

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

RUSSIAN FEDERATION

10 March 2006

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In Brief

Appeal No. 05AA073; Programme Update no.3; Period Covered: July to December, 2005

Appeal target: Revised from CHF 4,156,903 (USD 3,416,290 or EUR 2,674,025) to CHF 4,299,391 (USD 3,534,990 or EUR 2,765,135); Appeal coverage: 19.8% (*Please click here to go directly to the contributions list on the web*)

Related Emergency or Annual Appeals:

Russian Federation Annual Appeal 2005. For details, please go to the website at http://www.ifrc.org/cgi/pdf_appeals.pl?annual05/05AA073.pdf

Russian Federation Annual Appeal 2005 – Programme Update no.1. For details, please go to the website at http://www.ifrc.org/cgi/pdf_appeals.pl?annual05/05AA07301.pdf

Russian Federation Annual Appeal 2005 – Programme Update no.2 (Special Focus on Participatory Action Research with Older People in Karelia). For details, please go to the website at http://www.ifrc.org/cgi/pdf_appeals.pl?annual05/05AA07302.pdf

For further information please contact:

- Russian Red Cross: Tatyana Nikolaenko, President, Phone 7 095 126 5731; Fax 7 095 230 2868; email mail@redcross.ru
- Russia Delegation: Alexander Matheou, Head of Delegation, Phone 7 095 937 5267; Fax 7 095 937 5263; email Moscow@ifrc.org
- In Geneva, Miro Modrusan, Regional Officer, Phone: +41 22 730 43 24, Fax + 41 22 733 0395; email miro.modrusan@ifrc.org

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.

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Operational Developments

During the second half of 2005, the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) supported the Russian Red Cross (RRC) in accordance with the objectives set in the Annual Appeal 2005. The Health and Care and Organisational Development programmes remained the main focus, with a particular focus on tuberculosis (TB) programming. The IFRC Moscow Delegation and the RRC continued to raise the profile of the Red Cross and promote the Movement's humanitarian values and Fundamental Principles.

The Appeal's main donors are the British government/DFID (Department for International Development), Capacity Building Fund (CBF), Lars Amundsen Foundation, United States Agency for International Development (USAID), as well as the national Red Cross societies of the United States, Great Britain, Italy and Sweden.

All programmes are directly implemented by the Red Cross through its country-wide network of branches and volunteers. The Federation provides technical support and monitors implementation.

Health and care

Programme Objective: To provide high quality social care and support services in the health sphere to targeted vulnerable populations in Russia.

Projects implemented to meet these objectives are :

- HIV/AIDS prevention among intravenous drug users through harm reduction initiatives;
- HIV/AIDS prevention through peer to peer education;
- Support to the most vulnerable TB patients undergoing Directly Observed Therapy Short course (DOTS).

Harm Reduction project for intravenous drug users (IDUs), Krasnodarsky region

Timeframe: 1 March 2005 - Ongoing

Donor: Italian Red Cross

Background: The HIV/AIDS epidemic in the Russian Federation is concentrated primarily among intravenous drug users. In early 2004, more than 80% of all officially reported HIV cases identified injection drug use as the mode of transmission.¹ The RRC is responding to the spread of the epidemic in this vulnerable group through its Harm Reduction programme.

Objective: To use outreach work to intravenous drug users (IDUs) to reduce the risks of acquiring HIV infection related to the sharing of injecting equipment and sexual contact.

Progress and Achievements: The project liaises with drug users in their communities, providing them with information and the means to reduce the risk of acquiring HIV infection. The focus of outreach work is on encouraging safer behaviour with regard to high-risk activities such as drug use and sexual contact. At present, Harm Reduction activities are taking place in only one Harm Reduction centre. However, the expansion of sites for programme implementation is being considered.

Peer Education in Novokuznetsk District, Kemerovsky region

Timeframe: 1 December 2004 - Ongoing

Donor: British Red Cross

Background: Russia is facing one of the world's fastest growth rates in HIV/AIDS incidence. The rate of new HIV infections has doubled every 6-12 months since 1995. Over a quarter of a million people were registered as living with HIV/AIDS in Russia in 2003², but unofficial estimates put the total number of people living with HIV/AIDS at over one million.

