

# PROGRAMME UPDATE



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

## AZERBAIJAN

8 December 2005

### In Brief

Appeal No. 05AA068; Programme Update no. 2

Period covered: 1 June to 30 September, 2005

Appeal target: CHF 1,032,138 (USD 813,283 or EUR 671,702)

Appeal coverage: [<click here>](#)

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*The International Federation's mission is to improve the lives of vulnerable people by mobilizing the power of humanity. The Federation is the world's largest humanitarian organization, and its millions of volunteers are active in over 181 countries. All international assistance to support vulnerable communities seeks to adhere to the Code of Conduct and the Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Disaster Response, according to the SPHERE Project. Please access the Federation's website at <http://www.ifrc.org>*

### Programme analysis

#### 1. Health and care

##### Goal

Health vulnerability of people of Azerbaijan has reduced.

##### Objective

The Azerbaijan Red Crescent is a key humanitarian actor contributing to improving health of vulnerable people with a focus on preventive health.

**Expected result 1:** 12,760 people have improved awareness on the importance of non-remunerated volunteer blood donation and preventive health including nutrition, reproductive health and family planning, personal hygiene, infectious diseases, immunization and healthy life style through the expanded network of Red Crescent volunteer health promoters.

#### **Achievements, impact and constraints**

Health promotion and education have been among of the core activities of the Azerbaijan Red Crescent. Through a network of trained volunteers the national society has been educating communities on reproductive health, family planning, nutrition, personal hygiene, infectious and preventable diseases, such as Tuberculosis, and the importance of immunization. Over ten months of 2005, it conducted **23** training sessions for **21** new volunteers from Baku as well as Ganja, Lankaran and Sabirabad regions. This brings the total number of the Red Crescent volunteer health promoters to **66**.

During the reporting period the volunteers conducted **2,112** individual and group sessions for **13,980** people in their communities. Thus, from January to September the Red Crescent reached **20,452** people, which is **452** people more than it estimated to cover during the year. In addition, promotion and education materials such as 885 T-shirts and caps, guidelines for health promoters and manuals for communities were produced. The materials have been distributed to the participants of health promotion seminars and used by the Red Crescent volunteers.

To solve the problem of insufficient blood reserves in the country, the national society has been recruiting non-remunerated blood donors. In accordance with the plan, since January 2005 the Red Crescent – assisted by professional doctors – trained **12** volunteers to run promotional campaigns, mobilize communities and facilitate discussions with target groups in order to increase public awareness of safety, importance and benefits of blood donation. This brings the total number of trained Red Crescent volunteers recruiting volunteer blood donors to 52.

During the reporting period the Red Crescent volunteers talked to **11,222** people, encouraging them to donate blood to the state blood bank. In total, from January to September national society increased awareness of the importance of voluntary blood donation among **14,359** people, which is **7,079** people more than it planned to reach during the year. Additionally, there have been 1,490 booklets, red T-shirts and caps, wall clocks and trinkets produced and distributed during these events. In general the promotional efforts of the Red Crescent for the period of January-September resulted in recruitment of **152** blood donors. The national society presumes that it will be able to achieve this number till the end of the year.

The Azerbaijan Red Crescent marked 14 June, the World Blood Donor Day<sup>1</sup>, with a number of events. During one of them – attended by 200 representatives from the Red Crescent, governmental structures and non-governmental organizations – 50 regular donors received appreciation for their contribution and were presented gifts. A blood donation campaign among representatives from the Baku Educational Centre, a local newspaper, that the polyclinic department of the Central Military Hospital and Project Harmony was part of the celebration. As a result, ten people gave blood in favour of children with blood diseases.

**Expected result 2:** The risk of the spread of HIV/AIDS among young people has reduced through better Azerbaijan Red Crescent awareness activities.

The official statistics says there are 768 HIV-infected people in Azerbaijan, 70 of them died of AIDS. The risk of infection is exacerbated by poverty combined with poor public awareness, traditional low usage of condoms, inadequate health and care, and population movement.

To reduce the spread of HIV/AIDS and discrimination of people living with it, the Azerbaijan Red Crescent has been working to eliminate one of the factors – lack of awareness. It has been educating the population on HIV/AIDS prevention through a network of volunteers. The focus is on young people.

