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Annual report Turkmenistan

 International Federation
of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

MAATM001

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**This report covers the
period 01/Jan/2011 to
31/Dec/2011.**

Red Crescent volunteers facilitate a simulation of evacuation in case of an earthquake in one of the schools of Turkmenbashy town /Turkmenistan RC



In brief

Programme outcome

The Turkmenistan National Society programmes are aligned with the strategic aims of the *Strategy 2020* to save lives, protect livelihoods, and strengthen recovery from disasters and crises; enable healthy and safe living; and promote social inclusion and culture of non-violence and peace. The capacity-building efforts are in line with enabling action one to build strong National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies.

Programmes summary

The **disaster management** (DM) programme continued building its institutional capacity to meet the National Society's disaster management obligations and its community-based initiatives in the most vulnerable communities, including mitigation and public awareness. The staff and volunteers improved their knowledge and skills through training and simulation exercises. The National Society also improved its national disaster preparedness/disaster response and contingency plans, build up technical resources of the headquarters and branches and replenished emergency stocks. In order to facilitate improving the national legal base in case of the international disaster response the National Society promoted the Disaster Law (DL) in front of the government. The Turkmenistan Red Crescent provided humanitarian aid to people affected by natural and man-made disasters with resources from the National Society emergency stocks.

The National Society also strengthened the coping capacities of the population living in disaster prone areas by increasing community awareness of actions to take in case of a disaster and of the climate change adaptation measures.

In **health and care** the Red Crescent Society disseminated information about HIV among youth, key populations at higher risk and general public. The HIV prevention programme also increased the awareness of the harmful effects of drug use and promoted healthy lifestyle. Besides, the National Society continued following up on the recommendations of the peer education component evaluation by making preparations for an in-depth analysis of vulnerable groups, addressing the recommendations related to Red Crescent work in schools and printing information materials with key messages for specific target groups. The tuberculosis prevention component targeted people with tuberculosis (TB) on the continuation phase of treatment, their family members and general population. The services provided include direct observation of treatment (DOT) and social support to the clients with TB and raising awareness of TB. The community-base health and first aid (CBHFA) remained focused on health education and first aid sessions for rural communities. Pregnant women, women of reproductive age and schoolchildren also improved their knowledge of reproductive health issues. Five first aid training centres were set in National Society's regional branches and equipped with relevant equipment and disposable materials.

A new version of the Red Crescent statutes was drafted this year and should be considered by the next National Society congress. Also, more than 10 regulations in the area of human resources management were developed that define staff selection, employment, dismissal, adaptation etc. The Turkmenistan Red Crescent made changes to the draft law in accordance with the recommendations of the Joint ICRC/International Federation Commission for National Society Statutes. The draft had to be further discussed with the state interagency commission before it can be submitted to the Cabinet.

The **principles and values programme** informed the general public about the Movement's components, its principles, values and commitments through public campaigns, information materials, publications in media sources and facilitated sessions on anti-discrimination, tolerance and respect for diversity through training and seminars organized by other programmes for beneficiaries and partners. Messages on gender-based violence and discrimination have been spread as part of the National Society promotion activities. Limited funding allowed covering only a part of the principles and values programme activities of the Turkmenistan Red Crescent. Some programme activities were supported by other programmes.

Financial situation

The total 2011 budget is CHF 1,069,753, of which CHF 869,530 (81 per cent) covered during the reporting period (including opening balance). Overall expenditure during the reporting period was CHF 868,668 (81 per cent) of the budget. The disaster management and HIV prevention programme budgets increased to accommodate higher contributions.

The HIV programme implementation rate was 67 percent because part of the received funds, follow a different operating timeframe and was supposed to be carried over to 2012. The organizational development programme implementation rate is below 50 per cent. The coverage of the programme made only 68 per cent of the annual budget. The funds arrived in the second half of the year and were supposed to be carried over to 2012. Besides, some organizational development activities were covered from the disaster management programme, which was envisaged by an initiative on closer programme integration.

