

# OPERATIONS UPDATE



International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies  
Fédération Internationale des Sociétés de la Croix-Rouge et du Croissant-Rouge  
Federación Internacional de Sociedades de la Cruz Roja y de la Media Luna Roja  
الاتحاد الدولي لجمعيات الصليب الأحمر والهلال الأحمر

## **RUSSIA: HOSTAGE CRISIS IN BESLAN, NORTH OSSETIA**

21 March 2006

*The Federation's mission is to improve the lives of vulnerable people by mobilizing the power of humanity. It is the world's largest humanitarian organization and its millions of volunteers are active in over 181 countries.*

### **In Brief**

**Appeal No. 19/2004; Operations Update no. 6; Period covered: September 2005 – March 2006. Appeal coverage: [Please click here to go directly to the Contributions List.](#)**

#### **Appeal history:**

- Launched on 6 September 2004 for CHF 864,844 (USD 680,000 or EUR 563,000) for 12 months to assist 2,000 beneficiaries.
- Appeal budget revised to CHF 1,867,348 (USD 1,612,625 or EUR 1,234,490) to assist 5,000 beneficiaries until August 2006.
- Appeal budget revised to CHF 2,341,334 (USD 1,880,705 or EUR 1,526,575).
- Appeal budget revised to CHF 2,478,497 (USD 1,876,228 / EUR 1,583,704) to assist 5,000 beneficiaries for three years. The revised budget is attached to this report [<click here>](#)
- Disaster Relief Emergency Funds (DREF) allocated: CHF 50,000

**Outstanding needs:** According to the actual budget and funding, no additional funds are required for this Emergency Appeal.

#### **Related Emergency or Annual Appeals:**

**Russia: Hostage Crisis in Beslan, North Ossetia Emergency Appeal.** For details, please see the website at [http://www.ifrc.org/cgi/pdf\\_appeals.pl?04/1904.pdf](http://www.ifrc.org/cgi/pdf_appeals.pl?04/1904.pdf)

**Russia: Hostage Crisis in Beslan, North Ossetia Operations Update No.1** For details, please see the website [http://www.ifrc.org/cgi/pdf\\_appeals.pl?04/190401.pdf](http://www.ifrc.org/cgi/pdf_appeals.pl?04/190401.pdf)

**Russia: Hostage Crisis in Beslan, North Ossetia Operations Update No.2** For details, please see the website [http://www.ifrc.org/cgi/pdf\\_appeals.pl?04/190402.pdf](http://www.ifrc.org/cgi/pdf_appeals.pl?04/190402.pdf)

**Russia: Hostage Crisis in Beslan, North Ossetia Operations Update No.3 (Including revised budget of CHF 1,867,348).** For details, please see the website [http://www.ifrc.org/cgi/pdf\\_appeals.pl?04/190403.pdf](http://www.ifrc.org/cgi/pdf_appeals.pl?04/190403.pdf)

**Russia: Hostage Crisis in Beslan, North Ossetia Operations Update No.4 (Including revised budget of CHF 2,341,334).** For details, please see the website [http://www.ifrc.org/cgi/pdf\\_appeals.pl?04/190404.pdf](http://www.ifrc.org/cgi/pdf_appeals.pl?04/190404.pdf)

**Russia: Hostage Crisis in Beslan, North Ossetia Operations Update No.5.** For details, please see the website [http://www.ifrc.org/cgi/pdf\\_appeals.pl?04/190405.pdf](http://www.ifrc.org/cgi/pdf_appeals.pl?04/190405.pdf)

#### **Operational Summary:**

This update includes the revision of the appeal for Red Cross activities on provision of support to the community affected by the siege for the years of 2006-2007. The revision is based on needs assessments done through Russian Red Cross (RRC) activities and RRC/Federation monitoring trips to North Ossetia in 2005 and on provisions for the current programme exit strategy.

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*All International Federation assistance seeks to adhere to the [Code of Conduct](#) and is committed to the [Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Disaster Response](#) in delivering assistance to the most vulnerable.*

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

## Background

In September 2004, a three-day siege of school N 1 with over 1,000 hostages inside ended with violent clashes that killed 331 people including 318 hostages (186 children) and 13 officers, and left 783 injured, a tremendous loss for a small town of Beslan (North Ossetia) with a population of 32,000.

