

Programme Update



International Federation
of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

Russia, Belarus, Ukraine and Moldova (Focus on Belarus, Moldova and Ukraine)

Appeal No. MAA67003

31 August 2008

This report covers the period
01/01/2008 to 30/06/2008.



Ukraine: A visiting nurse provides medical assistance to a Red Cross client. Photo: Ukraine Red Cross

In brief

Programme summary: During the first half of 2008, the Red Cross Societies of Belarus, Moldova and Ukraine focused on the fields of disaster management, health and care and organizational development. Vulnerable groups such as children from disadvantaged and multi-child families, street children, orphans, people with disabilities and chronically ill patients, elderly people living alone and people living with HIV (PLHIV) were provided with additional nutritional support, home care and basic domestic services. Young people at higher risk of HIV infection were involved in prevention activities. The National Societies improved their governance and management structures and procedures according to their strategic work plan, consolidated their statutes and strengthened the visiting nurses service and the volunteer movement.

Financial situation: Total 2008 budget for Belarus, Moldova, Russia and Ukraine (MAA67003) was initially 5,761,490 Swiss francs (USD 5,237,718 or EUR 3,567,486). The revised appeal budget is 5,907,466 Swiss francs (USD 5,370,424 or EUR 3,657,837), out of which 54 per cent covered. The revision is due to a slight increase in the 2008 budget for the programmes in Russia.

[Click here to go directly to the attached financial report.](#)

No. of people we help: In total 51,652 people directly benefited from the programmes supported by the International Federation.

Programme	Target beneficiaries	No. of people we helped
Disaster Management	Elderly people living alone, people with disabilities, homeless people, multi-child families and people with low income, people released from prisons	14,950
	Red Cross volunteers and employees	35
Health and Care	Young people at higher risk and the general public	27,100
	People with disabilities and chronically ill patients, adults and children, elderly people living alone and PLHIV	1,470
	Red Cross volunteers and employees	967
Organizational Development	Young people	3,500
	Red Cross volunteers and employees	3,630

Our partners:

The three National Societies cooperated with eight partner National Societies, the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), UN agencies operating in the region, different non-governmental organizations (NGOs), national centres for blood donation, national AIDS centres, various governmental organizations at federal and local levels, universities and other educational institutions, mass media, as well as international and local enterprises.

Context

Due to the political, economic and social situation, the main humanitarian needs in Belarus, Moldova and Ukraine are related to poverty, health and disasters. Rampant inflation and increase in gas tariffs in Ukraine, the consequences of the drought in Moldova and the reduction of social benefits in Belarus had a negative impact on the most vulnerable groups of the population such as elderly people living alone, multi-child families, street children, people with disabilities, migrants and homeless people. These groups of people suffer from poverty and the lack of adequate health and social care. Some of them depend entirely on humanitarian aid.

Women represent the most vulnerable group, with employment discrimination, health problems, domestic violence and human trafficking among the hardships they can endure.

The incidence rates of Tuberculosis (TB) and HIV indicate a major health problem. Adult HIV prevalence among people aged 15-49 is very high in Ukraine (1.4) and Moldova (1.1) and much lower in Belarus (0.3)¹. With regard to the spread of TB, the prevalence rate in Moldova occupies one of the highest places in Europe with 150 and 149 cases for 100,000 people.

Along with the health problems, trafficking in human beings, drug abuse and violence continue to represent a danger to the population. With the increase of labour migration, there are more cases of social exclusion and discrimination and violence linked to it. Increasing violent racist attacks on foreigners and non-Ukrainians have been reported in Kiev and elsewhere in the country over the past two years.

¹ Source: UNDP Human Development Report

Out-of-date industrial infrastructure often becomes a cause for technological disasters. On 8 June, 14 miners died in the Donetsk region because of a methane explosion. This was the deadliest accident since November 2007 when 106 people lost their lives in a series of mine explosions in the region.

