

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

GEORGIA

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In Brief

Appeal No. 05AA069; Programme Update no. 2; Period covered: August to December 2005.

Appeal target: CHF 1,218,137 (USD 967,100 or EUR 788,400); Appeal coverage: 38%. (Please click here to go directly to the contributions list on the website).

For further information:

- **In Georgia Red Cross:** Mr. Giorgi Gigiberia (Secretary General); Phone: +995.32.961.534; Fax: +995.32.953.304; E-mail: gigiberia@redcross.ge
- **In Federation Delegation in Georgia:** Phone: +995.32.922.248; Fax: +995.32.922.249
- **In Ankara:** Stephan Seebacher (Head of Federation regional delegation for Turkey and Southern Caucasus); Phone: +90.312.441.42.92; Fax: +90.312.441.38.66; E-mail: stephen.seebacher@ifrc.org
- **In Federation Secretariat Geneva:** Sylvie Chevalley (Regional officer for Turkey, Southern Caucasus and Central Asia); Phone: +41.22.730.42.76; Fax: +41.22.733.03.95; E-mail: sylvie.chevalley@ifrc.org

This Programme Update reflects activities to be implemented over a one-year period. This forms part of, and is based on, longer-term, multi-year planning. All International Federation assistance seeks to adhere to the Code of Conduct and is committed to the Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Disaster Response in delivering assistance to the most vulnerable.

For support to or for further information concerning Federation programmes or operations in this or other countries, or for a full description of the national society profile, please access the Federation's website at <http://www.ifrc.org>

Operational developments

The Federation Secretariat, via its office in Tbilisi and a regional delegation in Ankara, assists the Georgian Red Cross to continue the efforts initiated in 2003, the principal goal of which has been to help the Georgia Red Cross rebuild the organisation that ceased functioning during the uncertainty over its leadership in 2001-2002.

During the period since 2003 significant progress has been achieved by the [Red Cross Society of Georgia](#) (RCSG) with the support of the Federation. The National Society improved its legal base by revising its statutes. Regulations, rules and procedures were established for the governance and management to increase effectiveness of their performance. Financial management has been improved by establishing a finance unit at the headquarters and developing guidelines, tools and procedures. Overall the National Society management has improved by the appointment of a secretary general with the previous experience as a Federation national staff and delegate.

While implementing reforms at the headquarters, the Georgian Red Cross has also engaged at the local level through a participatory community development approach. The approach helped the NS re-connect with the most vulnerable people as well as with the communities.

Donor response to the Federation appeal, however, has been at best modest. The year has been started with the remaining balance of 2004, which was 2% of the appeal coverage. With the arrival of a donation from the Federation's Capacity Building Fund (CBF) and British Red Cross, it has increased to 10 % to support some of the initiatives under the organizational development programme. The Norwegian Red Cross contribution (CHF 378,000) arrived at the end of May 2005 due to the fiscal year in Norway.

The income from different sources has summed up to CHF 516,847 (USD 393,938 or EUR 333,988), which is only 42 % of what was requested. The table below provides clear picture of funding situation.

Table 1: Appeal coverage and expenditure per each project and programme as of 31 December 2005

Programmes/Projects	Appeal Budget (CHF)	Total income (CHF)	Appeal Coverage (%)	Expenditure			Balance from the income (CHF)
				CHF	% of the budget	% of the income	
Organizational Development Programme	385,490.91	258836.39	67%	244,358	63%	94%	14,478.39
Governance and management capacity development	185,630.76	79,988.31	43%	77,085	42%	96%	2903.31
Participatory community development	199,860.15	178848.08	89%	167,273	84%	94%	11575.08
Health and Care	545,173.22	258010.80	47%	153,285	28%	59%	104725.80
Social support to vulnerable lone pensioners	333,426.09	242365.53	73%	145205	44%	60%	97,160.53
HIV/AIDS	211,747.13	15645.27	7%	8080	4%	52%	7565.27
Disaster Management	248,993.25	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----
Humanitarian Values	38,479.14	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----
Total	1,218,136.52	516847.19	42%	397,643	33%	77%	119,204.19

Insufficient coverage of the appeal prevented the Georgian Red Cross from implementing the disaster management and humanitarian values programmes. The first was designed to help the National Society build capacities to respond to disasters and empower vulnerable people to alleviate suffering, reduce casualties and damage caused by disasters. The second programme was to help the Georgian Red Cross to contribute to the government's efforts to reduce violence and discrimination in the country by advocating for the respect of human dignity, peace and tolerance. Other programmes have received only part of the funding that was requested.