A year and a half after the tragedy, people in Beslan begin to consider restoring normality to their social life – a thing unspeakable in the first year of common grieving hardened by medical and legal problems, massive humanitarian distributions, travelling, and extensive psychological problems.

Experience and capacities of the state and supporting organizations were insufficient to provide timely solutions to complicated psychosocial problems after the armed crisis in the school. Most social programmes offered to Beslan have been either bank transfers or rehabilitation travelling. Together with clear benefits they carried some negative effects for the community. Traditional methods – increased numbers of medical personnel, psychologists and psychiatrists, material aid and travelling – were not always adequate to meet new and previously unknown problems. In January 2005, the Head of local administration appealed to stop financial donations as they led to dependency and unhealthy competition, leading to conflicts and abuse as the community split into beneficiaries and those left out.

A social survey conducted in 2005 by the North Ossetian Centre for Social Research showed that the community in Beslan is clearly divided into two groups – those who directly suffered from the tragedy and those who did not – with distinctive features of both, such as: different levels of social involvement, vision of the future and attitudes to health issues. The survey revealed a low respect for authorities, an underdeveloped economy and a high level of corruption. The affected population (1373 persons) has a twice higher level of concern for another conflict in the republic and a twice lower level of hope for economic stability. A high percentage of respondents from both groups have prevailing fears of terrorist attacks, health threats, and a general fear for the future. The report concludes that a majority of the population in Beslan characterizes the environment as “criminal, socially vulnerable, corrupted and politically unstable”. Apathy and lack of interest in life is three times higher among the affected population. Only 10% of all respondents revealed their active social position. 77.4% of the affected population are suffering from lack of sufficient information on the criminal investigation of the terrorist attack. The population continues to refuse psychological support with 38.5 % of the affected population not having applied to psychologists at all. Yet, 36 % of the affected persons plan to apply to psychologists. 1/3 of the affected people envisage financial problems in medical treatment, while 34 % of them can afford medical care without external support. The Red Cross was ranked highest in the opinion polls for third sector services.

Experts' predictions that the situation might worsen materialized in somatic diseases that followed traumatic psychological stress, particularly after the year of the community grieving was over. According to the latest statistics from the central hospital in Beslan, in 2005, the number of serious diseases among the Beslan population increased over the previous year as follows: by 17 % - blood vessels diseases, 23% - digestive system, 37% - bone and muscle system and 25% - malignant tumours.

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In 2004-2005 medical services were increased, but they were discredited among the affected population by rumours of unfair distribution of medicines, insufficient attention and even rudeness with patients. As a result many of them are reluctant to apply for professional medical or psychological aid. Russian Red Cross (RRC) personnel have witnessed cases when their beneficiaries refuse to go to a psychiatrist or a psychologist despite their grave emotional stress. Some children refer to their bad experience with psychologists during rehabilitation trips.

There are losses that cannot be restored and people are learning to live with new realities around them. Some women managed to give birth to new babies, increasing the childbirth rate in the region by 2% in 2005, yet the feelings of grief and guilt over the passed children and spouses stay strong. Some families are falling apart.

The needs of the affected population remain greater than the state can cover. Children with disabilities, their parents, people who need further medical treatment and rehabilitation, teachers who had been in the siege, and other people suffering from psychological trauma after the crisis are among the most vulnerable. Apart from formal rights for treatment and benefits, these people need an individual approach, human attitude and understanding due to the specific and complicated character of the needs.

Two new schools designed with admirable modern conveniences aim to restore interest in studies. State and other programmes on health and rehabilitation help heal physical wounds and psychological trauma. Some medical problems might be solved with a new rehabilitation centre due to be commissioned by the end of 2006. But in the meantime there are many cases when the former hostages and their family members are unhappy with rehabilitation services and have doubts that the injured people will stay equal members of the society. Twenty-six women, former hostages, that are unable to get pregnant again pin their only hopes for new babies to doctors in Moscow.



Grieving over the human losses, fear of another tragedy, unwillingness to accept reality, indifference of state bureaucrats, insufficient information from criminal investigation, social vulnerability and disintegration of the community are among the factors that Red Cross workers in Beslan list as hampering restoration of the normality of life in Beslan. They point to the psychological and medical problems of former hostages and the disintegration of the community as the main problems in 2006.