Progress towards outcomes

Disaster Management

Belarus Objectives:

- *The Red Cross has developed effective mechanisms for efficient delivery of emergency response and recovery assistance in communities prone to natural disasters;*
- *Communities in Belarus are aware of disaster hazards and are capable of acting effectively during the time of disaster;*
- *The Red Cross has improved the nutritional status of people affected by disasters and their access to quality social services;*
- *The Red Cross has strengthened its capacities to prevent human trafficking by raising the awareness of potential victims and the general public and by providing reintegration assistance.*

No funds were received to support the programme objectives 1, 2 and 4. However, in spite of this, with the support of IOM, the Belarus Red Cross continued its efforts to raise the awareness of potential victims of human trafficking and the general public of the risks. Reintegration assistance was also provided.

In order to meet its disaster management obligations, the Belarus Red Cross in the reporting period maintained its disaster relief fund and emergency stocks pre-positioned in each region, and ensured a sufficient number of staff and volunteers are on stand-by in case of disaster. The National Society has its own emergency fund, to which 2 per cent of all its income (membership fees and local non-earmarked donations) is being allocated. This emergency fund has enabled the society to contribute to the International Federation's emergency appeals in support of operations in Myanmar, and Ukraine and Moldova.

With financial support from the Swiss Red Cross, the National Society procured 7,308 food parcels which were distributed to 5,500 beneficiaries, including elderly people living alone and people with disabilities, homeless people, multi-child families and people with low income, and people released from prisons in all regions of Belarus. Additionally, within the "Twice Christmas" operation the Swiss Red Cross bilaterally donated five trucks, which contained food, hygiene items, toys, second-hand cloths and shoes. All these have been supplied for further distribution among the vulnerable population in Minsk city and the regions of Minsk, Vitebsk, Grodno and Gomel.

Constraints or Challenges:

In Belarus for every project that involves foreign donors, all the money and supplies received from abroad must be registered as humanitarian cargo with the department for humanitarian aid under the presidential administration. The Belarus Red Cross has extensive experience in dealing with international projects and the system of getting money registration certificates runs smoothly. Nevertheless, the procedure can last several months, leading to delays in project implementation.

Moldova Objectives

- *Better trained regional rapid response teams to respond to disasters;*
- *Developed effective tools to strengthen the capacities of the communities prone to disasters;*
- *Strengthened National Society capacities to reduce the impact of disasters on vulnerable communities by providing small pensions and short-term nutritional support.*

The Moldova Red Cross Society through the “*Relief assistance to the most vulnerable*” programme has provided supplementary food assistance to 6,849 vulnerable people in Chisinau, Balti and Bender. The activities included the selection of beneficiaries jointly with the Ministry of Social Protection, collaboration agreement with canteens from target areas; daily distribution of hot meals for the most vulnerable people such as street children, orphans and elderly people with minimal pensions. Some 1,000 beneficiaries who could not be provided with hot meals received food parcels and hygiene kits.

Constraints or Challenges:

As the overall socio-economic situation remains difficult, there is a need to increase the Red Cross's complementary role and services to vulnerable communities. The number of vulnerable people continues to rise, while the resources to meet their needs are limited.

Ukraine Objectives:

- *Raised awareness of communities to hazards and strengthened disaster preparedness/response skills to respond to disasters effectively;*
- *Strengthened National Society disaster preparedness/response skills and material resources for emergency relief.*

Although there were no programme activities in this field in Ukraine, 35 Red Cross staff and volunteers from the Donetsk and Lugansk regional branches were trained in psychosocial support in the course of the DREF operation responding to mine blasts in the country. As a result of the training, Red Cross staff and volunteers were able to assist almost 140 miners' families and their relatives (about 500 people) affected by the mine blast on 19 November 2007 and on 8 June 2008.