¹ Russian Federal AIDS Centre, 2004

² Federal Scientific and Methodological Centre for AIDS Prevention statistics

The RRC has a critical role to play in the response to this growing crisis by empowering communities to reduce their vulnerability to health problems. As an auxiliary to the local authorities, the national society is in a unique position to fulfil this role. Its comparative advantage lies in its country-wide network of branches and volunteers.

The RRC is addressing HIV/AIDS through its “Youth and AIDS: Peer Education” programme. The project aims to educate young people (14-25 years old) on safer behaviour and HIV/AIDS preventive measures, and raise awareness of the risks of drug addiction and sexually transmitted infections (STIs).

Objective: To increase youth awareness on issues of HIV/AIDS prevention and drug addiction through ‘Peer Education’.

Progress and Achievements: The project is a logical continuation of other RRC peer education programmes in the past. Consultants (experts in family psychotherapy, behavior change and drug addiction) helped develop a monitoring system to measure behavioral change among the target group. This system requires further evaluation but there are early indications that the seminars held by Red Cross youth peer educators have increased youth awareness on HIV/AIDS prevention and the dangers of drug addiction and sexually transmitted infections (STIs). More detailed assessments will follow in future updates.

During the reporting period, the RRC has continued its work on HIV/AIDS prevention by attracting new volunteers and organising workshops in HIV/AIDS prevention. In December, the British Red Cross organised a regional round table meeting for five National Societies (Moldova, Kyrgyzstan, Turkmenistan, Central Asia and Russia) implementing peer education projects. The meeting objective was to assess the effectiveness of peer to peer interventions, and to discuss related problems and achievements of Red Cross work in these countries. The meeting participants agreed that a standardised approach to peer education should be developed.

For further information on the British Red Cross funded programme - information activities, training of volunteers, site selection, identification of target population, including the coordination efforts - please contact the Moscow delegation at Moscow@ifrc.org.

USAID funded TB project in four regions of Russia

Timeframe: October 2001 – Ongoing

Donor: USAID

Background: This programme fills a gap in national TB care by monitoring TB care using social and nutritional support as an incentive for the most vulnerable TB patients. Past results show that successful treatment outcomes are clearly linked to RRC intervention. At the same time, the programme is advocating international TB control guidelines. The initiative complements the Appeal objective, working in cooperation with regional services to provide TB programming support to the most vulnerable people.

The original grant supporting TB programmes in three territories over three years has been extended to the end of September 2007 as well as being expanded to a new territory, Khabarovsk, in the Far East of the Russian Federation. The TB programme aims to develop an effective, comprehensive, sustainable and replicable model of TB control in four regions (Pskov, Khakasia, Belgorod and Khabarovsk) in partnership with the regional authorities.

Objective: The objective of the USAID-funded TB project is to accomplish the following:

- Assist regional authorities to develop an effective TB control system;
- Assure access to care and follow-up for the most vulnerable TB patients, and increase adherence to treatment through social/nutritional support incentives;
- Facilitate improved links between prison and civilian TB services;
- Address the general population to promote healthy lifestyles and increase preventive awareness of TB, HIV/AIDS, and sexually transmitted infections;
- Strengthen the institutional capacity of the RRC and its Visiting Nurses Service.

Progress and Achievements: The main achievements for the reporting period (July - December 2005) are as follows:

Assist regional authorities to develop an effective TB control system

The Moscow Delegation organised two meetings related to the fourth round of Global Fund support for the Russian Federation.

- The first meeting was with the coordinator of the Russian Health Care Foundation (RHCF), the primary recipient of fourth round Global Fund support. Coordination with the Green Light Committee, preparation of an application, and protocol complexities related to the administration of second line drugs were discussed during the meeting. The Delegation facilitated contacts between the RHCF and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). The RHCF will endorse the mechanisms of social support for TB patients (finance, monitoring and reporting) developed by Moscow Delegation and the RRC.
- The second meeting was with a representative of the Research Institute of Phthisiopulmonology (RIPP) and the coordinator of the Federal TB Institutes. The objective of the meeting was to coordinate practicalities related to the implementation of the Global Fund supported programme between the RHCF and RIPP.