A return to normal activities remains vital for the affected population. For children, this means a return to school. In 2005, most of them did not attend school due to health reasons and extensive travelling. This year the situation is better, but a number of problems remain: often during lessons the teachers and pupils involuntary start recalling events during the siege; there

**As the one-year anniversary of the tragedy approached, the RRC visiting nurses were on daily duty at the former school and the memorial site for victims of the tragedy**

are cases when children show inappropriate reactions (fear, unreasonable aggression). Many teachers do not know what to do in such situations. Teachers and school administrations have appealed to the Red Cross for advice which gives a special importance to the RC work in schools in 2006. Information dissemination and counselling will be supported by a network of volunteers in first psychological aid.

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School N1 still stands in ruins despite the decision to demolish it. Arguments continue regarding the number of the new school. Some insist that it be N1 in memory of those who passed away; others believe that this number will be a disturbing reminder of the tragic events in the city.

Results of the criminal investigation of the September attack presented to the public last December contained no new information and lead to further tension in the community. The report gives scrupulous description of the terrorist attack and the names of organizers; however, there is no evidence as to who funded the operation or who is to blame for the tragic outcome of the hostage crisis – answers passionately sought by people in North Ossetia. After a scandal in the organization “Mothers of Beslan” in October last year, it disbanded and formed a new political group, “Voice of Beslan”, that seeks to get the truth about the roles of state authorities in the tragedy. The criminal investigation continues.

Lack of information remains a factor of social instability and disintegration in Beslan, hampering the process of social and psychological rehabilitation. In this environment, the RRC Centre can show the authorities, through various Red Cross publications, the importance of frequently and completely informing the public on all matters related to the tragedy.

### **Operational developments**

After restructuring at the North Ossetian Ministry of education in 2005, the Coordination commission on psychological support programmes in Beslan was eliminated and further coordination of projects operational in the city is to be handled independently on a bilateral basis.

Humanitarian projects, which originally numbered 40, were reduced to 16 operational ones in 2005. In 2006, ten projects continue to address psychological, second traumatization, preschool education, integration of disabled children and rehabilitation problems of the affected children and adults in Beslan. These projects are supported by United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF) and Charity Aid Foundation (CAF) – the main partners of RC in Beslan.

Following the State programme on rehabilitation, the Ossetian Ministry of Health sends people to hospitals both in Ossetia and in Moscow. Lists of patients are compiled in accordance with the findings of doctors from Moscow and St. Petersburg who arrived on September 20-23, 2005 for a check-up of former hostages. A group of French ear-specialists visited Beslan in November to test 100 people with ear injuries. They supplied 70 hearing devices. Several French families undertook to be patrons to several of the 25 children who lost both parents during the siege. 68 adults went for rehabilitation in Czech Republic in October last year. Some 40 senior students from school N1 received state grants for higher education in St Petersburg – this programme is planned for 10 years.

### **Red Cross and Red Crescent Action - Objectives, Progress, Impact**

In the period from September to December 2005, 32 RRC visiting nurses, social workers and psychologists have been providing social and psychological support to the affected families at their homes and encouraged them to join various activities in the RRC Rehabilitation Centre through family meetings, public events, sports, educational sessions at art studios, private talks and psychological counselling. Red Cross public events and public relations had a strong impact on the restoring of social ties and values in the community (see p.5).

Based on the current state of health of former hostages and their relatives in Beslan and taking into account the continuous need for psychosocial support both for individuals and in the community, the Federation and the Russian Red Cross decided to make a third revision of the appeal launched on September 6th 2004 and revised in November 2004 and May 2005. This revision, which increases the budget to CHF 2,478,497 (USD 1,876,228/EUR 1,583,704), is done to ensure that the intervention of the Red Cross relating to the Beslan crisis is consistent and efficient and combined with other RRC activities in the region, will lead to the reduced funding and gradual closure of the programme by December 2007.

The revised appeal will address

- Problems of the most vulnerable groups in Beslan with community-based psychosocial support,
- Disaster preparedness in North Caucasus, and
- RRC capacity building in North Ossetia.