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

No. of people we have reached

The total number of people who benefited directly from secretariat-supported programme interventions during the reporting period was 182,511.

| Programme/project | Target group | Number of people reached | % of women | % of men |
|-------------------|------------------------|--------------------------|------------|----------|
| Disaster | Population in disaster | 59,320 | | |

| | | | | |
|---|---|----------------|----|----|
| management | prone areas | 12,465 | | |
| | Children (5-18 years age) Key persons in government structures | 208 | | |
| Health and care: TB prevention | People with TB | 622 | 47 | 53 |
| | Family members, general population | 27,300 | 56 | 44 |
| HIV prevention | Most at risk populations, youth | 24,920 | 48 | 52 |
| | CBHFA Youth, women of childbearing age, general population | 22,176 | 55 | 45 |
| Principles and values | | 35,500 | | |
| TOTAL | | 182,511 | | |

Our partners

The donors supporting the programmes multilaterally through the International Federation were the British and Norwegian Red Cross Societies, the Japanese government, the Population Services International (PSI) and the UK Department for International Development (DFID).

Context

In November 2011 the interagency coordination committee adopted the country National Programme on HIV Control for the years 2012-2016 that should be further approved by the Cabinet. The Turkmenistan Red Crescent Society, as a member of the interagency coordination committee, will be responsible for the monitoring and evaluation of the programme.

Acting as auxiliary to the public authorities in the humanitarian field, the Turkmenistan Red Crescent is also the first non-government organization responding to emergencies and providing needs-based services to the most vulnerable communities at risk through its country-wide network. Over the reporting period the National Society assisted about 960 people (195 families) affected by disasters with emergency relief items using their own emergency stocks.

Progress towards outcomes

Disaster management

Programme component 1: Disaster management planning

Outcome:

- Improved ability to predict and plan for disasters to mitigate their impact on vulnerable communities: respond to, and effectively cope with, their consequences.

Achievements

Over the year, the National Society conducted 18 consultation meetings with 185 staff of relevant government bodies at different levels to facilitate cooperation in the area of disaster management and to get the Red Crescent's revised national disaster preparedness and disaster response and branch contingency plans recognised by the government. The existing branch contingency plans were updated and Lebap, Balkan and Ahal branches' additional contingency plans were approved as defining the National Society duties in case of a mid-scale disaster.

In March the Turkmenistan Red Crescent took part in testing the revised regional disaster response/contingency plan (DR/CP) of the Central Asian National Societies in Almaty (Kazakhstan). All stakeholders involved in disaster response in the region (including the ICRC, partner National Societies, the UN agencies, the Kazakhstan Emergency Ministry) attended the test and provided feedback that was later used to refine the plan. The Turkmenistan Red Crescent also signed two regional Memoranda of Understanding between the IFRC and the National Societies: on mutual assistance in case of an emergency and on the RDRT deployment.

Programme component 2: Organizational preparedness

Outcome:

- Strengthened capacity of the National Society in disaster preparedness and response through increased skills and knowledge of Red Crescent staff and volunteers, strengthened financial and technical resources, effective mechanisms for emergency response and recovery assistance.

Achievements

Following the disaster response team training in Tajikistan¹ four new members of the regional disaster response team (RDRT) from the Turkmenistan Red Crescent shared the knowledge with 77 disaster response team (DRT) members from its branch DRTs during five regional refresher trainings on needs assessment after the disaster and on emergency relief. The arranged simulation exercises reached around 1,630 Red Crescent staff and volunteers.

Six staff of the Turkmenistan National Society improved their skills in community mobilization at the regional training on community-based disaster risk reduction arranged by the IFRC in December. In addition, the National Society disaster management staff (mainly from the headquarters) participated in the IFRC workshop on climate change and in the workshop on the Hyogo Framework for Action and disaster risk reduction and project planning process, conducted by DIPECHO.