Health and Care

Belarus Objectives

HIV and AIDS:

- *The Belarus Red Cross effectively addresses the HIV epidemic by raising public awareness on prevention, healthy lifestyles, stigma and discrimination.*

Community-based first aid:

- *Capacities of communities and households to prevent and cope with individual and small-scale emergencies e.g. household and road accidents have increased.*

Within the reporting period, the Belarus Red Cross has involved 27,190 people in various HIV prevention activities such as peer education sessions, film-group sessions, youth actions and seminars (lectures, meetings with studying and working youth, parents, teachers and other educational specialists). About 206 educational institutions and 31 enterprises were reached by the programme.



Red Cross youth volunteer action “Protect love” organized on 14 February in Mogilev, Belarus

Three big events dedicated to AIDS Memorial Day and St. Valentine's Day were held in the regions attracting a number of local NGOs. A photo exhibition-installation, *The door?!* was opened at Gomel State Medical University to promote respect for civil and human rights in the context of HIV and AIDS, to debunk myths about HIV and AIDS and to form humane and tolerant attitudes towards PLHIV.

Recognizing the need to scale up both its activities and capacities to better tackle HIV in the country, the Belarus Red Cross joined the Red Cross and Red Crescent Global Alliance on HIV.

Though no funding has been received under the second programme objective, a dialogue is ongoing with the French Red Cross and the European Reference Centre for First Aid Education about possible support for the activities.

Moldova Objective:

- The Moldova Red Cross Society contributes to improving the health of vulnerable people by high quality services.

Based on the experience from previous years, in 2008 the Moldova Red Cross medico-social centres continued to provide vital assistance to vulnerable groups of people. They offered psychosocial consultation; medical check-ups; supply of prescription medicine; distribution of second-hand clothes; home care and awareness-raising on health issues. Jointly with the Association of People with Disabilities and the regional departments of social protection, the centres ran clubs for elderly people living alone, where they celebrated different holidays.

In addition, the Moldova Red Cross has organized charity actions jointly with the social workers and assistants in order to collect clothing to help children with disabilities and involve volunteers in providing necessary services to these children and also to the elderly people living alone.

During the reporting period, the Moldova Red Cross has provided 675 vulnerable people (with disabilities and chronically ill patients, adults and children, and people living with HIV) with better quality socio-medical services through 14 centres. In total, 1,470 beneficiaries have been provided with food products, hygiene items and medical supplies and also with services such as shopping, home cleaning and ironing.



“Charity day“ action organized by young volunteers from Orhei Red Cross branch for people with disabilities. Photo: Moldova Red Cross

As a result of the Red Cross activities, the vulnerable people approached by the Red Cross felt less marginalized and isolated in the society. Communities have increased their awareness of the plight of vulnerable people, including elderly people.

The project was also focused on strengthening professional skills of the Red Cross staff and volunteers in the regions. This was reached through seminars, public events on topics such as methods of providing care to PLHIV, promotion of voluntary blood donation, role of volunteers, social security, status and government privileges for people with disabilities, and the power of compassion.

Constraints or Challenges:

Unfortunately, the National Society’s systems, structures and mechanisms to motivate and retain volunteers are not fully developed. Work needs to be continued on strengthening Red Cross human resource capacities. There are many patients with chronic diseases, who need correct and effective treatment. However, limited resources prevented the Red Cross from helping them all.

Many patients live in remote areas and have no possibility to reach doctors for timely and proper treatment. This aggravates their condition and is particularly an issue during winter, when heavy snowfalls block roads and make villages inaccessible.

Ukraine Objectives:

- *Improved health and social conditions of PLHIV due to ARV therapy;*

- *Decreased spread of HIV in rural areas of Ukraine due to public awareness and behaviour-changing activities of the Red Cross;*
- *Decreased spread of HIV among injecting drug users (IDUs).*

Due to the lack of funding no appeal-funded health and care programmes were implemented in Ukraine in the reporting period. However, the Ukraine Red Cross has been providing health screening and psychosocial support to the population of Ukraine affected by the Chernobyl disaster in the framework of the Chernobyl Humanitarian Assistance and Rehabilitation Programme (CHARP).