Assure access to care and follow-up for the most vulnerable TB patients, and increase adherence to treatment through social/nutritional support incentives

- Social support of TB patients remained the most effective tool for improving treatment compliance. Assistance was provided in the form of daily nutrition (protein kits), distribution of food parcels and hygienic parcels. Statistics show that the number of default patients is significantly lower among those receiving social support from the RRC than those not receiving any form of social support. Promotion of these statistics is increasing recognition of the RRC social support as a crucial component in the fight against TB.
- Legal and psychological support was provided as an incentive for treatment compliance. Patients in need of psychological support are those suffering from one or more of the following problems: denial, resistance and/or non-acceptance of the disease, emotional disturbance, difficult social adaptation, family problems and alcohol addiction.
- During the reporting period, the RRC provided regular counselling assistance to TB patients and TB dispensary staff. Two models have been developed: “Positive psychological and emotional behaviour is the guarantee for treatment adherence” and “Stress and emotional burn out”. Relevant sessions based on these models were held in Pskov and Khabarovsk regions.
- Special attention was paid to motivating TB patients who interrupted the treatment to restart it again.

Facilitate improved links between prison and civilian TB services

- During the reporting period, RRC staff visited prisoners to distribute information materials on Red Cross TB prevention activities, along with addresses and telephone numbers of TB services available in the region. Together with prison personnel, the RRC provides psychological support and legal counselling to prisoners due to be released, and emphasises the necessity to continue treatment after a prisoner’s release.
- The Moscow Delegation and the RRC organised a meeting with the First Deputy Chief of the Medical Department of the Federal Executive Sentence Service. The objectives and activities of the USAID funded programme and HIV intervention in prisons were discussed during the meeting. The activities and sites for HIV interventions were also agreed upon. In addition, an agreement on first joint site visits (USAID, the Ministry of Justice, RRC and the Federation) was reached.

The selected sites for HIV intervention in prisons are as follows:

Area	Penitentiary system body
Republic of Chuvashiya	Correctional colony – 5 (for women)
	Treatment-correctional institution – 7 (for women)
	Correctional colony – 2 (for women)
Khabarovsk Krai	Correctional colony – 12 (for women)
Orlovskaya Oblast	Correctional colony – 6 (for women)
	Educational colony in Shakhovo village (for men)

Monitoring

- A number of monitoring trips took place. The findings of the monitoring trips to the Republic of Khakasia have shown that preconditions exist in this region for an application to the Green Light Committee. The Republic of Khakasia is the first site, among four programme implementation sites, where the outcome provided a basis for a move from DOTS towards DOTS-Plus strategy.
- Another monitoring trip to Khabarovsk Krai has acknowledged a good start up of the programme and effective mechanisms of coordination developed between the TB dispensary and the regional Red Cross branch. First patients have been provided with social support.

For further information on the USAID funded programme - information activities, legal, psychological and social support and logistical operations, including distribution of social support in the form of food parcels and protein kits, and tender for laboratories equipment - please contact the Moscow delegation at moscow@ifrc.org.

Disaster Management

Programme Objective: To assist the integration of internally displaced people and involuntary migrants into society and reduce related stigma and discrimination towards these groups.

Projects implemented to meet these objectives are :

- Population Movement

Population Movement

Timeframe: May 2004 – Ongoing

Donor: Swedish Red Cross

Background: Migrant populations are particularly affected by the process of social insecurity and exclusion. Their vulnerability is the result of a number of social factors, notably very limited access to employment, healthcare and information about their legal rights. Other factors also affect these populations such as their illegal status or the existence of discriminatory and sometimes xenophobic practices in all areas of social life. All these have a negative impact on the state of the physical and, especially, the psychological well-being of these people. That is why the Russian Red Cross Population Movement programme is aiming to assist internal and external migrants through a comprehensive programme consisting of: provision of psychological and legal support and practical assistance on issues that directly affect migrants, tackling the problem of discrimination and stigmatisation in the local community, and increasing access of these vulnerable groups to social benefits. All these efforts undertaken by the Russian Red Cross will lead to an improved quality of life of migrants and facilitate their gradual integration into civil society.