Even with limited funding support, the focus of the NS performance was shifted from pure organizational changes towards the service delivery. Three more Georgian Red Cross branches/communities in Telavi, Akhaltsikhe and Khelvachuri were engaged in Participatory Community Development (PCD) projects. The NS established a project with city of Tbilisi providing Health and Care services to the 1,500 lone elderly through its 5 district branches. Within the frames of this project 100 community-based volunteers were recruited and trained to provide relevant services to elderly people. Because the funding arrived only at the end of May 2005, there has not been much progress so far. The project is now 73 % covered and some activities will be postponed to the next year.

Another prioritised area, reducing the spread of HIV/AIDS and discrimination of people living with the disease by increasing awareness of the communities via Georgia Red Cross promotion and education campaign, is 7% covered. Therefore, only the part of the planned activities has been implemented.

Organizational Development

Goal: The Red Cross Society of Georgia is a key humanitarian actor working in partnership with local authorities to improve living conditions of people in need.

Objective: The Red Cross Society of Georgia has become a better functioning National Society helping people prevent and alleviate suffering.

Achievements, impact and constraints

Red Cross governance and management capacity development

The Statute of the Red Cross Society of Georgia was revised within the framework of the Organizational Development Programme. For this purpose, there has been constant liaison among the working group, the legal advisor and the representatives of the Federation/ICRC. All comments (at all levels), including the recommendations of the Joint ICRC/Federation Statutory Commission (Geneva) were consolidated and the final draft of the statute was presented to the General Assembly for adoption.

The focus is on strengthening management and governance functions, which is essential for the effective functioning of an organisation. Regulations, rules and procedures were established towards this end.

The finance management system and mechanisms have been established to improve the accountability and to increase transparency of financial management by the National Society. Training sessions were organized for the finance unit staff at the headquarters and in the branches throughout the country.

Efforts have started in the area of branch development strategy and to improve communication with local branches, as well as to strengthen links with the local communities by initiating a number of projects in targeted regions through a community participatory development approach.

Attention has been paid to improve volunteer management capacities. The National Society continues its work with volunteers and youth to encourage them to be more involved in the governance and management. The youth and volunteer policies and strategies have been developed to acknowledge the important role of young people and community members in the Georgian Red Cross work. This helps the National Society to reinstate its image and to improve the cooperation with partners as well as to attract the stakeholders.

The General Assembly has adopted the Statute and the plan of action for its implementation. It is planned to conduct the training session for senior management and to establish groups (staff members and volunteers) in order to introduce the new statute to all branches as well as internal regulations, rules and procedures for the governance and management. The first step in this regard was made at the headquarters. Within the frame of the organizational development (OD) programme, a training session was held for the National Society leadership and staff with participation of branch representatives and volunteers to introduce the organization structure as well as main issues of the Statute to improve the knowledge and understanding of the Georgian Red Cross.

In the meantime, the National Society, supported by the Federation country and regional delegations, has started drafting a strategic plan for 2006-2009. Consultations are ongoing with main partners and discussions are held within the organization to establish priorities for the coming four years.

Internal discussions on branch development strategy, which is a priority for the National Society, have started. The effectiveness of the organization depends on the local capacities and the quality of service delivery. The draft project is developed.

Efforts continued to improve the National Society's financial management. The finance unit with staff members (both at the headquarters and 12 regional branches) was trained on the National Society new financial management rules and procedures, including reporting. 90 per cent of the Red Cross financial transactions are done through the banking system. This allows the Georgian Red Cross to monitor its financial operations with branches via internet.

The finance regulation was developed by the finance unit and has been revised to bring it in compliance with the National Society's new Statute.

In an attempt to gain more new skills, the NS Secretary General and OD coordinator participated in the knowledge and experience sharing meeting relating to the organizational development, which took place in Budapest, Hungary from 8 to 10 December 2005.

The focus was made on successes and examples of best practice that exist in the Red Cross in Europe region as well as on issue that are faced in capacity building and organizational development.