Organisational Development

Belarus Objectives:

Volunteer promotion and development:

- *The Belarus Red Cross has developed and improved its systems of volunteer recruitment, retention and management;*
- *The Red Cross volunteers have been actively involved in the National Society programmes through better management and motivation tools.*

National Society capacity development:

- *The performance of the National Society has been improved through strengthening its legal base and capacities.*

Older people –participatory programme design:

- *Life quality of older people has been improved by ensuring their access to information.*

The financial management function was separated from the accounting function in the Belarus Red Cross as part of the capacity-building effort to create a sustainable, effective and transparent financial management system in the National Society. As a result, the system of electronic bank payments was set up, project budgets for 2008 were merged into one consolidated budget to analyse funding sources and expenditure; the system of interaction and financial reporting between the National Society's districts, regions and headquarters is being reviewed; and a unified salary system is being developed.

The Belarus Red Cross was short-listed for the Intensified Capacity Building (ICB) Fund and started to develop its plan. The ICB plan is a result of a broad-based consultative and participatory process including self-assessment of the organizational capacity by the Belarus Red Cross itself.

On 10 April, the Belarus Red Cross booklet of good practices on community-based initiatives *Youth in action* became a laureate of the professional public relations (PR) award in the section, *The best corporation publication 2007*. The competition was conducted by the Belarusian PR Institute. The booklet *Youth in action* was the only civil society organization publication that was awarded. Noteworthy that all good practices were written by volunteers themselves as well as all booklet pictures were taken by volunteers. This is the second award of the Belarus Red Cross youth programme. The first was a prize of the fifth International Social Projects Fair *Through Partnership to Social Well-Being and Sustainable Development* held in October 2007,



Charitable event for young wheelchair users in Vitebsk organized by Belarus Red Cross volunteers

where the programme became the winner in the section, *Overcoming of social dependency, development of self-support and volunteering.*

Since January 2008 youth volunteer development has been progressing steadily in Vitebsk region with the support of the Capacity Building Fund (CBF) grant. This is in addition to the youth activities, funded by Danish Red Cross bilaterally in Grodno and Brest regions. Seventeen project proposals on first-aid training, social integration of children with disabilities, reduction of intolerance and discrimination were developed through a small grant competition and submitted by youth volunteer groups, by the end of March. The overall target group is over 3,500 people and at least 200 volunteers were involved in the implementation of the initiatives in seven districts. Youth initiatives were supported by the local authorities. The official recognition through letters of support from the local authorities, youth departments, educational institutions, enterprises and local newspapers, resulted in the allocation of local resources for the initiatives with over 9,770 Swiss francs, or 70 per cent of the youth initiatives' total budget. The small grant competition has proved to be an effective capacity-building tool for local branches in the development of volunteering, sustainable service delivery, establishment of partnership and mobilization of communities.

In terms of legal base strengthening, the revised Belarus Red Cross statutes (to be adopted during the coming National Society congress) was sent for review to the Joint Statutes Commission.

Constraints or Challenges:

The Belarus Red Cross is facing several risks outside the organization. Uppermost is that the legal base is far from perfect, with no law on volunteering and the absence of a system for state grants to NGOs working in the social field. Furthermore, there is increasing competition between NGOs working in the social field. This could also be construed as a positive spur to raise standards.

Ukraine Objectives:

Youth and volunteer promotion and development:

- *The Ukraine Red Cross has developed and strengthened its capacities and structure to establish strong youth movement and volunteer recruitment and retention systems.*

Visiting Nurses Service (VNS) capacity development:

- *The quality of the Red Cross visiting nurses service has been improved.*

Out of the two planned projects in organizational development, the Ukraine Red Cross has been implementing the VNS project funded in January-March by Lars Amundsen Foundation and since then by the Capacity Building Fund (CBF). In the framework of the project, some 660,000 leaflets on how to provide first aid were printed in February and distributed among all regional Red Cross branches in Ukraine.

Since April the focus of the project switched to the modernization of social care and social work of the VNS. The objective of the project is to improve the visiting nurses service by strengthening its administrative-legal base and quality assurance component. As a result of project implementation, all necessary documents for getting the license for carrying out medical practice have been prepared and shared with the regional branches in Kiev, Vinnitsa Cherkassy and Kharkiv.