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<sup>1</sup> The World Blood Donor Day is celebrated on 14 June. It is a collaborative activity between the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, the World Health Organisation, the International Federation of Blood Donor Organisations and the International Society of Blood Transfusion, with support from the Association of Donor Recruitment Professionals and many other groups.

Since June 2005, the Red Crescent has trained **124** new volunteers as HIV/AIDS peer educators. It now has a network of 549 peer educators working with the communities across the country. Over the reporting period, they reached near **6,534** people. From January to September the Red Crescent society increased awareness of HIV/AIDS among **11,417** people, which is **6,867** people more than it was planned for 2005. The target groups included schoolchildren, students, sex workers, and patients of a skin-venereal hospital in Ramani. The questions addressed during the training sessions were: how the human immune system works, how HIV/AIDS is transmitted and how it can be prevented. Discrimination of people living with HIV/AIDS was also discussed challenging the youngsters' misconceptions. At the end of the training sessions participants were shown a Red Crescent video clip named "*Protect yourself*" with basic messages on HIV/AIDS prevention. The project also supported a printing of 800 booklets titled "*Youth against AIDS*".

## 2. Disaster management

### Goal

The vulnerability of the population of Azerbaijan to disasters has reduced.

### Objective

The Azerbaijan Red Crescent has strengthened its capacity to prepare for, mitigate and respond to disasters.

**Expected result 1:** The Azerbaijan Red Crescent has strengthened its disaster response capacities by improving professionalism of its volunteer teams, replenishing emergency stocks and improving internal communication.

### Achievements, impact and constraints

The project is designed to help the Azerbaijan Red Crescent prepare itself for assistance in the event of a disaster. Specifically, during the reported period the national society:

- Trained its employees and volunteers in the regional centres of Sumgayit, Mingachevir and Sabirabad (in total, 33 people) in *raising community disaster awareness* techniques;
- Trained other members of mobile volunteer teams and employees of the national society from seven regions (118 in total) in assessing the needs in emergency situation. These participants received newly printed manual (140 copies in total) "*Emergency situation and needs assessment*".
- Procured hygienic kits for 300 families from a local company. There exists an agreement between the society and the company on future cooperation in case of major disaster. With relief items available from the stock the national society also provided assistance to 26 families (146 members), whose houses were destroyed by fire or floods that occurred in six villages of Qabala, Qobustan and Ismayilli districts. Specifically, blankets, sleeping bags, mattresses, beddings, clothes, rubber boots, shoes, towels, hygienic and kitchen sets, portable gas-stoves, electric ovens, electric kettles, spades and rakes have been distributed based on the results of needs assessment.
- Installed VHF mobile radio stations in other two Red Crescent vehicles, bringing the total number of the Red Crescent vehicles equipped with VHF to 22.
- Installed three VHF Motorola GR-500 Repeaters in Baku and Sabirabad TV towers and a governmental building in Lankaran, improving communication between the Red Crescent Secretariat and three regional centres. The Repeaters cover the area of 50-75 km.
- Trained 83 Secretariat staff members and volunteers in Baku, Mingachevir and Lankaran regional centres and Nakhchivan Autonomous Republican Committee how to use the radio equipment.

**Expected result 2:** Communities living in disaster prone areas have better awareness of the risks and threats of the most common emergencies.

### Achievements, impact and constraints

First Aid has been an important part of the Azerbaijan Red Crescent's disaster management efforts to help the population learn basic life saving skills. Through the network of first aid instructors<sup>2</sup>, the Red Crescent trains different groups, mainly schoolchildren and their teachers, as well as the national society volunteers, internally

<sup>2</sup> The Red Crescent has three first aid instructors in each regional centre and one instructor in each local branch.

displaced people living in the southern camps, and employees of local non-governmental organisations. During the reporting period, the Red Crescent conducted 55 training sessions for 674 people.

On 10 September 2005 the Azerbaijan Red Crescent society marked the World First Aid Day with an event in the detention centre for juveniles in Khatai district of Baku city. Representatives from the Federation, the ICRC and “EI” Programme Development Centre<sup>3</sup> participated. The event run under the slogan “First Aid with vulnerable people” among 80 prisoners and employees of the detention centre. During the event the Red Crescent volunteers, with support from the First aid coordinator, demonstrated first aid skills. The participants also received brochures on first aid and health promotion and food parcels. This World First Aid Day was also marked in the southern camps and 12 communities of Sabirabad, Sumgayit, Ismayilli, Mingachevir and Zaqatala districts. Along with demonstration of first aid skills, the events included drawing and first aid competitions conducted in groups by 405 branch and community volunteers and pupils of drama circles.