Over the year DRT members responded to small-scale emergencies in all five regions of the country and assisted 195 families (960 people) affected by domestic fires, mudslides and a technological emergency.

Aiming at strengthening the mechanisms for effective emergency response and recovery assistance the Turkmenistan Red Crescent, with support from the IFRC regional representation and Geneva secretariat, introduced key stakeholders to the Disasters Law (DL) through meetings with eight representatives from the government bodies and 15 National Society staff. The Turkmenistan National Society also attended the second regional disaster laws conference “Strengthening Disaster Management Laws In Central Asia” organised in Astana (Kazakhstan) in August. Sixty three representatives from the state structures of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan, the UN agencies, the ICRC, the IFRC, the Central Asia Red Crescent Societies and partner National Societies present in the region took part in the meeting. The participants discussed existing laws, rules and principles of international humanitarian assistance, gaps and necessary steps towards legal base improvement. The conference also facilitated exchange of information, experiences and resources related to facilitation and regulation of international disaster relief between the five countries.

The main achievement of the regional conference was that all five country teams presented plans of action to promote changes to the national/regional legislation addressing international disaster response and risk reduction. Based on this plan the Turkmenistan Red Crescent met twice key government focal points to discuss the issue and the National Society proposal on legislation improvements submitted to the government is presently being studied.

Building the capacity of its national DRT, the National Society procured a four-wheel-drive vehicle, which significantly improved travel conditions and access to remote project sites. In addition, the Red Crescent procured two portable computers, seven big tents with folding furniture, jacklights, and

¹ The training was held in Norak, Tajikistan, in May 2011.

spotlights and 30 sets of individual supplies kits for NDRT members. Also, the National Society provided the NDRT with 30 summer-winter uniforms and 100 individual sets for volunteers. The emergency stocks of basic relief supplies in the central warehouse (Ashgabat) and in branches were partly replenished with family kitchen sets (100), first aid kits (150) and hygiene supplies (125 sets).

Programme component 3: Community preparedness / Disaster risk reduction

Outcome:

- Strengthened capacities of communities in disaster-prone areas to respond to future disasters through community-based disaster preparedness and the implementation of mitigation projects.

Achievements

The National Society carried out traditional work with local disaster management committees (LDMCs) in 26 communities – including seven newly involved communities – within the community-based disaster preparedness (CBDP) projects. During the working meetings and workshops arranged for 2,730 community members and local officials seven new LDMCs were established. The Red Crescent facilitated vulnerability and capacity assessments in each of 26 involved communities and the development or revision of community contingency plans.

To strengthen the disaster response skills of community DRTs, trainings and simulation exercises were arranged. In cooperation with the civil defense departments all five Red Crescent regional branches organized large-scale simulation exercises involving community members. Besides, the National Society arranged simulation exercises for 21 communities aimed to test their disaster response plans. The total number of people that took part in all 26 exercises made 9,400 people.

Besides, the National Society conducted 136 specific information sessions on climate change adaptation for community members. In addition, Turkmenistan Red Crescent, with the help of a consultant, developed a manual titled “Mitigation activities addressing threats related to climate change”. This methodological tool will be further used as a guidance for the National Society branches and local communities residing in climatic disasters prone areas to develop mitigation projects aimed at disaster risk reduction.

At the final stage of the CBDP work, six communities (2 urban and 4 rural) carried out mitigation projects that reduced the risks of underflooding and water-borne and water-related diseases. In total, around 19,200 people benefited from these mitigation projects implemented with strong support from the Red Crescent. In addition, the National Society assisted 20 urban and rural schools in two earthquake prone regions to implement non-structural mitigation projects on seismic-strengthening that benefited 7,800 schoolchildren and teachers. The Red Crescent provided relevant training to school staff and supplied the schools with relevant materials and instruments. As a result of the activity all furniture in 930 classrooms were fixed to the walls and to each other so as to prevent damage from shakes of an earthquake.