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In autumn 2005, the Russian Red Cross launched two new programmes in Beslan:

- "Medical treatment and rehabilitation trips for former hostages", that will cover travel expenses of all people sent for treatment and rehabilitation through the state programmes.
- "Home education for 25 children with disabilities and integration of them into schools".

The RRC continues to provide financial support to people who arrived in Moscow or Rostov for medical treatment (20 people received USD700 each during the reporting period). In January, the RRC organized a rehabilitation trip to a Moscow sanatorium for former hostages with their relatives (54 people, including 29 children).

The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) implements a range of programmes in nearby Dagestan, Chechnya and Ingushetia and finds that there is a need for psychosocial support in many places of the region. In January, a joint ICRC/IFRC/RRC workshop in Nalchik brought together chair people and psychologists from 14 regions of South Federal Region to discuss strategic issues of psychological aid in emergencies and the development of a RRC Psychosocial Support network. Seven people from Beslan participated in the discussions. A RRC psychological coordinator to be appointed in 2006 will maintain the network and develop further the RRC psychosocial service.

### **Revised objectives and activities for 2006**

1. Address long term psychological needs of the affected population (as an auxiliary to existing interventions) through a community centre aimed to support rehabilitation of the affected population and through schools.
2. Provide psychosocial support for the selected beneficiaries at homes through a network of visiting nurses and psychologists based at the North Ossetia RRC branch.
3. Strengthen the capacity of the local Russian Red Cross branch to provide social, medical and psychological support to the affected population, and prevent secondary traumatization and "professional burn-out" among Russian Red Cross staff members and volunteers via professional support mechanisms and trainings.
4. Involve the affected population in wider communication; raise their self-esteem and social activities through the Russian Red Cross website, through dissemination of education and awareness materials, and through cooperation with mass media.
5. Build the Russian Red Cross response capacity in case of future hostage crises, aimed at supporting relatives and community members around a hostage crisis site.

**Target beneficiary group:** Children and adults belonging to the following groups: hostages, their family members and friends; teachers; staff and volunteers working to support the victims; general population affected by the hostage crisis.

**Beneficiaries:** 5,000

### **Objectives and Activities:**

**Objective 1:** Address long term psychological needs of the affected population (as an auxiliary to existing interventions) through a community centre aimed to support rehabilitation of the affected population and through schools.

Following the screening of 578 affected families, 227 people have been selected as the ones in need of permanent care and psychological support at homes. In October, the lists were approved by the Ministry of Health of North Ossetia. 211 people have signed agreements with the RRC for permanent care. 20 nurses visit their beneficiaries one or two times each week, providing psychological support and home care to those whose lives have been torn apart by the tragedy. The lists of visiting nurses service (VNS) beneficiaries will change as some will get out of their patronage while others, without obvious medical diagnosis but unable to cope with psychological disorders, will get additional care. The programme will aim to reduce this group through home care and through social involvement of affected people.

**Community centre of psychosocial rehabilitation** functions as a base for activities designed to assist the local population to cope with the psychological impact of the hostage crisis. The centre is supervised by the Russian Red Cross in cooperation with the International Federation. Activities are oriented to prevent social problems and diffuse the psychological tension in the region that has increased since the school siege.



**Teacher Marat Alikov, centre, instructs some of the 300 children who attended computer classes at the RRC rehabilitation Centre in 2005**

541 people attend art, computer or sports classes in the Centre based in the Beslan Palace of Culture. 27% of them are former hostages. More people are attracted by family meetings and public events organized in the Centre twice a month (some 1500 people during the reported period). Such a community-based approach proved to be more effective than the occasional assistance of external specialists. Social activities, training, information, additional education and sports have had a healthy psychological effect on individuals and the community as a whole. During the day, the centre is busy with people coming for either trainings or simply to talk out their problems to the Red Cross workers: a psychologist and a visiting nurse are on duty in the Centre daily. The Director, Chief Visiting Nurse and

Chief Psychologist are also available to the public. As an outside expert in Beslan remarked: *“The very policy of the Centre is psycho-therapeutic. That is revealed not only in its activities, but also in the atmosphere that it creates in the city”*.