Targeted beneficiaries of RRC efforts include forced migrants, refugees, people seeking asylum in Russian Federation, internally displaced persons, labour and economic migrants, ecological migrants, undocumented migrants, and the most vulnerable local residents. Migrants arrive from internal unstable zones (Chechnya), NIS and Middle Asia countries, and other countries (Afghanistan, Iraq, Pakistan, China, Vietnam etc.).

Objective: The objective of the Population Movement project is to accomplish the following:

1. Provide professional legal, psychological and social support to involuntary migrants and vulnerable groups of local residents on the regional level free of charge.
2. Take part in implementation of the Federal special programme 'Developing ways of increasing tolerance and reducing extremism in Russian society' by conducting tolerance sessions at schools.
3. Strengthen coordination between the RRC and governmental structures working in the migration sphere (Federal Migration Service, Ministry of Interior Passport-Visa Service, Ministry of Health etc.).
4. Attract attention of civil society to the problem of migration.
5. Strengthen organisational capacities of RRC regional branches and clearly show action of RRC mandate as a neutral and impartial organisation.
6. Assist in social and psychological adaptation of the children of migrants.

Progress and Achievements: The main achievements for the reporting period (July - December 2005) are as follows:

Establishment of Regional Reception Points and Emergency Legal Counselling Points

From June-December 2005, RRC, with support from the Federation and funding from Swedish Red Cross, continued to implement the following population movement projects:

1. Regional reception points for involuntary migrants in Moscow and Orenburg oblasts (from 1 June 2005).
2. Emergency legal counselling points for involuntary migrants at Novosibirsk railway station (from 1 June 2005).

During implementation of the ‘Regional Reception Points for Involuntary Migrants’ project, assistance was provided directly at the RRC regional branches (for migrants and vulnerable residents of the regional centres) as well as during regular field actions together with representatives of territorial Migration Departments (for the remainder of people living in the region). During the reporting period, **1,693** people (including 1,052 migrants) visited RRC regional reception points and received legal, psychological and social consultations.

Within the ‘Emergency Legal Counselling Points for Involuntary Migrants at Railway Stations’ project, free legal support was provided to needy people directly on the premises of the railway stations.

Psychological support

The most important role of RRC and government agencies working with forced migrants is to assist their adaptation to new social-cultural circumstances. In addition to social and material assistance, professional psychological support is necessary. The majority of internally displaced people have experienced chronic stress and RRC psychologists provide assistance in coping with symptoms of post-traumatic stress.

The programme builds on substantial Russian Red Cross experience and success in this field of work. This track record has helped shift the psychologists’ efforts towards provision of psychological assistance to children of migrants. Psychologists are actively involved in diagnosing the psychological status of children and assessing their ability to cope with emerging problems. The often intolerant and hostile attitude of the local population is one of the main reasons for psychological problems among all migrants, with a particularly negative effect on the children of migrants. To combat this intolerance, psychologists conduct tolerance trainings for children to encourage cooperation and good relations between migrant and local children. These tolerance trainings reduce tension in class and establish a better atmosphere for effective learning. In turn, the children’s improved outlook positively influences family members at home. Work with children also increases awareness of the Red Cross support network among migrant families and encourages vulnerable people to seek timely assistance.

RC psychologists emphasise family counselling. In this case, support is provided to both children and their parents via family consultations.

During the reporting period, RRC psychologists provided support to **486** beneficiaries using the following methods:

- Dissemination of information among forced migrants about possibility and expediency of psychological assistance;
- Discussion on basic psychological problems of forced migrants;
- Detection of typical and individual psychological problems of involuntary migrants living in a specific area;
- Provision of direct psychological support to migrants using different methods (individual counselling; family counselling; group training with children and adults; and educational sessions).

In Orenburg, in addition to providing counselling at reception points, RRC psychologists participated in field trips to areas with a high proportion of migrants. They conducted educational talks and lectures and raised awareness about the existence and benefits of psychological assistance.

Overall, the psychological support provided during this reporting period has been effective, helping clients to improve their mood and strengthen their psychological health. The RRC’s psychological support network continues to assist migrants to adapt to new circumstances and cope with stress. Many people applying for this type of assistance received follow-up treatments, and a majority of the treated patients increasingly became ready to solve their problems independently.

