

THE CAUCASUS

EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE

CHF 11,989,000
500,000 beneficiaries

Programme no 01.40/99

The Context

In each of the three Caucasus countries, independence has brought a lot of human suffering. The transition to a new socio-economic system, begun in the early 1990s, is still compounded by the unresolved conflicts over Nagorno-Karabakh and Abkhazia. As a result, more than 1 million internally displaced people are unable to return to their places of origin.

Throughout this transition period, the National Societies in the Caucasus have been assisted by the Federation to ensure that those people most affected by transition and conflict - the lonely elderly, the displaced, children and chronically sick - receive assistance in the areas of health, food and shelter. Despite the fact that macro-economic indicators are showing signs of improvement, there is still a need to maintain minimum health and social welfare standards to highly vulnerable groups.

That said, the Federation has for the past two years concentrated also on strengthening the capacity of each National Society. Relief and rehabilitation assistance has been linked to development activities. This appeal provides a mix to encourage self-sufficiency among the vulnerable groups, integrating the development component with relief activities, community-based first aid, population movements, community development, income-generation and disaster preparedness, as well as strategic planning by the National Societies.

The Operation

The Caucasus has been in crisis since 1988, following a series of natural, ethnic, political and economic disasters. Since then, the Federation has been supporting the most vulnerable sections of the population in coping with the worst effects of the cataclysm. The 1999 programmes focus on the need to provide relief assistance to the most vulnerable, but also reflect the need to further encourage self-sufficiency among vulnerable groups and National Societies as the Federation's emphasis will shift towards the development of solid structures and systems, as well as ensuring quality of service through better targeting and monitoring.

In 1999, the Federation and the National Societies in the region will continue to fine-tune ongoing programmes, resulting in more efficient systems and improved services for the most vulnerable.

Objectives

- Continue to provide food and non-food assistance, as well as rehabilitation and water supply services to most vulnerable groups, concentrating on the displaced persons.
- Continue to meet the minimum health and social welfare needs of the most vulnerable.
- Continue to focus on the capacity building (population movements, first aid, income generation, information, institutional and resource development) of each national society within the context of their strategic planning.
- To further expand the scope of disaster preparedness and preparedness capacity in the region.

Plan of Action

ARMENIA

- Health

Anti-Malaria Campaign

The goal of the project is to reduce the transmission of malaria in four regions of Armenia, targeting 500,000 people living in the endemic areas of Ararat, Armavir and the Vayots Dzor marshes. The programme, which calls for spraying, the provision of medicines, and public education campaigns, will be run from March to December 1999 (before and throughout the malaria season). The Federation has the ultimate responsibility for project co-ordination.

Anti-Lice Campaign

The deterioration of the socio-economic situation in Armenia, water shortages, overcrowded housing etc. have resulted in the widespread occurrence of lice (pediculosis), particularly among children. According to data provided by the Armenian Health Ministry, the pediculosis rate in Armenia is much higher than in other NIS countries. The goal of this programme is to improve the health of the affected population by strengthening the primary health care system. The programme's planned duration is 12 months. The target is the whole population of Armenia, particularly children under 14 years old.

- Social Welfare

Social Services

This is a capacity-building programme to expand the National Society's assistance to the most vulnerable in Armenia. The programme will create small Social Service Centres within each

of the Society's 20 existing offices throughout Armenia. Each centre will be staffed by a Head of Service and, depending on the size of the population served, one to three support staff. Each will receive limited funding to support the centre's supply and programme needs. Although it is expected that the bulk of the centres' beneficiaries will be among the urban elderly population, other potential beneficiary groups will include victims of disasters and accidents; widows and orphans; single/abandoned mothers; refugees and IDPs; handicapped people and/or their families; destitute families with many children; and special groups as defined by vulnerability assessment.

The main thrust of the programme will involve health and health-related issues such as family hygiene, child care, disease control, guidance in finding medical services, and the like. Therefore, the National Society will recruit people with medical and health-related qualifications and experience to staff the centres. Given its health-related focus, the programme will benefit from the experience and resources gained through the long-running Visiting Home Nurses Programme.