For the general population living in disaster prone areas the National Society organised more than 25 disaster awareness campaigns on fire and road safety. These and other events related to disaster risk reduction (DRR), the presentation of the IFRC World Disasters Report, field exercises, competitions, contests and round table meetings with local authorities and relevant government bodies directly reached 9,495 people. Public events were supported with dissemination of 24,000 posters on disaster risks. It is estimated that the campaigns covered more than 88,000 people indirectly.

The Red Crescent information sessions on rules of behaviour in case of an emergency with special focus on prevention of domestic fires, road safety and first aid reached 12,465 children in 180 schools and kindergartens around the country. Also, the National Society reached 3,950 adults with fire safety education on request from the fire fighting department that also supplied the list of target organizations in the capital and regional centre cities.

Programme component 4: Recovery

Outcome:

- Increased capacity of the National Society to restore or improve pre-disaster living conditions and reduce the risk of future disasters.

Achievements

Three members of the RDRT from the Turkmenistan Red Crescent passed the five-day regional shelter/recovery training organised by the IFRC regional and country representation with support of the Tajikistan Red Crescent in Varzob (Tajikistan) in July 2011. The participants mastered the basics of the Emergency Market Mapping and Analysis and received an overview of the different techniques for early recovery and recovery activities. The training also addressed reporting and analysis of findings and included practical exercises.

As a follow-up the Turkmenistan National Society disseminated the knowledge with 30 staff and members of the national DRT through a national training on recovery in October.

Constraints or Challenges

The main challenge for the disaster management programme is regular exchange of information with the government bodies supervising the disaster management that would facilitate a more effective inter-agency planning. Although the National Society exerted every effort to ensure a long-term cooperation it failed to sign a long-term cooperation agreement or a memorandum of understanding with the Ministry of Defence. The cooperation is limited to joint annual plans – that include a number of disaster preparedness activities – developed with local civil defence departments, road safety and fire fighting services in all regions but not at the national level.

Also, over the last three years National Society did not succeed in securing a permission to use a radio channel and the emergency radio network does not function in the country.

Health and care

Programme component: HIV and AIDS

Outcomes

- Vulnerability to HIV and its impact reduced through preventing further infection and reducing stigma and discrimination.
- Awareness of the harmful effects of drug use to human health increased and healthy lifestyle promoted.

Achievements

The National Society HIV prevention programme targeted urban populations in Ashgabat, Abadan, Dashoguz, Mary, Turkmenabat and Turkmenbashi. The programme comprises information and education activities (sessions, trainings, public campaigns) on HIV and drug abuse prevention for schoolchildren, high-risk adolescents, military personnel, sex workers (SWs), injecting drug users (IDUs), taxi drivers and truck drivers, police personnel and staff of different enterprises. SWs and IDUs were targeted through outreach work; taxi or truck drivers and other adult population were reached through information activities. Outreach services included information sessions on safe behavior with key messages on HIV and TB, dissemination of condoms and information materials specifically produced for these target groups. The Red Crescent sessions vary in duration depending on the target group and the context in which the sessions are provided.

Over the year the National Society trained 308 peer educators – among them 168 young people, including high-risk adolescents, and 45 military men – and more than 95 outreach workers from SWs and IDUs. In total, the Red Crescent reached 24,920 people; out of them 46 percent with

information activities and 54 per cent with peer-to-peer training. The Red Crescent public actions marked the World TB Day, the World Health Day, the World No Tobacco Day, the International Children's Day, the International Anti Drugs Day and the World AIDS Day.

Regular monitoring was carried out to follow up the progress of the programme and its effect on the target groups. According to the results:

- 89 percent of the covered beneficiaries identified correctly the ways of preventing the sexual transmission of HIV and rejected major misconceptions about HIV transmission;
- about 66 percent of targeted by peer education reported consistent condom use with non-regular or multiple partners;
- 87 percent of covered young people expressed responsible attitude to their health and tolerance towards people with HIV;
- 68 percent of regular and irregular clients of SWs indicated using condoms in the time of the latest sex contact;
- 63 percent of trained SWs and DUs indicated using condoms in the time of the latest sex contact;
- 67 percent of trained DUs indicated using sterile equipment last time they injected drugs.