The planned six public awareness campaigns based on the findings of the vulnerability and capacity assessment in the most disaster prone areas have been postponed till the end of the year to ensure its effective implementation to give the branch staff of the national society enough time to be prepared for implementation of the planned activities.

**Expected result 3:** Azerbaijan Red Crescent has improved coordination in disaster response within the national society as well as with other key actors including the local authorities, the United Nations and other agencies.

#### **Achievements, impact and constraints**

Over the reporting period, the Azerbaijan Red Crescent society attended a number of meetings with governmental and non-governmental organisations working in disaster management to share information on its mandate, expertise and resources. The meetings were chaired by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), which is assisting the Government of Azerbaijan in developing the National Emergency Preparedness and Management Strategy. As the roles and responsibilities of the Red Crescent society were not clearly outlined in the draft strategy, the national society, in consultation with the Federation, prepared a new version and presented it to UNDP. The roles and responsibilities are as follows:

- To implement community disaster awareness activities (risk reduction activities) in disaster prone areas in close cooperation with the local authorities and other organizations;
- To render assistance to disaster victims – setting tent camps, providing first aid, supplying food and non-food items;
- To conduct needs assessment with the support of Federation regional disaster response team and field assessment and coordination team (RDRT/FACT) and in case of need to apply for international assistance to the Federation and the International Committee of Red Cross;
- To assist the organization responsible for radio communication in disasters and organize joint radio communication using the Red Crescent regional communication network;
- To assist the Government with collection of information from a disaster region and to pass this information to different international agencies and donors;
- To organize tracing service for the families that lost their family members as a result of an international war, an internal conflict and a disaster or assist the agency dealing with tracing.

The role and responsibilities of each Red Crescent department during disasters and/or emergencies have not been identified and an emergency response coordination mechanism has not been developed yet. These activities were postponed to the end of the year due to poor programme management of the disaster management division.

### **3. Humanitarian values**

#### **Goal**

Respect for human beings has increased.

#### **Objective**

<sup>3</sup> “EI” Programme Development Centre is a local organization, which carries out social and educational work among teenagers in detention centres.

Azerbaijan Red Crescent has strengthened its capacity to advocate for the respect for human dignity and promote a culture of non-stigmatization and tolerance towards marginalized communities, including people living with HIV/AIDS, elderly people, orphans and disabled children.

#### **Achievements, impact and constraints**

To raise understanding of humanitarian values, the Azerbaijan Red Crescent organized round table discussions on the life of a stigmatized person for 25 volunteers from primary organizations established in a number of universities in Baku. Other 44 new volunteers from three regional centres and 50 children from five districts participated in the seminars on the harm of stigmatisation during a summer camp. The participants of these seminars realised harmful influence of stigma on people's behaviour by putting themselves in the shoes of stigmatized people – handicapped, people with tuberculosis and HIV/AIDS.

The Red Crescent society organized a two day picnic in Lankaran for 45 secretariat staff and volunteers from Baku and three regional centres. During the event volunteers received information about tolerance, discrimination and stigma. They also organized presentations and performances on discrimination of people living with HIV/AIDS, TB and drug addicts, expressing ideas on how to change the behaviour towards a stigmatized person. A person living with HIV, who attended the event, talked openly about his life to warn young people against use of drugs and unsafe sex that put them at risk of infection.

The Red Crescent also continued to promote humanitarian values and principles through the mass media: 20 news-articles were published in eight local newspapers. Also, the *Lider* TV channel broadcast nine TV programmes "In light of the Red Crescent."

Two video clips "Protect yourself from AIDS" and "Give blood and save life" were demonstrated on the street monitor in one of the central streets of Baku during one month (100 times per day) free of charge. This became possible due to the new partnership between the Red Crescent information department and *Imedia Advertising Company*.

## **4. Organisational development**

### **Goal**

The Azerbaijan Red Crescent positions itself as an effective partner to support communities in confronting day-to-day challenges.