- Population Movement

Red Cross Summer Camp for Refugee and Non-Refugee Children

The project will provide two weeks of summer activities for 50 of the most vulnerable refugee and non-refugee children. Apart from feeding the children properly, and fostering a degree of tolerance between refugee and non-refugee youths, the project also includes educational activities. The project is expected to increase the volunteer base of the National Society and promote its image.

Regional Population Movement Workshop

The programme envisages workshops in four of the country's regions, targeting Red Cross branch staff and volunteers, as well as local authorities. The workshops will touch upon subjects relevant to the population movement programme, such as Movement policies and practises regarding refugees and asylum seekers, International Humanitarian Law, emergency preparedness, co-operation with UNHCR, IOM, and other NGOs, and project proposal writing.

- Development

Institutional and Resource Development

This project seeks to expand the scope, quality and effectiveness of Red Cross activities in Armenia and to create the infrastructure and resources to support these efforts on a long-term, self-sustaining basis. The programme is a direct extension of the National Society's decentralisation and capacity building strategy that calls for the expansion of community-based activities and services throughout Armenia. Much has already been accomplished in recent years. The year 1999 will see the full implementation of the National Society's initiatives on capacity building, decentralisation, service delivery, constituency and stakeholder expansion, and financial self-reliance.

- Disaster Preparedness

The major aims of the 1999 disaster preparedness programme are to assist the Armenian Red Cross in developing disaster preparedness and response training centres and units in all of its branches; to assist the Armenian Red Cross in maintaining disaster preparedness and response operational systems and structures; to continue to train the Red Cross staff and volunteers in disaster preparedness, response strategies and operational procedures; to create an early-warning network based on HF radios; and to help the National Society to broaden its volunteer base and to upgrade the branch offices.

AZERBAIJAN

- Southern Camp Relief

Distribution of Relief Goods

The overall objective of the project is to distribute a monthly minimum food basket (approximately half of the required food intake) to approximately 35,000 IDPs living in the so-called Southern Camps. The project will run from May to December. In addition, non-food items like soap and plastic sheeting will be distributed.

Water and Sanitation

During 1998 the authorities have taken over the main part of the sanitation systems in the seven camps.

The Federation will continue to be responsible for providing potable water to the camps. The project includes the provision and treatment of water, as well as maintenance of the water pipes.

Agriculture

The agriculture programme will help the IDPs by providing assistance for the production of foodstuffs to complement the present food distributions, and by giving families income-generating opportunities. The programme has three separate components: continued support for more than 2,000 kitchen garden plots, benefiting some 10,000 people; assistance in wheat-growing around the camps; and the provision of loans for agricultural purposes.

Community Development

The project aims at greater self-determination for the IDPs. Its implementation will allow them to develop cultural activities, training opportunities and rehabilitation programmes, with an emphasis on community involvement. The programme will also have an income-generation section, providing loans to selected IDPs for business and animal husbandry projects.

Repatriation and Resettlement

This project targets a maximum of 1,000 IDPs from the southern Fizuli district presently living in the Southern Camps or having recently returned to the district. The aim is to facilitate their reintegration by supporting community development and income-generating activities.

- Health Programmes

Community Based First Aid

The project aims to strengthen the capacity and institutional development of the Red Crescent Society of Azerbaijan (AZRC) through expansion and marketing of its community-based first aid programme. The project will be implemented through AZRC centres in eight regions.

Visiting Nurses Project

The project aims to support AZRC's visiting nurses programme, which provides basic medical and social care for some 7,000 lonely elderly people. This traditional AZRC project is an important Society image-booster and will increase volunteer involvement. The programme will be implemented through a network of AZRC doctors, nurses and volunteers attached to branches and regional centres.

Basic Medical Assistance to IDP's at Collective Centres in Major Cities

The project aims to provide basic medical assistance to 8,650 IDPs living in collective centres in the cities of Baku and Sumgait. AZRC started to provide basic medical assistance to this target group in 1998. The project will be implemented by a number of nurses and volunteers in collaboration with other NGOs.

Basic Health Care for IDPs

The aim is to continue providing primary health care to 18,000 IDPs permanently living in the Southern Camps and 15,000 in the immediate surroundings. In the course of 1999, the project will gradually be handed over from the Federation to the National Society. The project will be implemented through six basic health care posts in the camps.