Participatory community development

The project continues from the last year. It was designed to assist the targeted Georgian Red Cross branches to strengthen the links with communities and develop more relevant programmes to reduce vulnerability of the local population. To achieve this, the National Society has launched a pilot project to encourage its branches to work in a participatory community development (PCD) approach. PCD is helping people to reduce the causes of their own predicaments and mobilise community action. The Georgian Red Cross community networks bring vulnerable groups together with local government, non-governmental organisations and other relevant parties, asking them to identify problems, design projects to address them, and make the most of local resources.

The Georgian Red Cross has expanded the project to three more branches in Telavi, Akhaltsikhe and Khelvachauri. The project coordinators have been appointed in each of the targeted branch and were trained on the participatory community development and rapid appraisal methodology.

The National Society has started a dialogue with local authorities to encourage their involvement in the community work. In order to involve the local authority in the project implementation, the community meeting was held in Khelvachauri and Akhaltsikhe. A cooperation agreement was reached. At the same time the PRA results have been discussed. The participants of the community meeting resolved to establish a youth centre for analyzing youth problems and life knowledge, and more importantly to plan and act to improve its situation.

The Georgian Red Cross engagement with the communities in Khelvachauri and Akhaltsikhe worked really well. People were actively participating in the prioritization of need and designing the micro-projects to respond to what they identified themselves as the most problem. The local authorities have been also extremely supportive of the Georgian Red Cross initiative.

Meanwhile, the PCD programme coordinator attended the advocacy training in Bakuriani on November 16-28, 2005, organized by the British Red Cross and the Georgia Red Cross.

Health and Care

Goal: Health of vulnerable people has improved.

Objective: Red Cross Society of Georgia has strengthened capacity to improve health of vulnerable people.

Achievements, impact and constraints

Georgian Red Cross social support to vulnerable lone pensioners in Tbilisi

The progress made in this project has been limited because of several obstacles:

- The funding arrived only at the end of May 2005
- Due to heavy rainfall in Georgia the NS limited management capacities were busy with the consequence of the flood.
- Instability in the Government and local authorities. Usually new coming authorities are rejecting the decisions made by their predecessors.

64% of the fund from the total Norwegian Red Cross (NRC) contribution was allocated specifically for this project to help 1,500 homebound lone pensioners with food and non-food items. This group is determined as the worst affected by the socio-economic instability and ongoing changes in the country. The project implementation has been divided into three parts: preparation, establishment of social centres and service delivery through the centres using RC volunteers.



Georgia Red Cross volunteers with a beneficiary of the Tbilisi programme.

Despite the above mentioned difficulties, the programme coordinator was appointed by the end of August. The project has been implemented through a network of trained volunteers. Recruitment of volunteers and preparation of beneficiary lists has been completed. The Georgian Red Cross has also engaged with the local authorities to secure their support and cooperation during the project implementation. The government has pledged to help find space for five social centers, planned to be established in Tbilisi for elderly people, Georgian Red Cross staff/volunteers and youth to meet each other, initiate discussions on common issues, plan and organize different social events. Unfortunately, the distribution of basic food and non-food items has not already started and not all

rounds will be carried out by the end of 2005, as it was originally planned. Some will inevitably be delayed.

Currently, the NS social support team has decided to go ahead with project implementation without having social centres at this stage. Volunteers have been recruited in all 5 districts of Tbilisi and first training on RC/RC values conducted. A vehicle (minibus) was renovated to serve youth and volunteers involved in project implementation including HIV/AIDS awareness activities. The Georgian Red Cross volunteers and social workers monitored list of beneficiaries received by the district authorities. A partner NGO “Union of Labour Veteran Pensioners” assisted the NS in monitoring.

Generally, preparation has been completed and GRCS is ready to start the first round of relief distribution (the distribution process includes 4 rounds) and deliver relevant services to elderly people. The warehouse cleaning and fumigation have been done by the licensed sanitary service to hold the food and non-food items in stock. The procurement process has been completed (food and non-food items were purchased for distribution and kept in the warehouse) by the participation of the Federation delegation and the National Society. At the same time, the NRC fund has also been spent to buy a computer and tunics for the NS staff and volunteers who are involved with the project implementation and to print PR materials to undertake better promotion of the project activities.

Combating HIV/AIDS and stigmatization

Reducing the spread of HIV/AIDS as well as stigmatisation of people living with the disease is a priority for the National Society. The Georgian Red Cross has been working to reduce one of these factors – the lack of awareness. It has been educating the population of HIV/AIDS prevention through a network of volunteers.