The second half of 2005 saw the **visiting nurses** become more confident, experienced and skilful in their therapeutic work with their patients. They clarified lines of monitoring and reporting on people’s health and psychological situation in families. The visiting nurses were trained during 2005, and with experience they gained confidence that they carry to their patients today, thus removing the threat of their professional “burnout”. The remark of a participant of a focus group in November highlights the value of the VN: *“From the Red Cross workers we receive psychological and such human support, that one would not expect to find in any other public service,”*

**Six studios** at the centre (English language club, folk dance, sports, fitness, computer club, digital photo studio) increased the number of attendees to 541 (including 146 former hostages - 27%). The fitness instructor attended a three day course in yoga and added a new group to her classes in November.

**Four psychologists** provide professional supervision and advice for visiting nurses; conduct public activities that reduce psychological stress, promote the ability to communicate, and increase social competence, interaction and acceptance of others; provide individual psychological counselling in the Centre; and watch that secondary traumatization does not affect the RC staff.

Thirty-nine children aged 6-12 attend five groups of psychological rehabilitation at the **children’s play room** for a 5-week course with a psychologist. The work in the room and in studios is organized to permit rotation, allowing more people to be involved.

**Social events** organized by the Red Cross for the community last autumn included a children’s competition and travelling exhibition of drawings (by 200 children), a Festival for 400 teenagers who participated in Red Cross camps at home and abroad, an Art gallery in the new school (1200 visitors), and two New Year parties for 100 children. All staff of the centre was actively involved in preparation of these events. These ways of social involvement had a notable indirect psychosocial effect in the community. Three of the events are worth special mention:

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**Competition of drawings** started with a local contest “*My native town*” before the Anniversary of the tragedy in Beslan. In September, after joined efforts with partners, it grew into an international travelling exhibition, “*The world through the eyes of children*”, that visited seven cities in Russia and two in Italy. In every city the drawings were presented to psychologists at local universities and other visitors who were asked to write short messages to the young authors. The finale of the exhibition, apart from rewards for the winners, will see an album with words of support for every young artist.



**Norwegian students and their friends from Beslan are greeting the participants of the Red Cross Festival in Beslan in November**

**Red Cross Festival** on November 26-27 accumulated the experience of Red Cross camps organized in 2004-2005 both in Ossetia (two summer camps) and abroad (Czech Republic, Estonia, Norway, Italy). The Norwegian delegation, organized with support of the Norwegian Red Cross (NRC), participated in the festival giving it international appeal. Estonian and Czech delegations could not come on short notice, but information they sent was used for exhibitions in the hall. For two and a half days some 400 teenagers were involved in Red Cross activities as well as entertained by a famous cartoon maker and a local pop musician. “*This was a clever introduction of elements of cultural*

*life into the traumatized society*”, marked the pop star performing at the festival. “*The Red Cross festival helped me too to overcome a psychological barrier to come to Beslan with my music, I was not sure whether it would be accepted here at all after the tragedy,*” he added.

In order to form an **Art Gallery**, a collection of paintings by prominent Russian artists was donated to Beslan by the Russian region of Ivanovo. There is no art museum in Beslan; therefore, to prevent the canvases from being buried in bureaucratic corridors and to guarantee the use of the paintings for rehabilitation purposes in the city, the RRC decided to put the exposition in the new school involving local volunteers in the arrangements. A guard was hired and trained. For three months, she conducted tours for students from all schools in Beslan. Some 2,000 people attended the gallery in December-March. The gallery promoted communication between the new school and other schools in the city. Lectures on art, as well as on the Red Cross history and International Humanitarian Law, conducted by an ICRC officer from Vladikavkaz, were appreciated by both students and teachers. According to the agreement with Ivanovo, on March 10 the Gallery will be handed over to the city administration.

Direct contact of RC workers with former hostages and their relatives has become habitual: it does not cause stress, fear or tears on either side. However the challenges remain – to involve people into community life, restore and revive their social activity, and help former hostages get rid feelings and attitudes of dependency. Social and community events organized by the RRC Centre in 2005 played an important role in restoring normal relations in the local society.

In October, talks were conducted with teachers of the former school, N1, who complained of insufficient attention to them in terms of psychological support. Apart from rehabilitation sessions they also need advice, understanding and support. In November-December, the Head Psychologist from the RRC Centre made an assessment of school needs in terms of psychosocial support that the Red Cross could provide. The needs will be addressed in 2006 through meetings, lectures, events and information materials (publications) for schools, as well as through attracting teachers and social workers to volunteering in the RRC first psychological aid.