Support for Health Reform through Integrated Management of Childhood Illnesses (IMCI)

The project aims at supporting the government's health reforms by upgrading the quality of health care for children under 5 years of age by implementing IMCI in the Southern Camps and in three districts. In the camps, the project will be implemented through the primary health care posts. In the districts, AZRC doctors and nurses will run the programme.

- Population Movement

In line with the overall objective of enhancing AZRC capacity to support the vulnerable in society, the National Society must play an active advocacy role on the issue of the treatment of refugees, IDPs, and other displaced persons within Azerbaijan. This programme is expected to improve the National Society's reputation both with the international aid community and with the relevant authorities.

- Development

Institutional Development

This long-term project aims to assist AZRC to become a well-functioning National Society and as such improve its performance as a humanitarian organisation. In 1999, the programme will focus on organisational structure, decentralisation and training. A Federation delegate will facilitate the project's execution at the headquarters, regional and branch levels.

Resource Development

The project aims to improve the financial situation of the AZRC, leading the society towards independence from the Federation. Simultaneously, the staff of the National Society will be

trained and supported on this issue. The project will be based on the resource development plan, using the nation-wide regional network. A delegate will support the National Society at all levels.

GEORGIA

- Relief

Food and Food Production for Social Institutions

The programme will target 1,500 patients in 15 institutions receiving minimal or no support from the government and other organisations. Supplementary food assistance, hygiene articles, seeds, fertiliser and agricultural tools will be provided over a six-month period.

- Health

Home Care for the Elderly / Family Food Parcels / Pharmaceutical Support

The project will provide basic health care and pharmaceutical assistance, social services (personal hygiene, domestic activities, laundry, shopping) and food distribution to 5,000 vulnerable lonely elderly people throughout Georgia. It will be a continuation of the Visiting Nurses Programme of the Red Cross Society of Georgia (RCSG). The programme will involve 300 doctors and nurses.

Medicines for Patients Suffering from Chronic Psychiatric and Neurological Disorders

The project will continue to provide essential medicines to patients of psycho-neurologic facilities throughout the country. It targets more than 60,000 registered patients.

Collective Centres Western Georgia: Basic Health Care for IDPs

The project will provide basic health care to 50,000 IDPs currently living in collective centres in Western Georgia.

Social Mobilisation for Immunisation Campaigns

The programme is intended to support immunisation campaigns in Georgia by running public awareness and health education campaigns through the RCSG network. All activities will take place in co-operation with the relevant health authorities and UNICEF.

Community-Based First Aid

RCSG has established first aid training centres in six cities and has widely distributed Georgian-language first aid manuals. The 1999 programme calls for the opening of training centres in seven additional cities and equipping them with the necessary materials. Training fees will be introduced in order to make the programme self-sustainable.

- Rehabilitation/Construction

Emergency Rehabilitation of Collective Centres in Western Georgia

The programme will provide rehabilitation of selected collective centres located in Western Georgia. Over a nine-month period, essential repairs will be made to the centres' roofs, windows, plumbing, and electricity.

- Population Movement

Mobile Technical Teams in Western Georgia

The programme will provide minor repairs over a one-year period to schools and dormitories used by 30,000 IDPs from Abkhazia as collective centres. Vulnerable groups within the host community will also be serviced.

Red Cross Summer Camp for IDP Children

The project will provide two weeks of summer activities for 50 of the most vulnerable refugee and non-refugee children. Apart from feeding the children properly, and fostering a degree of tolerance between refugee and non-refugee youths, the project also includes educational activities. The project is expected to increase the volunteer base of the National Society and promote its image.

Public Awareness

The project is intended to increase awareness of the situation of IDPs in Georgia and

Federation programmes

among the public and potential donors. It will consist of three components: a television documentary on IDPs in Georgia, a brochure concerning the RCSG activities benefiting the IDP population, as well as series of public events, such as public debates and concerts.

- Vulnerability and Capacity Assessment

In 1999, the National Society, supported by the Federation, will conduct a community-level vulnerability and capacity assessment. A household survey is to provide data that will enable RCSG to improve its services to the most vulnerable in Georgia - particularly at the branch level. This assessment will be based on similar surveys conducted by National Societies elsewhere in the NIS.