With the poor appeal coverage, the project received only 7 % of the total income, which was not enough to pursue the original plan of action. Therefore, the funding has been spent basically for the NS staff salary and delegation running cost.

According to official statistics the situation with HIV/AIDS in Georgia is as follows: The World Health Organization estimates the number of those infected has exceeded 1,500. Most infections (71 per cent) have been found among injecting drug users who share needles. In 2001, over 87 per cent of all new AIDS instances were detected in people of 26-35 years old. Over 46 per cent of those live in Tbilisi, the capital with a population of 1.5 million and 16 per cent are in Ajara region, a major seaport in western Georgia.

The Red Cross Society of Georgia can play an important role in reducing the spread of HIV/AIDS by undermining one of the factors – lack of awareness, but it needs more external support to be able to achieve the objective.

The Georgian Red Cross organized basic knowledge workshop on HIV/AIDS. At the same time, the World AIDS Day- December 1- was marked and the special article prepared by the NS was published in Georgian newspaper - "Sakartvelos Respublika."

Disaster Management

Goal: Vulnerability of communities to natural and man-made disasters has reduced through an effective disaster management system of the Red Cross and better coordination between the local authorities and other key actors in the country.

Objective: The Red Cross Society of Georgia has strengthened capacities to respond to disasters and empower vulnerable people to alleviate suffering, reduce casualties and damage caused by disasters.

Achievements, impact and constraints

The lack of funds did not enable the Red Cross to make any progress under this project, which is dismaying given the challenges Georgia faces. It is a disaster prone country. The mechanisms, however, to cope with the effects of natural and/or man-made hazards are weak.

Heavy rainfall, warm temperatures and a sudden onset of seasonal snow melt resulted in floods in the western Georgian regions of Racha-Lechkhumi, Lower (Kvemo) Svaneti, Imereti and Samegrelo-Upper (Zemo) Svaneti on 25-26 April 2005. On 27-30 April, the eastern regions of Inner (Shida) Kartli, Lower (Kvemo) Kartli, Mtskheta-Mtianeti, Adjara and part of Samtskhe-Javakheti were also affected. Landslides and mudflows have occurred in many mountainous areas. While fortunately there has been no loss of human life, the damage to already poor infrastructure, residential buildings and agriculture has been extensive. Populations from a number of villages have been relocated due to fears for their safety. Families from damaged or destroyed houses have mostly found temporary shelter with relatives, friends, or neighbours. Transport infrastructure has been heavily affected also.

Many bridges and kilometers of road have been washed away isolating some of the villages. On 28 April 2005, the Georgian government appealed for international assistance. On the same day (28 April 2005), the Federation launched a minor emergency alert to inform the international community of the disaster.

To respond to the immediate needs of the population, the Red Cross Society of Georgia distributed 1,900 jerry cans to some 950 households.

The Federation has employed a technical consultant to establish the feasibility of rehabilitating the water supply system in Oni. The consultant together with a local geologist and an engineer from the state-planning agency visited Oni to assess the condition of the water supply system there. Their findings concluded that it is more durable to invest into building a new water supply system instead of repairing the old one, which was demolished by the June 2005 floods.

During the reporting period, the Federation technical consultant visited Oni several times. Preliminary works were conducted for the water debit evaluation. Four wells with 3-4 meters of depth were excavated and tested. The testing results are positive and also are approved by the state-planning agency. At this time, the contract agreement with "Georgian Water project" planning agency was signed for the project preparation activities. The scopes of works and price list for the construction work were developed and a tender was opened to identify the construction company which carries out the works.

The Red Cross Society of Georgia, supported by the Federation delegation, is actively engaged in the disaster response. The activities undertaken by the National Society in the frame of the emergency operation (Emergency Appeal no. [05EA011](#)) have been reported through [Operations Update no. 1](#) and [Operations Update no. 2](#).

Humanitarian values

Goal: Violence and intolerance triggered by armed conflicts in Georgia have reduced and respect for human dignity has increased.

Objective: The Red Cross Society of Georgia has contributed to the government's efforts to reduce violence and discrimination in the country by advocating for the respect of human dignity, peace and tolerance.

Achievements, impact and constraints

No progress has been made under this project either as it has not received any funding.

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