

# PROGRAMME UPDATE



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

30 June 2003

## AZERBAIJAN

**Appeal No. 01.78/2003**

**Appeal Target: CHF 1,896,238 (USD 1,301,071 or EUR 1,288,397)**

**Programme Update No.1;**

**Period covered: January – May 2003**

*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 180 countries.*

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### ***In Brief***

**Appeal coverage:** 64.2 %; (As of date published – see weblink below for current contributions )

[http://www.ifrc.org/cgi/pdf\\_appeals.pl?annual03/1-2-3%20-%20ap017803.pdf](http://www.ifrc.org/cgi/pdf_appeals.pl?annual03/1-2-3%20-%20ap017803.pdf)

**Outstanding needs:** CHF 678,250 (USD 500,000/ EUR 437,000)

**Programme Summary:** The International Federation continues supporting its colleagues at the Red Crescent Society of Azerbaijan to develop structures and programmes to improve the lives of the most vulnerable. It concentrates on technical advice, effective co-ordination and authoritative international representation. Efforts were made to finalise the legal position of the National Society with the Government, expand youth activities and strengthen health prevention measures. Other core capacity building areas include: financial reporting and budgetary control systems; increasing the National Society membership level and maximising volunteer potential; expanding the financial resource base; and establishing good governance and management practices. Initial donor response to the appeal has been good enabling the smooth implementation of the planned activities. Further support, however, is needed, to ensure their continuation.

### **Operational developments**

Despite the growth in the socio-economic sector during the past few years, in a recent World Bank survey Azerbaijan is classified among the poorly developed countries in the world. 61.5 per cent of households are considered poor and 20.4 per cent very poor. The continued territorial dispute with Armenia over Nagorno Karabakh remains unresolved. The large number of internally displaced persons (IDPs) has been the most visible sign of the unsettled conflict. Almost 10 years after the ceasefire in 1994, more than 570,000 persons displaced from Nagorno-Karabakh and surrounding districts continue to live in very precarious conditions, compared to the rest of the population (source: UNDP).

Since 2001, the government of Azerbaijan has initiated a more comprehensive response to the needs of this population, by devoting more of its oil revenues to resettlement programmes and social aid. In 2001 and again in 2002, the president of Azerbaijan adopted several decrees ordering the State Oil Fund to provide funds to improve shelter and social-economic conditions for the IDPs through the State Committee for Refugees and IDPs. An annual average of USD 40 million has been allocated to the assistance and search for durable solutions for IDPs. Within the framework of this initiative, more than 3,000 displaced families, including 16,000 IDPs supported by the Federation, currently living in camps, are planned to be relocated to new villages.



With the support of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and World Bank, the government of Azerbaijan also released a National Poverty Reduction Strategy, which targets IDPs as one vulnerable group. The strategy includes an activity plan for 2003-2005 which foresees the design of a new repatriation plan, the rehabilitation of the so-called 'liberated areas', housing for more than 5,000 families, upgrading infrastructure in IDP camps, addressing employment problems of IDPs, education and health. The World Bank, the IMF and the Asian Development Bank have committed funds for this strategy.

However, in a context of declining support from the international community, the extent of the needs on the ground overwhelms the objectives of the government programmes. As of early 2003, 135,000 internally displaced persons live in tented camps, makeshift huts, and unfinished buildings and railway wagons. The resettlement process is progressing very slowly. Return programmes remain limited too, such as the one implemented by the Federation for a total of 300 families in two villages in the Fizuli district.

Vulnerable groups remain marginalised. The plight of the Federation's 'traditional' groups of beneficiaries - elderly living alone, handicapped, patients with chronic diseases, thousands of internally displaced persons - has not improved.

Heavy floods this year have put additional burden on vulnerable communities. Persistent rains, exacerbated by heavy snowfalls, have caused the Kura and Araz rivers to burst the banks and flood eleven districts in south eastern Azerbaijan, triggering landslides in certain regions. At least two people died in the floods and more than 6,000 families have been affected. According to a preliminary assessment, some 2,000 houses have been damaged and more than 3,000 hectares of agricultural land have been submerged, destroying crops. The economic impact of the floods is devastating for families living along the river banks. Many households have had their vegetable gardens, the sole source of supplementary income, washed away. According to the local authorities, estimated losses for the country from the flooding have reached USD 30 million. The worst affected districts are Salyan, Nefchala, Sabirabad, Zardab, Ali Bayramly and Kurdamir. The government appealed for international assistance to help confront the humanitarian challenges caused by the disaster.