**Objective 2:** Provide psychosocial support for the selected beneficiaries at homes through a network of visiting nurses and psychologists based at the North Ossetia RRC branch.

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30 visiting nurses are working within the programme, including 20 in Beslan. The ten nurses working in other districts are involved in the programme through trainings and experience exchange.

The Head nurse that was supposed to move to work in Vladikavkaz in December will stay at the Beslan centre as a skilful leader and an important liaison with the local medical authorities.

Each nurse provides bi-weekly psychological and social services to 10-14 people. The system of reporting and monitoring that was developed at the stage of screening the affected families (VN Journal with modules of vulnerability) was enriched with VN Diaries for each beneficiary. 211 of 227 people have signed agreements with the RRC for permanent home care in 2006. But these lists will vary according to the needs and positive changes in behaviour.

**Objective 3:** Strengthen the capacity of the local Russian Red Cross branch to provide social, medical and psychological support to the affected population, and prevent secondary traumatization and professional “burnout” among Russian Red Cross staff members and volunteers via professional support mechanisms and trainings.

Experience in individual work on psychosocial support, public events and communication with authorities enhances the experience of the Russian Red Cross in the region as an organization and raises its image.

Training sessions that take place every 2-3 months help to review the development of Red Cross support work in Beslan and identify current challenges as well as topics for further training. They also help to analyze case studies and prevent professional burn-out.

In 2006, the Federation intends to continue the established direct methods of work with the traumatized population through the RRC centre in Beslan (home visits, individual counseling, trainings, and family meetings). However, as the programme proved last year, there are other ways to attract the population to social life. By helping the people of Beslan to live through the stage of deep grieving, the RRC increased its role in the community, gained experience, and grew its authority among partners. The potential will be further increased if a **RRC Youth Leader** appears in Beslan (in the meantime all staff members, with the exception of the Head visiting nurse, are on temporary job contracts). Through work with youth and volunteers, this person will add value to the implementation of psychosocial objectives and enlarge the scope of the programme. Public events will help increase social capacities in the community such as personal responsibility, willingness to help others, confidence, and independence. International communication through Red Cross/Red Crescent channels could be an essential part of this work. In January 2006, the RRC branch in North Ossetia advertised a vacancy for a youth leader in Beslan. This person will coordinate the three RRC programmes and accumulate their experience in his/her work with volunteers to promote it in future when the programme/s come/s to an end.

**Trainings in Psychosocial Support** for Russian Red Cross staff in September-December 2005 and in January 2006 included sessions for all staff as well as individual training for psychologists and social pedagogues. The trainings covered such topics as specific aspects of work with parents in grief and children; methods of group work in the community; home care (second part); aggression. The sessions included practical trainings of skills and individual consultations.

In August-September, the Federation will start Training of Trainers (ToT) sessions for Red Cross volunteers in first psychological aid and psychosocial support.

**Objective 4:** Involve the affected population in wider communication; raise their self-esteem and social activities through the Russian Red Cross website, through dissemination of education and awareness materials, and through cooperation with mass media.

**The RRC website** ([www.redcross.ru](http://www.redcross.ru)) provided information and fulfilled some rehabilitation objectives through the promotion of news from Beslan, its people and their achievements. A photo gallery was added to the news page. A trip to Beslan inspired the website manager to broaden communication with the RC workers and people in Beslan. In May, a large scale presentation of the website and its resources will be held in the RRC Centre in Beslan.

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Plans to have a version of the website in the English language remain for 2006. Possibilities to make it interactive are being sought as well.

**Information and training materials on psychosocial support** did not reach printers in 2005. In addition to the Federation manual on Psychological Support, British Red Cross booklet on how to cope with crisis was translated into Russian. A draft version of a leaflet for parents on how to help children to overcome psychological crisis was compiled in Russian. Plans for more systematic publications (including a digest of materials from trainings and the Federation Psychological Support manual) have been finalized as of February 2006.

**Objective 5:** Build a RRC hostage crisis response capacity in Moscow and the North Caucasus to support relatives and community members around a hostage crisis site.