In 2011, the Turkmenistan National Society made arrangements with the government structures and health providers to introduce a voucher referral system for IDUs. The system will provide improved access to testing and treatment for this beneficiary group. It will also allow tracking whether the referred clients use the services of friendly organizations.

Programme component: Tuberculosis

Outcome

- Vulnerability to TB and its impact reduced through preventing further infection, rendering social support to TB patients, reducing stigma and discrimination, and integrating with HIV prevention.

Achievements

Over the year the National Society's TB prevention programme in Ahgabat, Dashoguz and Mary cities served 622 people with TB. Since March 2011, the programme stopped providing food parcels to beneficiaries as part of the social support because they were provided through the project funded by the Global Fund. The treatment success rate with Red Crescent clients made 93 percent, the default rate made 1 percent.

Regular work with TB clients and their family members including education and psycho-social support helped to ensure uninterrupted treatment. Self-support groups, facilitated by 16 former clients also rendered psychological support to peers.

Awareness raising campaigns for the general population contributed to early diagnosis. In cooperation with the HIV prevention programme, sessions were provided to raise awareness of the diseases in organizations, schools and higher educational institutions, juvenile correctional facilities, in military units, customs services, immigration services. The Red Crescent nurses and trained volunteers of the programme also made home visits to facilitate an early detection of TB. Over the year 27,300 people were reached with TB prevention and control messages. About 80 percent of people reached were able to identify at least three signs of TB and three ways to prevent the spread of disease.

Public actions were arranged in the project sites on the World TB Day and the International Day against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking. The overall coverage of the information and education activities for the population that includes public campaigns and media exceeded 660,000 people.

Programme component: Community-based health and first aid

Outcome

- Population health improved through diseases prevention, health promotion, trauma reduction and basic first-aid training.
- Reproductive health improved through education and promotion of women's health and antenatal care.

Achievements

The Turkmenistan National Society implemented the CBHFA programme at ten sites of the country – Baharly, Etrek, Esenguly, Yolatan, Tagtabazar, Serhetabad, Atamurat, Turkmenbashi, Koytendag, Magdanaly districts. The programme targeted rural population – adult people of 25-40 years (men and women with many children), pregnant and breast-feeding women aged 18-35, women of childbearing age, adolescent girls aged 15-17 and young schoolchildren.

The programme provides information and education activities in the area of public health and reproductive health. Moreover, first-aid trainings are conducted to train the beneficiaries on the relevant knowledge and skills. Sanitation, hygiene and safe water promotion topics are included in the programme education. The pre- and post-education tests also include relevant questions.

Information dissemination and education activities have been conducted by 421 volunteers (60 percent women and 40 percent men) from various categories of the population, such as youth, school teachers, medical nurses, housewives. Information materials on first-aid and drug abuse prevention were produced and disseminated.

The number of people covered by the informational and educational activities during the reporting period amounted to 22,176 people. The results of the education tests show that 75 percent of the trained population have improved knowledge, attitudes and skills on first aid and public health and 39 percent of them have acquired basic skills in first aid. Among women of reproductive age, 81 percent of pregnant and breastfeeding women knew and applied in practice the basic rules of behaviour and nutrition during pregnancy and in early postnatal period. Also, 89 percent of pregnant women reached with the training regularly attended antenatal consultation services. About 96 percent of the reached schoolchildren were aware of and practiced basic hygiene rules.

The Red Crescent public campaigns arranged on national and international days, including the World First Aid Day, the International Red Cross Red Crescent Day, the International Children's Day, The World AIDS Day, the International Day of Persons with Disabilities etc. covered indirectly 19,316 people in rural areas.