National AIDS prevention centre released a report, according to which a total of 537 HIV-infected persons were registered in Azerbaijan by May 2003. Given the lack of countrywide surveillance, this figure is probably a gross underestimate.

With full consideration to the humanitarian needs in the country, the main strategy of the Red Crescent Society of Azerbaijan is to alleviate the suffering of vulnerable people by :

- strengthening local disaster management mechanisms;
- developing community-based health and care programmes with a focus on preventive measures and increasing awareness of HIV/AIDS and TB and
- promoting the Red Cross Red Crescent Fundamental Principles and humanitarian values.

The Federation assists its colleagues at the local Red Cross to strengthen their operational capacities to meet the needs of vulnerable communities building on the achievements of previous years. It strives to hand over responsibility for all activities to the Azerbaijan Red Crescent, phasing out the Federation's presence in the country.

## Health and care

**Goal: Health vulnerability in Azerbaijan is reduced through health education and advocacy.**

**Objective: Community-based health promotion in the areas of nutrition and good sanitation practices, HIV/AIDS education and first aid is developed and linked more closely to preventive activities through the disaster preparedness programme.**

**Expected result 1: Creative, community-based first aid and health promotion activities are maintained by the Red Crescent Society of Azerbaijan in all regions covered by the regional centres, through training of 90 volunteers in health promotion, distribution of training material and first aid kits, and seminars on focal issues such as breast feeding, and prevention of diarrhoea and malaria.**

### Progress/Achievements:

- The Azerbaijan Red Crescent trained **43** volunteers as health promoters and first aid instructors. These volunteers have then been actively involved in disseminating knowledge about reproductive health, family planning, nutrition, personal hygiene, infectious and preventable diseases, importance of immunization and basic First Aid skills among IDPs and vulnerable communities. A total of **11,811** persons - IDPs living in the southern camps and settlements in Darnagul, Surakhani, Narimanov, Yasamal and Binegedi - were reached during the reported period.
- The Red Crescent instructors from Baku, Mingechaur, Lenkoran, Sumgait and Sabirabad regional centers trained another **500** people - IDPs, Red Crescent staff and volunteers, children from secondary schools and orphanages, as well as staff of private agencies – on First Aid.
- In order to raise awareness of TB, the Red Crescent organized a seminar for IDPs in the southern camps and Darnagul settlement on 24 March, world TB day. Over **900** persons attended the seminar.
- The Red Crescent is strengthening cooperation with a National Blood Transfusion Centre. A memorandum of understanding between these two institutions has been signed. According to this memorandum, the national society will be assisting the Centre to recruit blood donors across the country through awareness campaigns and active community mobilisation. Representatives of the Azerbaijan Red Crescent, Federation Baku Delegation and National Blood Transfusion Center visited the Norwegian Red Cross in March to learn from the experience of their Norwegian colleagues in the blood donor recruitment.



*Red Crescent staff donates blood to children ill with thalassemia*

- The Azerbaijan Red Crescent received a European Certificate from the First Aid Centre in Paris.

### Impact

- The Azerbaijan Red Crescent has a health promoter and a first aid instructor in every regional centre allowing it to reach more vulnerable people across the country. Through health education, vulnerable communities are more conscious about health measures and have increased capacity to deal with day-to-day incidents as well as more serious challenges.
- The First Aid Certificate received from the First Aid centre in Paris will provide the Azerbaijan Red Crescent more opportunities to conduct first aid trainings for different international companies and organizations operating in Azerbaijan.
- Cooperation with the National Blood Transfusion Centre will help increase the number of volunteer blood donors and strengthen the auxiliary role of the Red Crescent to the Government in reducing health vulnerabilities in the country.

**Constraints:** Heavy floods in March and later in May have put additional strain on the limited resources of the National Society and did not allow some planned activities to be carried out. Personnel changes in the management of the health department have further delayed the operation. The project, however, is back on track now gaining its momentum.