On December 20-22, following the Memorandum of Understanding, the RRC, the ICRC, and the Federation organized a strategic workshop on developing principles and approaches to RRC psychological support in disasters. An attempt was made to define a role of a Psychosocial Support network in South federal zone. Chair people and psychologists from 14 republics and regions participated in the workshop, including seven representatives from the RRC Centre in Beslan. The ICRC plans to support the RRC Psychosocial Support Programme Coordinator in 2006. With 18 working psychologists (migration and Beslan programmes) in South federal zone, the Coordinator could develop a Psychosocial Support network operational in disasters. Possibilities of a mobile Psychosocial Support team were discussed.

A **mobile emergency response centre** was set up at the RRC office in Krasnodar. Its role is to coordinate and provide first aid, tea and coffee, drinking water, plastic rain coats or blankets depending on the weather, biscuits, telephone links with loved ones, and psychological support. These services will be provided from a Red Cross marquee tent that would be erected immediately in the event of a crisis.

RRC branches in the North Caucasus and Moscow are trained and equipped to provide such support during hostage crises and will have this role negotiated with the Ministry of Emergencies. The RRC Hostage Crisis response capacity could be used to assist victims of natural disasters also and this potential will be considered during training.

## **Cooperation and Coordination**

A number of United Nations (UN) agencies and international organizations are operational in the North Caucasus, providing social and psychological support to the population exhausted by wars and forced migration. Coordination of these activities is done through the UN Organization for Coordination of Humanitarian Aid (OCHA) based in Nazran (Ingushetia). Programme updates are sent to OCHA regularly. OCHA reports on security and operational developments in the region are filed among programme documents. In November, the Programme Coordinator visited the OCHA coordination meeting in Moscow.

All activities are done in cooperation with the ICRC, which has extensive experience and good knowledge of the region. The ICRC officers in Moscow and in Vladikavkaz are kept updated on the developments of the Federation/RRC programme in Beslan.

A Norwegian Red Cross (NRC) representative visited Beslan in October from the delegation of Turnsberg – the city developing twinning ties with Beslan. Representatives of the NRC and the RRC branch in North Ossetia exchanged experience and talked about possible cooperation in the field of youth movement and volunteering in future. A team of Norwegian students and the NRC participated in the RRC Festival in Beslan last November. The Norwegian side is planning another exchange of students in 2006.

A fourfold agreement was signed between the RRC, the Federation, Moscow Psychological University and Adventist Development and Relief Agency International (ADRA) to organize a travelling exhibition of children's drawings, "*The world through the eyes of children*", in Russia and in Italy.

In October, an agreement on cooperation was signed between the RRC, the Federation, and Moscow Psychological University. So far this cooperation has been in the form of trainers from the University being invited for Red Cross workshops in Beslan and occasional consultations.

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An agreement will soon be signed with programmes supported by UNICEF in Beslan concerning RC cooperation in work with schools and the organization of summer camps for children in North Ossetia.

The RRC branch from Zhukovsky (Moscow region), famous for its young rescuers teams, will help to train such teams in the RRC summer camp for children from Beslan in summer.

### **Information and Representation**

Although media interest in Beslan events gradually fades after the mourning events last September, public events organized by the RRC in Beslan and beyond have managed to attract local, regional, and some national media attention to the Red Cross work in addressing the ongoing problems.

In September, the programme was presented at a two-day forum on psychological support, which was held in Budapest and organized by the Network for Psychological Support for European Red Cross/Red Crescent National Societies.

In December, the programme was shared with RRC psychologists and chair people from RRC branches in South Federal zone, including all republics of the North Caucasus.

### **Conclusions**

The results of the RRC/International Federation programme in Beslan have been effective and well received by the population. The Red Cross Centre in Beslan presents a new model of a complex community centre for psychosocial support.

Its complex approach to psychosocial rehabilitation (home visits, social activities, training and information) helps to solve psychological problems in Beslan on both the family and community level. With its equipment and trained staff, the Red Cross Centre has the potential for effective rehabilitation of the entire community for several years. The Centre can also help to further the humanitarian ideals of the Red Cross in the community and strengthen its position in the republic.

The local authorities, doctors, psychologists and people emphasize the centre's important features:

- Community-based,
- Long-term in character,
- No cost for the local population,
- New occupations for the people of Beslan,
- Not limited to former hostages.