RRC Legal Network

Within the Population Movement programme, RRC legal counsellors provided support to **972** migrants in the following fields:

- Procedure of application for Russian citizenship, permanent and temporary registration;
- Status of forced migrants and refugees;
- Job placement and labour contract (for foreign citizens as well);
- Restoration of lost documents;
- Pensions, social insurance etc.

Legal support was provided to beneficiaries via individual and group counselling as well as answering telephone and written appeals of involuntary migrants and vulnerable groups of people.

Statistics received from RRC regional reception points reveals that the majority of the beneficiaries of the RC legal advisers are undocumented migrants. RRC legal advisers paid particular attention to assisting undocumented migrants, those without forced migrant status, and those without Russian citizenship to obtain legal status in Russia.

Social assistance to involuntary migrants

Social assistance was provided in the following forms:

- Social consultations on medical, social, educational, job placement and pensions;
- Humanitarian aid (food and hygiene items, second hand clothes and shoes collected locally);
- Assistance in accessing free of charge medical treatment.

According to reports from the regions, most visitors to the reception centre applied for humanitarian aid. Procurement and distribution of humanitarian aid is not provided within the programme budget, and RRC regional branches conduct local activities to collect and distribute humanitarian goods.

Participating branches and railways station emergency reception centres collected and distributed the following items: foodstuff, hygiene items, second hand clothes and shoes, wheelchairs, medical kits and bed linen. **6,950** beneficiaries received support within the programme.

A significant part of the social assistance to the migrants was in the form of social counselling. Within the reporting period, **480** persons visited RRC regional reception points with social problems and all were given counselling assistance.

Social workers answered queries regarding the following issues:

- Assistance in providing humanitarian passport;
- Assistance in providing medicines and accessing medical treatment;
- Assistance in job placement;
- Assistance in resolving housing problems.

In order to provide effective support to beneficiaries, RRC branches work in close cooperation with territorial Ministry of Interior Migration departments, and other organisations assisting migrants. RRC branches have established relations with the regional departments of the following state services: Social Welfare, Education, Health, and Labour. Furthermore, well-publicised work of Red Cross psychologists, legal advisers and social workers has led to increased recognition and the opportunity to develop working relations with non-governmental institutions dealing with social issues.

One of the major constraints encountered during the reporting period was the lack of humanitarian aid, in particular foodstuff and hygiene kits.

Organisational Development

Programme Objective: To improve and strengthen the programmes and service delivery of Russian Red Cross headquarters and participating regional branches through better coordination, self-assessment, planning, and youth development.

Projects implemented to meet these objectives are :

- Participatory Action Research in 14 RRC regional branches;
- Organisational analysis, self-assessment and strategic planning at the regional branch level;
- Development of the Organisational Development Section of the RRC Website.

Participatory Action Research (PAR) in 14 RRC regional branches

Timeframe: October 2003 – Ongoing (Participatory Action Research with the Elderly)

November 2005 – Ongoing (Participatory Action Research with Migrants)

Donor: British Red Cross

Background: Working with the most vulnerable older people, children and migrants is one of the oldest and most accepted functions of the Russian Red Cross. The RRC's substantial experience in this field is widely recognised. The Participatory Action Research (PAR) project was initiated as part of a process to ensure that Russian Red Cross services to older people, children and migrants are responsive to their needs, supportive of rights, complementary to state services and (to different extent depending on the particular target group) is guided by the beneficiaries themselves.

This research process is an element of a new qualitative phase of the RRC development programme, aimed at identifying problems and needs of the above target groups (older people, children and migrants) with their active involvement in the process. By involving target groups in the assessment process, the RRC will be able to achieve the following:

- Correlate RRC programs' activities with the real needs of the most vulnerable;
- Empower the most vulnerable within the programs;
- Fill up the gaps in local Health and Social welfare activities;
- Identify methodologies and modalities of support to the most vulnerable taking into consideration their opinions and expectations.

The PAR process was designed to promote dialogue and alliances between the state, the Red Cross, third sector organisations and the beneficiaries, empowering the latter and reintegrating them into civil society and breaking their social isolation.