**Expected result 2. Ten Red Crescent youth volunteers from each regional centre are able to conduct HIV/AIDS peer education among teenagers, adults, and affected communities. Their participation in harm reduction activities and at the HIV-positive centres takes place a minimum of four times per year.**

### Progress/Achievements:

- **35** volunteers from seven regional centers were trained as trainers on HIV/AIDS in a four-day workshop organized by the Azerbaijan Red Crescent. This brings the total number of Red Crescent volunteer trained on HIV/AIDS to **79**. Participants received information kits and HIV/AIDS certificates.
- Red Crescent trainers disseminated information on HIV/AIDS, and its ways of transmission and prevention to **1,713** youth in seven regional centers. Additionally, two volunteers from the Surakhani branch have organized seminars on HIV/AIDS on weekly basis at the Sexual Transmission Infections Treatment Clinic in the Ramani district of Baku city. A total of **395** persons attended these seminars. The participants were provided with educational materials.



*Changing behaviour: Red Crescent volunteers launch anti-tobacco campaign*

**Impact:** The number of trained volunteers on HIV/AIDS has increased. The aim is to ensure nationwide coverage. Those volunteers are encouraged to share knowledge on HIV/AIDS among their peers thus contributing to global efforts to prevent the spread of this killer disease.

**Constraints:** no major constraints have been encountered so far. The project is progressing according to plan.

## **Disaster Management**

**Goal:** The vulnerability of the population to disasters and their impact is reduced.

**Objective:** The Red Crescent Society of Azerbaijan has a well-functioning and effective disaster preparedness and disaster response programme to ensure its capacity to alleviate the consequences of disasters on the affected population.

**Expected result 1:** The disaster management policy and plan of Red Crescent Society of Azerbaijan, based on a regularly updated Vulnerability and Capacity Assessment (VCA), are developed and disseminated to all stakeholders. The status of the national society and its auxiliary role to the government in disaster preparedness and response is clarified.

**Progress/Achievements:**

- The Azerbaijan Red Crescent has finalised its disaster management policy through extensive internal consultations.
- In 2001, the Red Crescent carried out a full-scale analysis of vulnerability in the country. More than a year later, taking into consideration evolving vulnerabilities and capacities, the VCA has been updated and will be published soon. 300 copies in Azeri and 100 in English will be printed.

**Impact:** A shared disaster management policy will help the Red Crescent respond to future emergencies in an effective manner. The VCA will help the National Society better understand the humanitarian challenges confronting the country and tailor its programmes more effectively to provide relevant services to vulnerable communities.

**Constraints:** Due to personnel changes in the Disaster Management department, the finalization of the VCA has been delayed until the end of June. Based on the disaster management policy, the Red Crescent will start working on the plan.

**Expected result 2:** Disaster management volunteers and first aid groups are identified with the assistance of regional centres and branches; training programmes in disaster needs, assessment and tracing, as well as basic intervention are developed.

**Progress/Achievements:**

- The Red Crescent mobile volunteer teams in each of the seven regional centres received training on advanced needs assessment.
- 19 Red Crescent staff members together with leaders of the Red Crescent mobile volunteer teams attended a workshop on disaster preparedness and response organised by the Iranian Red Crescent in May 2003.

**Impact:** Training such as this improves disaster management capacities of the Red Crescent to respond rapidly to emergency needs. The importance of adequate preparedness was demonstrated once again. Red Crescent volunteer teams were first on the scene to help during the devastating floods. They rushed in relief materials – food, blankets, as well as kitchen and hygiene articles. Red Crescent volunteers helped reinforce dikes with sandbags, provided first aid to the affected population and distributed emergency relief items to 18 families, evacuated from Subh Island and temporarily settled in public buildings.

**Constraints:** Training of Red Crescent volunteers has not followed the initially agreed plan mainly due to the floods operation, which diverted Red Crescent resources. While the focus was the emergency relief efforts, the operation provided valuable learning and growth opportunities for the Red Crescent Society in Azerbaijan. Capacities of people at the national society have strengthened as management was exposed to new operational methods, requiring rapid decision-making and intense multi-actor coordination. Staff and volunteers benefited from on-the-job learning. Lessons learned will be analyzed and integrated into ongoing Red Crescent programmes.