### **Objective**

The Azerbaijan Red Crescent is a well-functioning national society providing better services with greater impact and relevance to the country's vulnerable people.

**Expected result 1:** Azerbaijan Red Crescent staff from the secretariat in Baku and regional centres have strengthened programme planning and management capacities to ensure effective implementation of the strategic plan and programmes/projects.

### **Achievements, impact and constraints**

The Red Crescent society trained 26 branch chairmen and youth instructors of the local committees within Ganja regional centre in project design. It is expected that the received skills will help the participants to write effective project proposals to be presented to possible donors.

The Red Crescent produced 200 issues of its Strategic Plan for 2005-2007<sup>4</sup>: 150 copies in Azeri and another 50 in English. The copies have been distributed among the Red Crescent primary organizations and international

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<sup>4</sup> The Strategic Plan of the Azerbaijan Red Crescent Society for 2005-2007 was developed in 2004. The Plan defines the prioritised areas in line with the Federation's strategy 2010. Strategy 2010 is the document that guides the Federation's actions from 2000 to 2010. Adopted by the Federation's General Assembly in October 1999, it draws on the lessons learned by the Federation from its performance during the 1990s.

organizations cooperating with the national society to ensure their awareness of the strategic directions of the Azerbaijan Red Crescent society.

**Expected result 2:** Four branches of the Azerbaijan Red Crescent have strengthened links with local communities and reduced dependency on external support by initiating responsive and focused programmes and mobilising local resources.

### **Achievements, impact and constraints**

In 2005 the most active Red Crescent branches – Sabirabad, Mingachevir, Sumgayit, Ismayilli and Zaqatala – have been selected to continue with the participatory community development (PCD) approach<sup>5</sup>.

In each of 12 communities, activity groups together with the Red Crescent branch staff and volunteers identified vulnerability areas in their communities and responded to these needs through a number of training sessions. Since June 2005, 437 people received knowledge on the International Red Cross/Red Crescent Movement, its history, mandate and Fundamental Principles. In addition, 43 Red Crescent health promoters trained 5,065 people on family planning, reproductive health, HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis, the importance of immunisation, breast cancer and public and personal hygiene. 34 Red Crescent first aid instructors trained another 636 people in the targeted communities in first aid skills. During the reporting period, the Red Crescent initiated training in *raising community disaster awareness* for the branch staff and community members: previously trained employees and volunteers of Sumgayit, Mingachevir and Sabirabad regional centres in their turn conducted training sessions for 76 Red Crescent staff and volunteers and community members.

In Sumgayit and Ismayilli nine Red Crescent volunteers have been regularly visiting 15 disabled children and 16 lone elderly people. During these visits, volunteers cleaning houses, do shopping, cut firewood and cook for the elderly. They also help children with their homework and entertain them. Volunteers from the Ismayilli branch took two physically disabled children to the “Healthy Child World” center that provides psychosocial rehabilitation to such children.

To improve psychosocial condition of children in the targeted communities, the Red Crescent branches have been organising a number of out-of-school activities. Specifically: **334** children have been attending a folklore circle. Other **1,340** children regularly play football, volleyball, basketball and chess; **37** children are involved in a drawing group and **157** children in a drama circle. A number of training sessions and sports tournaments were organized among children in the targeted communities. 42 pupils of drama circles in the southern camps and five communities in Sabirabad region participated in puppet making training. After the training pupils held puppet shows, which delivered an important message on health related issues such as personal hygiene and prevention of infectious diseases, among other children in the communities. Some 145 children from the southern camps and six communities of Sabirabad and Ismayilli districts participated in drawing competitions and football, volleyball and checkers tournaments. Winners were rewarded with gifts. The aim of sports tournaments is to provide children with meaningful pastime, encourage them to take part in out-of-school activities and prevent developing harmful habits.

The Red Crescent organized a one-month summer camp in the children’s sanatorium in Zaqulba district for 100 children from the families living in the southern camps, as well as communities of five regions. The camp’s curriculum included training sessions on the Movement’s Fundamental Principles, health promotion, first aid and basics of disaster preparedness.

The above-mentioned branches also run vocational training for 130 people to help them learn new skills and gain better employment opportunities: 71 people have been attending sewing classes, 31 learn barbering, and 13 women take course on hairdressing. Another five women learn how to knit, while other 10 take lessons in culinary. The courses are run by 17 volunteers.