The implementation of the project raised the confidence of the clients towards the VNS, which at present is very high and the number of clients permanently grows. The majority of the recipients of assistance completely trust the visiting nurses and depend on their assistance.

Moldova Objectives

National Society capacity development:

- *Strengthened National Society capacities to diversify local resources and develop sound financial management;*
- *Increased number of branches able to assist larger number of beneficiaries;*

- *Increased capacities of the headquarters and branches' staff on project planning, evaluation and reporting;*
- *Clear separation of leadership and management at all levels.*

The most significant achievement of the *National Society capacity development* programme in the reporting period was the revision of the National Society's statutes. The new statutes define more clearly governance and management functions that should ultimately improve the effectiveness of service delivery. Progress was made on the establishment of a vertical relationship between the three structural levels of the organization – national, regional and community. Rights and responsibilities of the executive committee and the presidium were discussed and agreed on. This has enabled the decision-making process to be decentralized and increased transparency at regional and local levels.

In an effort to improve coordination within the organization, the Red Cross also initiated regular meetings with regional chairpersons, staff members, volunteers, local authorities, mass media to review progress within programmes, discuss constraints and find solutions in a participatory manner. About 230 people took part in the events.

Humanitarian values

Ukraine Objectives

Anti-discrimination programmes:

- *The level of discrimination towards vulnerable groups in Ukraine has been reduced through the promotion of humanitarian values and changing negative behaviour.*

Programme for migrants:

- *Irregular migrants at their temporary places of residence have received humanitarian assistance and their human rights have been protected.*

Moldova Objectives

Promotion of humanitarian values and respect for diversity:

- *Strengthened capacities to effectively promote the Movement's Fundamental Principles and humanitarian values;*
- *Increased community awareness about the importance of voluntary blood donations;*
- *Increased National Society capacities to promote tolerance and respect for diversity to victims of human trafficking.*

Due to the lack of funding no programmes under Global Agenda goal four were implemented in the reporting period. Nevertheless, components of dissemination of humanitarian values and reduction of stigma and discrimination were incorporated into other programme activities such as the relief assistance to vulnerable people in Moldova and volunteer actions in Belarus.

Working in partnership

To achieve better results and generate high quality programme, the National Societies in the three countries continued cooperating with the key stakeholders in the field of health and care, disaster management, organizational development and humanitarian values. Traditional partners of the National Societies are the ministries of health, social welfare, emergency, justice, internal affairs and education. The Moldova Red Cross is a member of the government commission on humanitarian assistance.

The main international partners of the three National Societies within the International Federation are the Danish Red Cross, Swiss Red Cross, Norwegian Red Cross, Swedish Red Cross, French Red Cross, Italian Red Cross and the Consortium consisting of the Austrian Red Cross, the German Red Cross and the Swiss Red Cross.

The Belarus Red Cross runs programmes on refugees and human trafficking in cooperation with UNHCR and IOM. The Ukraine Red Cross together with other interested organizations (UNAIDS, USAID, UNICEF, PATH, WHO, International Foundation "Alliance") is taking part in the preparation of an application from Ukraine to the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria (GFATM) seeking a grant for activities responding to TB.

Close contacts were made also with NGOs such as La Strada, Credinta, Positive Movement, Fialta, Acasa and different youth clubs on human trafficking and migration programmes.

Cooperation with ICRC is focused on restoring family links, dissemination of International Humanitarian Law (primarily through the *Exploring Humanitarian Law programme*).

Contributing to longer-term impact

All the projects implemented by the National Societies of Belarus, Moldova and Ukraine are aligned with the International Federation's Global Agenda. The health and care programmes, in alignment with Global Agenda goals two and four, aim to raise public awareness of HIV and AIDS, promote healthy lifestyles and fight stigmatization and discrimination towards PLHIV. They also strive to develop effective community-based first-aid programmes. The organizational development programmes are in line with the Framework for Action's ten areas of improvement.