**Expected result 3: Emergency stocks for a total of 200 families, with adequate warehouse facilities, are available in all seven regional centres. Communication means, including telecommunication equipment, maintenance and training, are provided in the seven regional centres and headquarters.**

**Progress/Achievements:**

- The Red Crescent has now warehouse facilities available in three regions - Sabirabad, Ganja and Mingechaur - as well as in Baku.
- The Government allocated radio frequencies for Azerbaijan Red Crescent VHF and HF radios. Preparations for installation are ongoing.

**Impact:** Improved communication will allow the Red Crescent to transmit information on disasters or emergencies to the headquarters in a timely manner ensuring rapid response to future emergency needs of affected communities.

**Constraints:** Due to lack of funds, the Azerbaijan Red Crescent did not ensure emergency stocks and adequate warehouse facilities in each of the seven regions as included in the Federation's annual appeal. Additional support is required to strengthen the disaster management capacities of the national society throughout the country.

**Expected result 4: The capacity of the national society to improve self-reliance of displaced persons, thus reducing their dependency on outside assistance, is increased via rehabilitation of housing in Alkhanli village and agricultural support through technical advice and initial inputs to 140 repatriated IDP families.**

**Progress/Achievements:** As of 30 May 2003, the Federation repaired or constructed 96 of the target 143 houses. Preparations have started for the next round of the project, from 9 June to 7 July 2003. A further 14 houses will be repaired or constructed in the village. To date, four rounds have already been finalised, while another four have still to be implemented.

Besides construction and reconstruction, the Federation supports self-reliance among the returnees to reduce the need for outside assistance by strengthening their social structures, developing a sense of community spirit among the target beneficiaries, involving them in agricultural projects and providing technical advice and initial inputs. Communities have been encouraged to establish interest committees such as agricultural committees, women committees, Aksakal (elderly) committees, and youth and children committees that coordinate all the community-based activities in the village.



*Shelter: a house in Alkhanli village is constructed for an IDP family.*

The villagers were assisted to prepare 50 ha of land for spring sowing. They sprayed agro-chemicals such as pesticides, nitrogen, dimetilamin, karate and phosphate against weeds and cutworms. They sowed seeds including lucerne, sunflower, onion, maize and beetroot. The Federation provided supplies. Soon the families are expecting their winter harvest, which were sown last year. The villagers are advised to save proceeds from the harvest to enable them to buy inputs for the next season.

The village committees were trained by International Center for Soil Fertility and Agricultural Development on how to: apply correctly fertilizer; control weeds growth and crop rotation; utilise and maintain agricultural machinery. Several discussions were held with the villagers on community mobilisation and leadership, needs identification and prioritisation.

The CHF, an international agency working on community development initiatives in the Fizuli district, assisted the agricultural committees in Alkhanli to organise themselves into a village association, a legal entity, which will provide a basis for collective advocacy and action. It will help villagers lobby issues to benefit the community as a whole and protect their interests with the Government more effectively. The agricultural committees have managed to secure a further 1 ha of land from local authorities for the construction of a warehouse in the village. Also the electrical water pumps were repaired to ensure proper irrigation. Meetings with Executive Committees and local authorities resulted in establishing an additional artesian well in the village that will improve access to potable water, which is still insufficient.



*Agricultural support: Winter wheat fields in Alkhanli are feeding people in need.*

**Impact:** Construction work in Alkhanli is proceeding according to plan helping more families. The community mobilisation efforts facilitate the formation of effective communities. Initiatives undertaken under the agricultural component of the operation encourage village residents to be more self-reliant in an environment of dwindling international support.

**Constraints:** The hand-over of the houses to families was slightly delayed due to poor weather but returnees moved into their houses in February and June. Recent assessment identified two main problems facing families in Alkhanli. These are lack of sufficient potable water and poor condition of irrigation facilities. Supported by the Federation, the agricultural committees attempted to solve these problems with the help of local authorities.

**Expected result 5: A total of 60 displaced people and 30 refugees receive skills training and psycho-social support, through training in computer and English skills. Organisation of a two-week summer camp for 200 IDP and refugee children and support to vulnerable people living in remote areas of Azerbaijan is provided through implementation of mobile technical teams activities in Quba, Ismali and Lenkoran.**

**Progress/Achievements:**

- 30 IDPs attended English language and computer training courses at the headquarters of the Azerbaijan Red Crescent. Another group, which will have graduated in June, received training about the History of the Red Cross/Red Crescent Movement and Fundamental Principles carried out by the Information and Dissemination Department of the national society.