Objective: The objective of the PAR project is to accomplish the following:

- Represent the interests of the socially excluded through a combination of advocacy, service delivery and awareness raising that is rooted in consultation with vulnerable groups;
- Give older people, migrants and children in 14 Russian regions the opportunity to articulate concerns and priorities to research teams made up of RRC, social welfare, NGOs and government representatives;
- Design 14 pilot projects in response to the PAR based on empowerment approaches and including qualitative impact monitoring systems;
- Increase RRC's ability to serve, articulate and defend the interests of older people, migrants and children as a result of PAR and impact monitoring.

Participatory Action Research with the Elderly

The participatory research project carried out in Tomsk last year has proved that the Red Cross can only become more responsive to needs by consulting targeted communities. Responding to the needs of elderly in Tomsk, the regional RC branch designed and implemented the "Assistance" project.

"Assistance" Project (Tomsk)

The project objectives are as follows:

- To hold regular meetings of older people in the RRC medico-social centres to gather information on changes in the quality of older people's lives by collecting their opinions.
- To advocate for interests of older people to regional and local authorities with involvement of older people themselves.
- To render practical assistance to older people through RRC medico-social centres and to coordinate services provided between state structures and the third sector.
- To raise public awareness about life of older people through mass-media.

The project was built on a combination of advocacy, service delivery and awareness raising that is rooted in consultation with the elderly.

Advocacy

The monitoring committee consisting of representatives of the target group has been set up. Committee members were trained on how to work with focus groups. Within the reporting period, three meetings were held with the participation of 152 older people, with most of them having also participated in the research carried out in August 2004.

Questions discussed with older people during meetings were focused on changing societal attitudes towards older people, influencing policy makers' decisions concerning older people, accessing public health services, information availability, self-realisation of older people and aspects of home care. In parallel a survey on the above-mentioned issues was conducted with 122 older people.

The general opinion expressed by older people is that the quality of their life has become worse in terms of health and social isolation. To address the concerns of all involved parties, a round table discussion was held with the participation of local administration, social welfare, public health, center of employment and mass media representatives. During the meeting, the research findings and ways to solve the revealed problems were discussed. In order to monitor older people's quality of life, it was decided to set up the Coordination Council, made up of representatives of target group and the above mentioned organisations.

Service Delivery (practical actions)

- ✓ Red Cross medical staff provided older people with necessary medical services at RRC medico-social centres, with Red Cross nurses also visiting patients at home. In total, 429 people visited the Red Cross doctor, and 3359 pensioners were referred to nurses for medical assistance. 15 people received home based care.
- ✓ Medical experts from district polyclinics consulted older people in RRC medico-social centers.
- ✓ A "home master" envisaged by the project rendered small repairs at pensioners' homes. 84 pensioners applied for this kind of support.
- ✓ The RRC worked jointly with Veteran Council to organise an initiative group consisting of older people. The main task of this group is to identify and prepare a list of the most needy pensioners, and then to create a self-support group whereby the most active pensioners will provide support to other pensioners.

The PAR project in Tomsk was followed in the second half of 2005 by a series of research initiatives with active involvement of older people in four regions of the Russian Federation (Karelia, Ingushetia, Samara and Chukotka). Based on the findings from these PAR initiatives, Red Cross regional branches presented PAR reports that included a description of the research methodologies and frameworks, newly discovered problems and needs, as well as recommendations on how to improve the beneficiaries' quality of life. In early November, after approval by the RRC and the Federation, the regional branches launched four projects based on the research findings in the territories of Karelia, Ingushetia, Samara and Chukotka.

The projects launched are as follows:

- "Social, legal and psychological support to older people of Sunja District, Ingushetia Republic" (Ingushetia Red Cross)
- "Volunteer initiatives focused on social assistance to older people in Chukotka region" (Chukotka Red Cross)
- "Older people – Support, Protection and Advocacy" (Samara Red Cross)
- "School for the elderly" (Karelia Red Cross)

As in Tomsk, these projects will be implemented through:

- Advocacy –round tables involving Government, the Third Sector and vulnerable groups' representatives to attract public attention to the problems of the target group;
- Service Delivery – through RRC medical rooms;
- Awareness Raising – informational campaign with mass-media;
- Social mobilisation and empowerment of older people.

