (human, goods, and services);
- strengthen local capacities by providing infrastructure support;
- promote partnership between Participating National Societies and the RRC.
**Latest events**

Responding to a request from Taimyr AO, a Russian Red Cross team has recently conducted an assessment mission visit to the area. The humanitarian situation in Taimyr is very similar to the one in the Far East, and the RRC has proposed to extend the programme to that area.

**Red Cross/Red Crescent action**

With the tenders for the production of food parcels due to close soon, it is anticipated that production will begin and distributions to Magadan, Kamchatka, and Koryak okrug will be carried out. It is planned that each food parcel will contain 2 kg of wheat flour, 1 kg of sugar, 2 kg of macaroni, 1 litre of vegetable oil, 2 cans of meat, 2 cans of condensed milk, 1 kg of semolina, and 0.5 kg of tea. Various methods of distribution are being considered, but the most likely transport method would appear to be primarily by vehicle and helicopter, as well as by sea in Koryak okrug as ports thaw.

The Netherlands Red Cross is supporting the Russian Red Cross in 15 regions (including Magadan) with food parcels and medicine to support 140,000 beneficiaries. In Altai, the Netherlands Red Cross is assisting three children's hospitals and feeding 1,000 children during the year. Other bilateral programmes are managed by the Norwegian Red Cross (Murmansk/Archangelsk) and Finnish Red Cross in Karelia.

The Federation's Winter Emergency operation also continues to fulfil its objectives despite the constraints encountered. The assistance rendered to date in the form of food parcels, soup kitchens, winter shoes and clothes to multi-child families, orphans, pensioners, handicapped and homeless in Belarus, Moldova, Ukraine and Russian Federation has proved invaluable. In response to the spread of tuberculosis, HIV/AIDS and Sexually Transmitted Diseases, and on behalf of the National Red Cross Societies in the four countries, the Federation also launched a 10-15 year programme in March this year. This support is complementary to the RRC and Federation's Far North-East and Winter Emergency Appeal programmes.

**Outstanding needs**

Cash donations are urgently needed in order to continue the programme, and to reach 100% implementation. Without the needed cash support, clothes, medication, hygiene parcels, nursing kits, and food for children will not be procured.

**External relations - Government/UN/NGOs/Media**

Close co-operation between the Russian Red Cross, the Federation, and the local Red Cross branches continues. A Federation representative was sent to Magadan on 29 March to assess the situation and discuss with local authorities the most effective means of transportation of the food parcels. Another assessment mission has returned from Kamchatka, where productive meetings were held with the Vice-Governor of the oblast. An inter-agency United Nations mission visited Kamchatka oblast and Koryak okrug in February, with similar conclusions on the emergency situation as those highlighted in the Federation Appeal. The UN has publicly supported the Federation's Appeal and encouraged donors to channel funds through the RRC.
Contributions

See Annex 1 for details.

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This and other reports on Federation operations are available on the Federation’s website: http://www.ifrc.org