- The Azerbaijan Red Crescent has identified 200 children who will participate in the summer camp in July and August: 100 of them are IDPs living in the southern camps and another 100 are Chechen refugees. The camp will have an agenda of games, sport as well as Red Crescent activities.
- The Azerbaijan Red Crescent established mobile technical teams in Guba, Ismayilli and Lenkoran to assist lone elderly and other vulnerable groups in remote and isolated areas. Damage to homes and the infrastructure has affected living conditions. Minor construction and repairs were carried out.



*Helping hand: IDP women in the southern camps receive skills training.*

Each team has two constructors, an accountant and a driver. The teams were provided with training on first aid and safety during construction. The team in Geranboy, which had been formed last year, repaired 118 houses of vulnerable people in Khanlar, Geranboy and Samukh of Ganja region. Beneficiaries were selected either by Red Crescent branches in consultation with community representatives, or beneficiaries - either themselves or through representatives - who approached the local Red Crescent for assistance. The team mainly repaired and installed electrical systems, roofs and windows, as well as chopping and stacking firewood.

**Impact:** The training courses directly help individual beneficiary IDPs to become less dependent on humanitarian assistance at the outset. The skills development component creates motivation within the IDP communities to take a more proactive role in the development of individuals' futures. The summer camp will bring fun into lives of children. Red Crescent volunteers will organize various games to spread the message of the power of humanity, respect for human being, tolerance and coexistence.

**Constraints:** The integration of IDPs into local communities should be promoted as a return to their original homes remains unlikely. Talks between Armenia and Azerbaijan under OSCE sponsorship have not produced any significant results, despite numerous meetings between the two presidents since 1999. The Red Crescent project facilitating reintegration efforts has not received full funding. Due to lack of funds, the mobile teams in Quba, Ismaili and Lenkoran could not carry out repair works in target villages and are on stand-by.

## Organisational Development

**Goal:** The capacities of the Red Crescent Society of Azerbaijan are strengthened to enable it to provide needed services to the most vulnerable population.

**Objective:** The Red Crescent Society of Azerbaijan has improved its functioning with sufficient and relevant operational and management capacities to develop and implement programmes on the central and branch levels.

**Expected result 1:** The national society has strong management skills, as well as the ability to identify strategic priorities, and support and motivate its own human resources. The knowledge and understanding of

**the Federation's means and tools to support the national society's development and capacity building is increased, as well as readiness to make use of these services.**

**Progress/Achievements:**

- The Federation provided a three-day training on Project Planning Process (PPP) for the national society management.
- The Red Crescent staff at the headquarters attended a nine-month English language courses.

**Impact:** The national society has enhanced understanding of the project planning process, which will ultimately lead to programmes that are more responsive to local vulnerability and focused on the areas where they can have the greatest impact.

**Constraints:** The Red Crescent of Azerbaijan has faced a major change in its human resources in the last few years. This has enhanced the need for the increased support of the Federation to the development of the national society. More efforts are required to increase the knowledge and understanding of the Federation's means and tools to support the national society's capacity building, as well as readiness to make use of these services.

**Expected result 2. The development of the headquarters of the Red Crescent Society of Azerbaijan, seven regional centres and 83 local branches is strengthened in the fields of programme management, financial management, human and material resources, through quarterly training activities and the development of specific plans and roles.**

**Progress/Achievements:** The Azerbaijan Red Crescent continues to focus on organisational development of its branches. The leadership of the Red Crescent has visited regions and branches to better understand capacities and needs so that headquarters can better support them. The plan is to visit all 83-branch committees.

In June, the Azerbaijan Red Crescent will launch a pilot branch development project in Sumgait and Mingeçaur regions with an increased focus on community participation. Three branch committees in each of these regions have been selected. The aim is to strengthen the overall structures and compatibility of the Azerbaijan Red Crescent to reduce the vulnerability of local communities to health and social factors. This will be achieved through tailored training for Red Crescent staff and volunteers and community based health and social initiatives.