In cooperation with the disaster management programme five first aid training centres in regional branches were established and equipped with desktop computers, TV sets, DVD players, mannequins, and disposable materials. In addition to strengthening the programming capacities, this capacity building initiative will help to improve the National Society's fundraising at the country level and will contribute to its sustainability.

As a follow-up of the introduction of the CBHFA *in action* approach in health programmes two health committees opened in Turkmenabad and Dashoguz.

Organizational development/Capacity-building

Programme component 1: National Society organizational development and capacity building (headquarters and branches)

Outcomes

- Red Crescent governance and management bodies at all levels established; the system of their interrelations enforced.

- National Society capacities increased through the introduction of human resources management system, improved finance management, planning, monitoring and evaluation system and the implementation of branch development projects.
- Volunteer capacity improved through relevant training and participation in core activities.

Achievements

Over the year the Turkmenistan Red Crescent Society held 20 working meetings and 1 workshop for its staff to explain the key points of the governance and management regulations and provisions that reached 203 people. A new version of the Red Crescent statutes was drafted this year and should be considered by the next National Society congress.

A number of regulations and provisions were developed concerning staff business trips, processing of applications and complaints from the population; job descriptions of district and city branch chairpersons and a draft provision on the National Society staff were also produced. In addition, more than 10 regulations in the area of human resources management were developed that define staff selection, employment, dismissal, adaptation etc.

Following the performance appraisal of the regional branch staff, the National Society held a two-day workshop for 22 branch chairpersons and organizational development focal points from the branches where the ratings were the lowest. Two experience exchange meetings for chairpersons and executive directors took place in Dashoguz and Balkan regional branches.

In September 2011, the IFRC facilitated a workshop on self-assessment for the Turkmenistan Red Crescent staff within the organizational capacity assessment and certification² process. The results of the self-assessment show that the following areas should be priority areas for development: internal and external communication; volunteering; staff professional education and development; and financial management. The National Society made a plan of action to address shortcomings in these areas.

In order to improve programme management the IFRC held two trainings – in programme/project planning and in monitoring and evaluation – that reached 37 headquarters and branch staff of the National Society. To improve working conditions and communications in the headquarters and branches the Red Crescent procured 4 desktop personal computers, 5 multimedia projectors, 1 portable computer, 6 modems and 1 web camera.

Programme component 2: National Society legal base development

Outcome

- Red Crescent Law developed and promoted for adoption.

Achievements

In 2011 the Turkmenistan National Society made changes to the draft law in accordance with the recommendations of the Joint ICRC/International Federation Commission for National Society Statutes. The draft had to be further discussed with the interagency commission that includes representatives of the parliament, ministries and public organizations before it can be submitted to the Cabinet.

In March 2011, the leadership of the Turkmenistan Red Crescent and IFRC representatives, including IFRC Vice President, met with members of the parliament and the government to promote the adoption of the Red Crescent law.

² OCAC process is based on the set of core capacities that are critical for strong National Societies. It is one of the key components of the IFRC framework and principles for building strong National Societies.

Principles and values

Programme component 1: Promotion of humanitarian principles and values

Outcome

- Fundamental principles and humanitarian values of the Movement promoted.

Achievements

In Turkmenistan more than 5,500 journalists, partners from state agencies, representatives from universities and general population attended 23 public events like round tables, the Red Crescent photo exhibitions and public actions at the headquarters and in branches. The participants were informed of the Movement's components, its values, and commitments. Moreover, in November the Turkmenistan Red Crescent Society presented its activities and promoted principles and values at a national educational conference organised by the Ministry of Education. The conference covered 30,000 people.

The Turkmenistan Red Crescent held 13 principles and values sessions within the thematic trainings, meetings and competitions of the TB, HIV prevention, youth and disaster management programmes.

Programme component 3: Anti-discrimination and violence prevention

Outcomes

- Ability of communities to combat discrimination, intolerance and violence and to promote respect for diversity enhanced.
- Understanding of the necessity to prevent and fight sexual and gender-based violence within communities increased.