- Institutional and Resource Development

Although progress has been made in 1997 and 1998 in assisting the RCSG to establish a firmer legal base, to improve its statutes and to define its mission, embedded in a strategic plan, some basic development areas remain less well-clarified. They include agreement between the principal stakeholders in the development process on the goals and methods underpinning the programme and, most vital, the need to define RCSG's constituents through a vulnerability and capacity assessment (see above). After rebuilding part of the platform for development co-operation between the National Society, the Federation and PNSs, development objectives will focus on RCSG/Federation co-operation where there is a role for the Federation in complementing local expertise and improving skills on a counterpart basis. Simultaneously, the increasing role of PNSs will be recognised, while the elaboration of a Framework for Development Co-operation will be encouraged towards the end of 1999.

Specifically, the RCSG's 1999 development programme will seek formulation of and consensus on current programme objectives and methodology; formulation of a clear mission statement for RCSG, supported by a realistic strategic/development plan; a vulnerability and capacity assessment; to encourage increased partnership between the RCSG and the government, other NGOs and the private sector; to widen the funding base of RCSG through revenue-generating services consistent with its mission; more effective leadership, separation of governance and management and wider sharing of decision-making within RCSG; a more effective link between the Federation's institutional and resource development and programme development efforts; and to continue to hand over programme management responsibility from the Federation to the National Society.

- Disaster Preparedness and Response Capacity

The programme is intended to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the disaster preparedness and response programmes of RCSG to enable it to cope with increasing humanitarian challenges by implementing the following objectives: improve the efficiency and effectiveness of RCSG disaster preparedness and response; strengthen the organisational, institutional and physical structures of the National Society; and develop the capacity of key branches to respond to limited disasters by developing practical preparedness and intervention skills to avoid reliance on expensive equipment.

- Community Development

This nation-wide programme will offer a package of four community development projects to IDPs: community rooms; skills development; income generation; and kitchen gardens. The project is designed to encourage social integration, vocational skills, remunerated employment and household food production among the targeted IDP communities throughout 1999.

Regional Information Programme

The Regional Information Programme started in September 1998 and will continue until August 2000. The Armenian, Azerbaijan and Georgian National Societies' information departments will be equipped and trained in a series of seminars to ensure that high-quality information activities support the National Societies' work on all levels: headquarters, regions and branches. Basic funding for the programme has been secured, but several public awareness initiatives vital to it remain unfunded.

Although all three National Societies employ information/public relations staff, there is a further need to promote the awareness of Red Cross/Red Crescent activities to attract volunteers and potential donors. Meanwhile, the National Societies' internal information flows between headquarters, regions, and branches needs a structure, a plan and regularity.

Resource Planning

It is anticipated that the support for the relief assistance programmes will be forthcoming from traditional sources, with PNSs supporting the infrastructure required to implement these programmes and their developmental components.

Capacity

- The National Societies

In Armenia, the National Society has branch offices in all of the country's 10 regions, with a total membership of 11,000. The trend within ARCS is away from traditional top-down relief operations towards community-based Red Cross activities. Headquarters employs 67 paid staff and 40 volunteers.

The Red Crescent Society of Azerbaijan maintains a branch office in each of the country's 75 districts. To streamline its operations, AZRC has divided the country into eight regions, each with its own regional centre. With four of them opened in 1998, the remainder will be put in place in 1999. The National Society has 225 staffers, 20 of them at headquarters.

The National Society in Georgia currently covers all administrative regions of the country with the exception of disputed territories in Abkhazia and Tskinali. In all, there are 10 regional offices and 60 branches throughout Georgia. They are involved in implementing a strategic plan focusing on health, youth, disaster response and information activities. Headquarters employs about 30 people. Throughout Georgia, there are 2,000 Red Cross volunteers.

- The Federation

The Federation maintains delegations in Yerevan, Armenia; Tblisi, Georgia, with sub-offices in Kutaisi, Zugdidi, and Batumi; and in Baku, Azerbaijan, with a sub-delegation in Sabirabad. Although all Caucasus offices will be maintained in 1999, their delegate complements will be reduced as programme responsibilities will be gradually assumed by National Society staff in all three countries.

Co-operation

While the number of international humanitarian agencies operating in the Caucasus has fallen, the Federation continues to work closely with the ICRC and with major providers of international humanitarian aid within the United Nations system.