**Impact:** It is difficult to measure the impact at this stage as the project is in initial phase.

**Constraints:** The leadership of the Azerbaijan Red Crescent has committed itself to a strong change process. According to the national society's strategic work plan, organisational development and capacity building are among the priority programmes. Significant progress has been made. However, further work is necessary to increase the Red Crescent institutional capacity to deliver well-planned, managed, monitored and evaluated programmes.

**Expected result 3: The ability to raise funds from different sources for national society programmes is improved by establishing a strict fundraising policy and plan, and ensuring that staff members are trained accordingly.**

**Progress/Achievements:** The Red Crescent has established a working group to explore the possibilities of the national society to broaden sources of funding and generate financial resources. The working group consisting of representative from various departments of the national society has started the development of a fundraising policy.

Three meetings with the staff and volunteers have been held to brainstorm for ideas. Experience already gained and lessons learned from past income generating projects, including the agricultural project, will be used as a base.

In the meantime, the Azerbaijan Red Crescent placed three new donation boxes at the exhibition of *Iteca Caspian LTD Company*. With the collected money the Red Crescent volunteers bought presents for 93 orphans in Mardakan. The gifts were handed over on International Children Day.

**Impact:** The shared policy on fundraising will help the national society improve its ability to raise funds from diversified sources for its programmes.

**Constraints:** The national society still largely depends on external resources. It has to yet develop self-sustainability. Fundraising is identified by the national society in its strategic work plan as one of the priority areas for improvement and development.

**Expected result 4: The legal base of the national society is consolidated through the adoption of the Red Cross law by 2004 and formalization of relations with governmental offices and regulatory bodies.**

**Progress/Achievements:** The Azerbaijan Red Crescent revised its statutes last year to ensure division between Governance and Management and articulate clearly its mission and mandate. The statutes have been reviewed in conformity with the Federation's global Guidance for National Society Statutes and have followed an internal, participatory process, helped by the Federation's and ICRC's technical and legal assistance. The new statutes were adopted by the national society at the 20<sup>th</sup> extraordinary General assembly in March 2003.

To consolidate the legal framework of the National Society, the Azerbaijan Red Crescent, with the Federation's support and in coordination with the ICRC, has continued to advocate with the Government on the adoption of a new national law on the Red Cross in accordance with the new statutes of the national society. The draft of the Red Cross law was submitted to the government for comment but still needs additional work and adoption.

**Impact:** The revision of the Statutes was a significant achievement of the internal change management process initiated by the National Society, which aims to ultimately deliver clear, unified and measurable outcomes in the overall management and programme capacity building within the Azerbaijan Red Crescent. The Red Cross Law will help the National Society achieve a clearer status in the country.

**Constraints:** The forthcoming presidential elections, due to take place in October, have become the central topic in Azerbaijan. This might hinder the adoption of the Red Cross law. It is unlikely that any progress will be made in this regard before the elections.

**Expected result 5: The number of volunteers of the national society taking an active part in service programmes is increased. A management system is developed, a volunteer board and policy of national society is set up, and specific training models for volunteers in core activities are developed.**

**Progress/Achievements:** Two youth delegates from the Norwegian Red Cross, who are currently in Azerbaijan on a bilateral exchange project, held a seminar for Red Crescent volunteers on how to work with orphans in Mardakan settlement.

Volunteers have been actively participating in the Red Crescent operations distributing gifts to disabled children and orphans, and assisting the national society in its efforts to help flood-affected communities.

The major achievement was the establishment of a youth and volunteers board at the national level. The creation of such a board had been discussed at the General Assembly in March 2003 and was included in the new statutes of the national society. The board has an elected chairperson with two deputies. It will act as a coordinating body on youth and volunteers related issues. The board will ensure volunteers are represented at the governance and management of the national society and actively participate in the decision-making process. One of the main tasks of the board is to help the society attract, effectively manage and retain volunteers across the country. The plans envisage the formation of a youth and volunteer board in each regional centre of the Azerbaijan Red Crescent.



*Norwegian youth delegate with children in Shagan orphanage*

The first meeting of the board members took place in Mingechaur. At this meeting, Red Crescent volunteers discussed the emerging youth policy and emblem. Such meetings will be held on a regular basis in different regions on a rotation basis.