Regular visits are organized in the field to ensure evaluation of the programme activities, to find out the best practices of cooperation with local authorities, to ensure qualitative assistance to the beneficiaries and to share experience and communication with the branches.

In Ukraine, the VNS project provides an opportunity to strengthen the infrastructure in service provision, to improve the process of rendering assistance to the most vulnerable groups of the population, to improve the conditions of work, to enlarge the sphere of services and the quality of facilities. It will increase the effectiveness of clients' involvement and will increase their confidence in the VNS.

The Moldova Red Cross through relief assistance and activities directed towards the dissemination of humanitarian values, has improved its image among the general public. Many young people have expressed the wish to become Red Cross volunteers.

The National Societies strictly follow the approach of gender equity and ensure the equal participation of women and men through appropriate information and publicity materials in the design of key project activities and access to the opportunities they offer. An appropriate male/female balance is also sought in the project management structure and the activities themselves.

Looking ahead

For the second half of 2008 and for 2009 the priorities of the National Societies will be on health and care, disaster management and organizational development. The Belarus Red Cross will continue running harm reduction and HIV and AIDS palliative care activities also funded by GFATM. In the second half of 2008, the new "HIV prevention at workplaces and in vocational schools in Belarus" programme with financial support from GTZ (German international cooperation enterprise for sustainable development) is expected to be launched. If the ICB plan is selected by the CBF committee, the Belarus Red Cross will also start a capacity-building programme focusing on developing the local network of the Belarus Red Cross branch units and increasing access of vulnerable population groups in communities to sustainable and high quality services.

In the second half of 2008, the Ukraine Red Cross will modernize the visiting nurses service funded by the CBF. The main activities will be focused on further improving the standards of service

provision and increasing the qualification of the visiting nurses to meet all the needs of people receiving assistance on a permanent basis.

As a result of the negotiations between the Ukraine Red Cross, the International Federation's country representative and the American Red Cross, HIV prevention projects are expected to be launched in Ukraine in September 2008. Another priority programme will be disaster management focusing on improving disaster preparedness and response skills of Red Cross staff and volunteers through training, competitions and first-aid education, as well as further developing Red Cross infrastructure, including establishing a disaster preparedness centre. The International Federation and the Ukraine Red Cross will seek necessary funding for these programmes.

Building up its organizational capacity at national and regional levels is vital for the Moldova Red Cross. Weak volunteer and staff management systems undermine the organization making it a less than valued partner for the government and funding bodies. Therefore it is of paramount importance that the National Society, in formulating its humanitarian programmes, focuses on a smaller number of activities with higher impact; ensures that the selected programmes are aimed at the most vulnerable; ensures efficiency, cost effectiveness and accountability; explores non-traditional sources of revenue and finance; builds partnerships; ensures sustainability; recruits, retains and nurtures competent staff, and ensures true division of governance and management.

The National Society will develop and strengthen its capacities and structure to establish strong youth and volunteer recruitment/retention systems as a form of civic participation. This will help address the social problems in local communities, by involving youth in training the population in first aid and HIV prevention activities.

The Moldova Red Cross has been short-listed for Intensified Capacity Building support and as this report was being finalized it was working to produce a three-year capacity-building plan. If the Moldova Red Cross is not successful in its application for ICB support it will need to find this support from other sources/partners. Without this support it is quite possible that the National Society will become essentially redundant.

How we work	
<p>The International Federation's activities are aligned with its Global Agenda, which sets out four broad goals to meet the Federation's mission to "improve the lives of vulnerable people by mobilizing the power of humanity".</p>	<p>Global Agenda Goals:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduce the numbers of deaths, injuries and impact from disasters. • Reduce the number of deaths, illnesses and impact from diseases and public health emergencies. • Increase local community, civil society and Red Cross Red Crescent capacity to address the most urgent situations of vulnerability. • Reduce intolerance, discrimination and social exclusion and promote respect for diversity and human dignity.
Contact information	
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