Achievements

The Red Crescent activities were highlighted at country, regional and global levels through websites and IFRC publications. Actions on the World TB Day, the World Health Day and other public events were highlighted by local newspapers and web-site of the National Society of Turkmenistan. Totally, about 148 publications appeared in media sources. An annual report of the Turkmenistan Red Crescent was published and distributed among 24,000 people from partner organizations.

Sessions on gender equity were conducted by an information officer of the Turkmenistan Red Crescent for staff and volunteers, communities, at universities and secondary schools. Messages on gender-based violence and discrimination were spread as part of the National Society's promotion activities within all programmes.

Constraints or Challenges

The programme budget was 38 per cent covered. Some planned activities, like regular maintenance of the web-site, were not implemented because of that.

Working in partnership

At country level, the Turkmenistan National Society works in close cooperation with the governmental bodies and local authorities.

Data on TB and HIV was obtained from the health ministry; local authorities often facilitated the access to communities, and TB dispensaries provide the National Society with information about the target groups of the programme. The National Society is an active member of inter-agency meetings conducted in the country to discuss the development of the national programmes on TB and HIV.

The Red Crescent maintained relationships with international agencies like Project HOPE, USAID, UNAIDS, UNODC by sharing relevant information on TB and HIV issues. The OSCE supported the HIV prevention project in Dashoguz, Turkmenabat, Turkmenbashi and Mary cities on bilateral basis. The Turkmenistan Red Crescent Society also cooperates with UNDP as a sub-recipient of the grant from the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria for country-wide social support services targeting people with TB.

The ICRC is the major partner of the organizational development programme in Turkmenistan, namely it supported the National Society in the Red Crescent Law development and promotion. The British Red Cross supported the human resources management system development on a bilateral basis. The Danish Red Cross supported youth programming, also bilaterally.

There existed a bilateral partnership between the Turkmenistan Red Crescent Society and the Netherlands Red Cross in the area of capacity building for branches.

The Turkmenistan Red Crescent was also part of the project “Building sustainable community resilience through Disaster Risk Reduction in Central Asia” implemented by the consortium of the American, German and Netherlands Red Cross Societies, the Central Asian Red Crescent Societies and IFRC, which was funded by DIPECHO. Besides, with the American Red Cross, the Red Crescent run the urban earthquake preparedness initiative that focused on the capital city.

The key partners of the principles and values programme are the media, which play a great role in improving the image of the Red Crescent and changing behaviour towards vulnerable groups served by the National Society.

Contributing to longer-term impact

Monitoring of the programmes was carried out by the National Society through field visits, observations, interviews, meetings with the local authorities and community leaders, internal staff meetings with the branches staff and progress reports. The IFRC regional disaster management coordinator visited Ashgabat in March 2011, to monitor the programme and meet relevant government partners and a local NGO working with the National Society on implementation of the DM programme.

The establishment of the first aid centres and work through trained Red Crescent volunteers, who disseminate knowledge and skills through the community-based disaster preparedness and the community based health and first aid activities, helps mobilize communities and contributes to sustainability.

In the second half of the year the Turkmenistan National Society worked to address the recommendations of the HIV programme evaluation.³ For instance, during the visit to the Russian Red Cross in November 2011 the programme staff learnt about their approach to vulnerable groups. In addition, the programme addressed the recommendations related to Red Crescent work in schools. Two HIV programme staff also attended the training on integrated programming on prevention, care, treatment and support of populations at high risk of HIV and TB for service providers (visiting nurses, social and outreach workers) from the five Central Asian National Societies organized by the IFRC regional representation in December, 2011. Training guidelines for staff implementing such programmes will be further developed by the IFRC secretariat and disseminated among National Societies so that they can prepare their staff and use the methodology.