The Azerbaijan Red Crescent regional centre in Baku has established good contact with their colleagues in the Nedre Eker branch of the Norwegian Red Cross. Through this cooperation, the Azerbaijan Red Crescent aims to share knowledge, experience and best practices on the work with volunteers and youth.

The head of the Azerbaijan Red Crescent youth and volunteers department together with a Norwegian counterpart visited the Iranian Red Crescent to learn from their experience of youth work.

A youth bulletin has been printed and distributed to Red Crescent volunteers and youth across the country.

**Impact:** The National Society has largely stepped up its work with volunteers and youth. The youth and volunteer board will be a forum for volunteers to discuss, share ideas and participate in the decision-making process of the national society.

**Constraints:** Volunteers are motivated and eager to contribute. What is needed is to support the National Society capacity so that it can effectively harness the inspiration that exists among individuals. It is an important and exciting challenge. Specific training models for volunteers in core activities have yet to be developed.

**Expected result 6. Increased capacity of the national society to improve self-reliance among the returnees by encouraging community mobilisation and community development, thus reducing their dependency on outside assistance.**

**Progress/Achievements:** As of January 2003, all the community development initiatives aimed at strengthening the self-support mechanisms and social structures among IDPs, previously implemented by the Federation, have been handed over to the Sabirabad regional centre of the national society. Activities in the Southern Camps consist of assistance to IDP women, children and lone elderly.

The women committees were trained on how to increase their self-sustainability. In May, they discussed their achievements during the last two years and held elections among the displaced women of three camps. Interest of women in the committees' work has considerably increased. 77 women wanted to become new members of the committees and 400 women cast their voters. A total of 39 new members were elected. IDP women committees were encouraged to carry out needs assessment in the camps and distribute 287 baby-sets and 312 parcels of second hand clothes among the most vulnerable IDP families .



*Training of IDP women committees*

The Red Crescent also continues to provide activities for IDP children in all seven camps, involving them in out-of-school activities in four main circles: drama, fine art, folklore and sport. The aim is to keep the children physically and socially healthy. Red Crescent staff and volunteers organized different competitions such as football, boxing and chess tournaments. 20,448 issues of 'Shakar Villasi' – a children's newspaper - were distributed to IDP children in 18 schools. The newspaper includes stories and poems written by children and is a good tool to encourage them. Distribution will continue until the end of the year.

The Red Crescent also continues training of young people in the camps on various skills, such as sewing, knitting, hairdressing, shoe repair and mechanics. Currently, a total of 122 young people attend different courses run by 11 instructors, who work on voluntary basis in the camps.

The national society local branches in Sabirabad, Agdjabedi, Ali-Bayramli and Fizuli have been providing regular food assistance – hot meals twice a week - to 100 lone elderly. They have recruited and trained volunteers to raise funds and collect food from private donors to ensure continuation and self-sustainability of the project.

**Impact:** Community development initiatives effectively implemented by the Azerbaijan Red Crescent contribute to reducing the dependency of IDPs on outside assistance. The target communities become more self-reliant. Women's committees play an instrumental role in promotion of health, hygiene and sanitation in the camps.

**Constraints:** Strengthening of the capacity building measures undertaken in the camps should be continued. The national society is exploring new ways to raise funds to continue their community development initiatives for this vulnerable group.

## **Humanitarian Values**

**Goal: Behaviour in the community is influenced and discrimination is reduced. A culture of non-violence and non-discrimination is promoted.**

**Objective: Through advocacy, the Azerbaijan Red Crescent promotes the Movement's Fundamental Principles and humanitarian values and at the same time, promotes the culture of non-violence and non-discrimination as committed to in the Berlin Charter.**

**Expected result 1: The national society has a well planned and pro-active communication strategy. Provision of computer equipment to the seven regional centres, internal communication and information techniques is improved.**

**Progress/Achievements:**

- The Red Crescent branches in Lenkoran and Mingechaur were provided with internet/e-mail communication systems. The plan envisages the provision of internet communication systems to all regional centres. This will be a priority in the second half of the year.

**Impact:** Thanks to the improved communication systems, the branches could rapidly send information to the headquarters on the extent of damage caused by the floods. This information then formed the basis for the effective disaster response of the Azerbaijan Red Crescent.