Participatory Action Research with Migrants

In November, PAR with another target group – migrants – was initiated in Nizhniy Novgorod region, Pilnensky district. The first week involved four focus groups per morning, followed by afternoon discussion and analysis sessions. During the week, over 200 migrants participated in the focus groups. Participants were selected according to the following criteria:

- To be a native of Nizhniy Novgorod oblast and therefore a repatriate.
- To be in the process of obtaining the Russian Federation citizenship.

Discussions with migrants centred on the following questions:

1. What are the central vulnerabilities experienced by migrants in the region in the areas of access to health services, education, employment or pensions? What forms of social exclusion do migrants in the region experience?
2. To what extent is there migrant phobia and discrimination?
3. How are these vulnerabilities expressed and understood by migrants and what steps can be taken to overcome them?
4. What are the central capacities possessed by migrants – what connections to other community networks do they have and how could these be built on and expanded to enhance their adaptation into local community? (Social environment and social mobility).

The research was followed by a report summarising the experiences, concerns, and ideas that migrants expressed during the focus groups. The research revealed the following main issues, as identified by migrants:

1. Procedure of application for Russian citizenship (Considered to be the main problem).
2. Lack of knowledge regarding legislative rights of migrants and relevant laws.
3. Poor access to health services and education.
4. Socio-cultural prejudices.

Three underlying objectives to guide the work of the Red Cross with regional migrants were identified as a result of the research. These objectives are:

1. To alleviate any immediate suffering of the most vulnerable migrants either through direct interventions or through active referral to responsible care providers.
2. To increase the influence of migrants on service providers and policy makers through the provision of information and mobilisation opportunities.
3. To make regional service providers and policy makers more responsive to needs and rights of migrants through sensitization work and accountability campaigns.

Another PAR initiative with migrants was launched in early December in Orenburg oblast. In the coming year, participating RRC regional branches will introduce respective program proposals based on their PAR research results.

Achievements

Thanks to the PAR initiatives carried out within the reporting period, older people and migrants were given the opportunity to articulate concerns and priorities to a research team made up of RRC, social welfare, NGOs and government representatives. This is an important step in the empowerment of older people and migrants leading to the improvement of their lives and the resolution of their most essential problems.

As a result of PAR initiatives and impact monitoring, participating regional branches of the RRC are better able to serve, articulate and defend the interests of older people, migrants and children as well as better represent the interests of the socially excluded through a combination of advocacy, service delivery and awareness raising that is rooted in consultation with vulnerable groups.

Constraints

Due to some organisational constraints, the programme has not progressed as planned. Regional PARs initially planned for spring were postponed and rescheduled for summer months. All these, in turn, caused subsequent reschedule of other programme activities:

- Second Round Table (Migrants) scheduled for May was held in July;
- Final session (Older people) planned for July was held in September;
- Third Round Table (Children) planned for August was held in October;
- Regional Researchers on migrants scheduled for summer months were initiated only in November and Regional Researchers on children were therefore postponed until 2006.

Organisational analysis, self-assessment and strategic planning at the regional branch level

Timeframe: Ongoing

Donor: Capacity Building Fund (CBF).

Objective: The objective of this branch-level project is to accomplish the following:

- Assist the leadership and staff of participating regional Red Cross branches to acquire essential knowledge and skills in organisational analysis, self-assessment and project planning;
- Introduce consistent and systematic organisational analysis, self-assessment and strategic planning into participating Russian Red Cross regional branches' practice;
- Enable participating regional branches to carry out ongoing programme activities with enhanced efficiency and effectiveness and in conformity with the Federation's methodologies and format.

Progress and Achievements:

Two round table meetings in organisational analysis, self-assessment and strategic planning methodologies were organised. The meetings aimed to improve programme management in participating Red Cross regional branches. All participating branches were provided with developed guidelines and standardised templates, to be used in their assessment and planning, namely: Characteristics of well-functioning RRC Regional Branches, RRC Regional Branch Humanitarian Passport, Self-assessment Analytical Modules and standard model of RRC regional branch Strategic Development Plan. These documents will help RRC regional branches to enhance programmes' effectiveness and ensure their conformity with the RRC Headquarter's and Federations' strategic priorities and recommendations.