Promoting and respecting the fundamental principles and humanitarian values, including promotion of gender equity, are indispensable, since the Red Cross Red Crescent is to be perceived as an impartial, neutral and independent actor in order to facilitate the Red Cross Red Crescent to carry out its mandate. The National Society does not take sides with diverging population groups and follow the principle of diversity in the composition of their staff.

³ The evaluation of the programme peer training component and its compliance to new standards was done in May 2011 by an independent expert hired by the British RC.

The SPHERE standards and the Code of Conduct for Red Cross Red Crescent staff and volunteers in Emergency Relief guide the Red Crescent disaster response, and the fundamental principles and the value of respect for dignity and equality are at all times promoted in disaster management awareness materials, during training and work with the communities. In disaster response, the distribution of assistance is made on the basis of impartiality. Actions are solely guided by needs, proportional to the degree of suffering and prioritized on the basis of urgency and vulnerability.

The characteristics of a well-prepared National Society provide both a point of reference and a framework for National Society capacity building in disaster management. The criteria for the characteristics of a well-prepared National Society are broadly based on the Federation criteria for the “Characteristics of a Well-Functioning National Society”, a set of agreed standards that every National Society should strive to meet. The information gathered through a well-prepared National Society (WPNS) questionnaire enables the National Society to conduct internal self-assessment measuring performance and impact as well as improving processes to build on existing capacities.

The National Society of Turkmenistan has been involved in the WPNS self-assessment process since the first phase (2001). Over the reporting period the National Society carried out the third phase of the assessment. The data for the WPNS questionnaire was collected through an inclusive process that implied discussions in a focus group – a group of relevant disaster management paid staff and volunteers that undertook the completion of the questionnaire so as to increase the validity. The analysis of the filled WPNS questionnaire demonstrates that the Turkmenistan National Society improved its capacity by 2-4 points in each of the following parts (out of 7) of the questionnaire:

- Emergency preparedness, policy, plans and laws (including data on structure and organization; national coverage /historical data);
- Resource and response mobilization (including human resources and training, financial resources, material resources);
- CBDP, mitigation and disaster risk reduction;
- Advocacy.

Looking ahead

The National Society plans to continue the advocacy of DL and to approach the government in order to assess a national legislation’s compliance with the IFRC International Disaster Response Laws guidelines.

After the school mitigation projects on seismic strengthening implemented in 2011 for the first time a number of educational institutions became quite interested in exploring such approach to risk reduction. The National Society plans to develop similar projects in other earthquake prone regions of the country as well as in Ashgbat city. Training on earthquake preparedness for schoolchildren and teachers would then be followed by non-structural mitigation and development of school disaster response plans, all of which contributes to the disaster risk reduction as well as to fostering the culture of disasters related safety among the population.

In health and care the Turkmenistan Red Crescent will carry out an in-depth analysis of vulnerable groups within its HIV promotion programme. The survey will update the National Society of the needs, knowledge, attitude, behaviour and HIV, STI, TB risks perception in among SWs and IDUs, available services and gaps in programme activities. A voucher referral system for IDUs will also be introduced.

In 2012 promotion of the fundamental principles and humanitarian values will be mainstreamed in other National Society programmes.

How we work

All IFRC assistance seeks to adhere to the [Code of Conduct for the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and Non-Governmental Organizations \(NGO's\)](#) in Disaster Relief and the [Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Disaster Response \(Sphere\)](#) in delivering assistance to the most vulnerable.

The IFRC's vision is to inspire, encourage, facilitate and promote at all times all forms of humanitarian activities by National Societies, with a view to preventing and alleviating human suffering, and thereby contributing to the maintenance and promotion of human dignity and peace in the world.

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Saving lives, changing minds.



The IFRC's work is guided by Strategy 2020 which puts forward three strategic aims:

1. Save lives, protect livelihoods, and strengthen recovery from disaster and crises.
2. Enable healthy and safe living.
3. Promote social inclusion and a culture of nonviolence and peace.

Find out more on www.ifrc.org

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