A major advantage of the RRC Centre remains the fact that it is "visitor friendly" - open for all and free from any form of bureaucracy.

In 2006, psychological work will continue to be in demand due to the somatic and other consequences of stress disorders caused by the crisis, physical disabilities, insufficient communication, and disrupted family and community ties. It will take time to heal wounds that might not always appear on the surface—problems stored up for the future are hard to predict. The affected population continues to endure serious emotional and physical injuries and their need for further care and attention will continue through 2006 and partially into 2007. It takes time for an individual to come to terms with pain, and it will take more time to help a fiercely traditional Ossetian community in this crisis.

The Red Cross needs to accumulate and retain information about this experience to be able to share it when necessary in the future. This includes properly analysing the experience of running a large scale complex long-term community-based psychological support operation. An assessment team comprised of specialists from the Federation Resource Centre, a partner National Society, and Russian Red Cross leaders with a similar project management experience will lead this effort in May 2006.

## **Russia: Hostage Crisis in Beslan, North Ossetia; Appeal no. 19/2004; Operations Update no. 6**

In 2006, most objectives of the programme remain the same with greater concentration on the selected families and schools and wider involvement of the community. By the end of 2006, sports and educational studios will be given over to the city administration for their further use for target beneficiary groups. In 2007, the RRC Centre in Beslan will continue to be operational through the Visiting Nurses Service and psychologists. Depending on needs, the play room might also be preserved at the centre. Along with the visiting nurses and psychologists, the Director and/or RRC Youth Leader will work through 2007, and the two other RRC programmes currently operational in Beslan (home education and medical treatment) will continue. Through the existing programmes, the RRC Youth Leader and the Director of the Centre will accumulate a lot of experience, develop the volunteer network, and possibly start fundraising activities.

Judging by the response of the community to the current Red Cross activities, the potential in Beslan and in the republic is high; however, the population is not used to a wide scale public work and due to local traditions there are not many skilful leaders. The Chairlady of the republican branch is open for cooperation and supports initiative. Support from the RRC headquarters and partner national societies in terms of training, technical specialists and volunteer exchanges will be vital during and after the programme implementation.

***The revised budget is attached below. Please [click here to return to the title page and contact information](#)***

**BUDGET SUMMARY**

APPEAL No. 19/2004

**Russian Federation: Hostage crisis in Beslan, North Ossetia**

<b>TYPE</b>	<b>PREVIOUS BUDGET</b>	<b>REVISED BUDGET</b>
<b>RELIEF NEEDS</b>	IN CHF	
Medical & first aid	68,000	
Teaching materials	8,000	19,741
Other (sanatorium)	390,000	177,749
Other (school-based PSP)		109,500
Other (community centre)		46,942
Other (Support to Vladikavkaz branch of RRC)		34,980
Tents		3,818
Other (misc relief supplies)		80,116
<b>TOTAL RELIEF NEEDS</b>	<b>466,000</b>	<b>472,846</b>
<b><u>CAPITAL EQUIPMENT</u></b>		
Computers & telecom. equipment	6,000	33,816
Vehicle		41,495
<b><u>PROGRAMME SUPPORT</u></b>		
Programme support (6.5% of total)	56,215	161,104
<b><u>TRANSPORT STORAGE &amp; VEHICLE COSTS</u></b>		
Transport and storage	7,600	
Vehicle costs	3,600	11,307
<b><u>PERSONNEL</u></b>		
Expatriate staff	41,100	173,150
National staff	147,040	993,117
Workshops and training	12,560	94,247
<b><u>ADMINISTRATIVE &amp; GENERAL SERVICES</u></b>		
Travel & related expenses	8,100	72,877
Information expenses	10,000	88,665
Administrative & general expenses	106,629	335,872
<b>TOTAL OPERATIONAL NEEDS</b>	<b>398,844</b>	<b>2,005,651</b>
<b>TOTAL APPEAL CASH, KIND, SERVICES</b>	<b>864,844</b>	<b>2,478,497</b>
<b>LESS AVAILABLE RESOURCES (-)</b>		<b>2,488,130</b>
<b>NET REQUEST</b>		<b>-9,633</b>