<sup>5</sup> The branch development project started in June 2003 through participatory community development (PCD) approach. The focus was on six branches and ten communities. This year Sabirabad, Mingachevir, Sumgayit, Ismayilli and Zaqatala branches were chosen to continue the work as they understand local needs well, support communities in finding solutions of their day-to-day social and health problems and mobilise maximum of local resources to strengthen the sustainability of their activities.

The Red Crescent pays a particular attention to strengthening the role of women. 12 women committees that unite 133 women were created in the targeted communities. The committees meet regularly with the leaders of the community activity groups to discuss the women's social problems and gender issues. Jointly with health promoters they organized a number of seminars on health related topics such as family planning, importance of blood donation and sanitation-hygienic rules. Several times women committees mobilised their neighbours to clean the streets. They also take care of the most vulnerable members in their communities, for instance they regularly visit lone elderly people to help them with the housework. During the reporting period they also distributed baby-sets to 19 pregnant women in the southern camps and one of the communities.

**Expected result 3:** The Azerbaijan Red Crescent has more active youth and volunteers providing services to vulnerable communities via better management system and structures.

### **Achievements, impact and constraints**

The Azerbaijan Red Crescent society continued to register its volunteers based on the information received from Baku and a number of Red Crescent local committees. The aim is to specify their number and profile. The data base will also enable the organization to determine in which areas volunteers need support to strengthen their skills and professionalism. During the reporting period, 110 new volunteers were included into the database of youth and volunteers bringing the number of registered volunteers to 813. In total, the Azerbaijan Red Crescent has 15,717 volunteers.

To encourage its volunteers, the Red Crescent offers them different training opportunities to improve their skills. 45 newly involved volunteers of Baku regional centre attended Red Crescent induction course. The participants received basic information about Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, its three components and Fundamental Principles. Other 33 volunteers of Ganja regional centre and members of the Sabirabad regional youth and volunteer board were trained as trainers on Red Crescent induction course. 15 volunteers from the central youth and volunteer board learned first aid skills.

Youth and volunteer boards<sup>6</sup> have been meeting regularly to report on their activities and discuss new ideas. In June and August meetings of the central and Sabirabad regional youth and volunteer boards were held. The national society also highlights the activities of youth and volunteers through monthly bulletin.

52 volunteers from Lankaran, Ganja, Baku and Sumgayit regional centres continued providing social service to 550 orphans and disabled children in the orphanage houses and those who live at home. During their visits, volunteers help children with education issues, train disabled children on how to look after themselves, knit, draw, help them with homework and play different games. On 15 September, the Day of Knowledge, volunteers from the Sumgayit and Lankaran regional centres organized a number of activities: an outing for disabled home-bound children, training on HIV/AIDS, first aid, the International Movement and its Fundamental Principles, and an exhibition of children's handicrafts.

Additionally, the Red Crescent organized a two-week summer camp for 153 disabled children from Shagan orphanage house. Seven volunteers from the Norwegian Red Cross and 11 volunteers from the Azerbaijan Red Crescent took groups of children to walk, swim, play different games and organized sport, drawing, sewing and music programmes for them. The summer camp was funded various partner organizations. In their turn, five volunteers of the Azerbaijan Red Crescent visited their colleagues in Norway to exchange experience on how to look after disabled children.

The Red Crescent youth committee initiated a new project "Promotion of knowledge on ecology, geography and hygienic norms among orphans in "UMID" orphanage house. Four volunteers-students of the faculty of geography and ecology in Baku State University have been trained how to work with orphans. A group of 25 young people was already formed and training sessions among them will be held once in a week during six month starting from 25 September 2005. Along with the implementation of the project the youth committee also provided 60 orphans of this orphanage with clothes and toys collected through a donation campaign among employees of the Red Crescent and the ICRC.

<sup>6</sup> The Red Crescent has one central and six regional youth and volunteer boards. Each board has an elected chairperson with two deputies and 15 members.

To mark the International Day of Children's Protection on June 1 the youth committee organized musical entertaining events in a kindergarten and Azerbaijan Gymnasia of Arts. The events included intellectual games, declamation of poems and performances linked to the national society's activities, in which children actively participated.