The second round table in organisational analysis, self-assessment and strategic planning methodologies was held in July and was attended by eight representatives of four RRC regional branches (chairpersons and program coordinators) in three RRC Zones: Orenburg and Nizhniy Novgorod (Volga Zone), Novosibirsk (Western Siberia Zone) and Moscow Western District (Central Zone).

The third round table was held in October, and was attended by 23 representatives (chairpersons and program coordinators) from 11 RRC regional branches from North-West Zone (Arkhangelsk, Vologda, Kaliningrad, Karelia, Komi, Leningrad oblast, Murmansk, Nenetsky, Novgorod, Pskov and Saint-Petersburg). A specific mini-session on Customized Assessment and Performance Indicators – 3 (CAPI), facilitated by an expert from the Swedish Red Cross, was incorporated into the round table agenda. The round table participants became acquainted with CAPI assessment tools and some regional branches (Murmansk, Arkhangelsk and Karelia) expressed their willingness to carry out regional CAPI assessments in 2006. Pskov regional branch shared experience on regional CAPI assessment carried out in spring this year.

In addition, during the second and third round table meetings participants had a possibility to share experience and expertise in assisting such target groups as migrants and children, as well as being provided with new tools intended to identify the most essential needs of these target groups (Participatory Action Research). The following issues were discussed at the meetings:

- Vulnerability as a concept
- Causes leading to vulnerabilities and ways of reducing these causes
- Migrants' and children's vulnerability indicators
- International and domestic NGOs' best practice
- New international approaches and methodologies to reduce vulnerabilities
- Rights and interests of the most vulnerable
- Impact Assessment
- Empowerment

All participating regional branches were invited to carry out a Participatory Action Research initiative according to suggested methodologies and format, with a respective project proposal to follow the research phase.

In addition, the participants of the first round table held earlier this year reconvened in September to participate in the final round table discussions to summarise findings of PAR carried out earlier in their regions.

In November, the second workshop in assessment planning process for lagging regions (smaller regional branches) was held. Thirteen representatives (chairpersons and program coordinators) from seven RRC regional branches from Central Zone (Yaroslavl, Kostroma, Ivanovo, Kirov and Mordovia) as well as two Moscow City District branches participated. The workshop aimed to achieve the following:

- Assist the participating RRC regional branches in organising their systematic and consistent analysis, assessment (including self-assessment) and planning (strategic and program planning) process;
- Inform the RRC regional branches about new approaches and methodologies towards organising Red Cross activities taking into consideration new donors' and PNSs' requirements;
- Support the RRC regional branches in giving new impetus to their program activities.

Achievements

Participating RRC regional branches have successfully introduced consistent and systematic organisational analysis, self-assessment and strategic planning into their practices. Within the reporting period, RRC regional branches completed their Regional Humanitarian Passports, providing key data on humanitarian contexts and RRC capacity to respond. Six regional branches carried out local vulnerability and capacity assessments within their regions using newly acquired knowledge and skills including PAR methodologies and the logical framework matrix. As a result, the planning process in the participating branches became more systematic and purposeful.

Trainings held within the reporting period covered nearly 20% of all RRC regional branches and provided an opportunity for RRC staff to acquire knowledge and skills in PAR methodologies and approaches. The new knowledge, skills and expertise gained and their subsequent implementation into practice enables RRC regional branches to introduce better programs aimed at improving living standards of the most vulnerable populations in the Russian Federation. In parallel, to ensure that RRC programmes are more responsive to the needs of the most vulnerable, the involvement of programme beneficiaries into preliminary assessment, monitoring and impact assessment has become an integral part of newly designed projects.

Constraints

To date, 'Characteristics of a well-functioning RRC regional branch' have not been included in the Agenda of RRC Presidium. Therefore, the document remains a draft and has not been adopted as a guideline for the RRC regional branches.

The strategic planning process in the regions has been limited by the willingness of RRC regional branches to have clear and articulated general strategic directions formulated by the RRC leadership and headquarters before implementing a project.

Development of the Organisational Development Section of the RRC Website

During the reporting period, the RRC website has been created and the Organisational Development section was introduced.

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