**Constraints:** The national society has yet to develop its communication strategy. The strategy will serve as a basis for providing clarity and direction for Red Crescent communications activities at national and regional levels of the Society. It will ensure consistency in decision making throughout the national society as well as defining the boundaries for the conduct of its staff.

**Expected result 2: Higher awareness among the population of Azerbaijan of the humanitarian values and the Fundamental Principles was achieved through nationwide campaigns in media and through distribution of materials and education on recognition and respect for the Red Cross and Red Crescent emblem, as well as campaigns against discrimination, violence and stigmatization.**

**Progress/Achievements:** The Azerbaijan Red Crescent has been disseminating humanitarian values and fundamental principles across the country by distributing awareness materials - notebooks, posters, brochures and calendars - through branches and at various training sessions/workshops.

The Azerbaijan Red Crescent marked World Red Cross and Red Crescent Day with a number of activities in May. Using the *You cannot get AIDS by....* stamp designs as training materials, a four-day peer education initiative for 35 young volunteers was carried out. The aim of the training was to improve HIV/AIDS awareness to assist young people in taking sound decisions and helping to prevent transmission by encouraging healthy living. During one of the training days the volunteers concentrated on designing art-work to represent their feelings on HIV/AIDS.

The video *AIDS. Take care!* was screened in several restaurants throughout the day and volunteers distributed leaflets about HIV/AIDS. Visitors had a chance to get acquainted with the history of the Movement, Azerbaijan Red Crescent, its humanitarian activities and also to gain the knowledge about HIV/AIDS and its prevention.

Promotion of humanitarian values was an integral part of a nationwide campaign on voluntary blood donation launched by the Azerbaijan Red Crescent in May. More than 70 people took part and 45 of them became donors for children suffering with thalassemia. Red Crescent volunteers also organised a campaign against tobacco, in cooperation with one of the leading national newspapers, in which the Fundamental Principles and humanitarian values were key core components.



*Getting involved at the community level: a youth and volunteers board meeting*

The Azerbaijan Red Crescent organised a drawing competition on *'help the one who's next to you'*. 300 school children from five regions took part in it. The best drawings were exhibited at the Red Crescent headquarters in Baku on 8 May. Winners were presented with diplomas and presents.

In February-April, the Red Crescent trained 12 volunteers from Mingechaur, Ganja, Sumgayit, Sabirabad, Lenkoran and Nakhchivan regions on basic communication and information systems.

The national society has a network of volunteers across the country organising seminars and public awareness campaigns on humanitarian values in their regions. In June, a second round of training will be organised for these volunteers utilising the Russian version of the CD-rom *'From Principles to Action'*.

Many articles were published in local newspapers on the ongoing work of the Azerbaijan Red Crescent raising awareness of the Red Crescent, its mandate and principles. The leadership of the national society has given few live interviews to local TV channels. A Red Crescent film on earthquake and HIV/AIDS response was broadcast too.

**Impact:** Visibility of the National Society has significantly increased through media coverage of Red Crescent events and activities. As a result, beneficiaries and the public have a better understanding of the Azerbaijan Red Crescent operations, its mission and objectives.

**Constraints:** More needs to be done to spread the message of the power of humanity in order to bring about a change in the behaviour of people, increase tolerance and mutual understanding. The National Society recognises the need to have a more focused approach to this work and to profile and project these issues in more depth and more widely. It will continue to build on its dissemination and information capacity and develop promotional initiatives aimed at building a culture of non-violence in the resolution of community differences.

**Expected result 3: Existing tools, such as youth guidelines in the Russian version - the CD *'From Principles to Action'*, and the *'Seven steps for seven principles'* manual - were shared at the headquarters, seven regional centres and 83 local branches.**

**Progress/Achievements:** The CD *'From Principles to Action'* is one of the main tools used by the Red Crescent to disseminate the knowledge about the Red Cross Red Crescent Movement, its principles and mandate to staff and volunteers.

**Impact:** More people within the Red Crescent know about Red Cross Red Crescent Movement and have better understanding of Humanitarian Values.

**Constrains:** Basic information on the Fundamental Principles and humanitarian values is now included in all training, but this will need to be developed.

## **Federation Coordination**

**Goal: The Azerbaijan Red Crescent has become a dynamic and well-functioning national society through the assistance of the Federation.**

**Objective: Through the coordinating role of the Federation, the Azerbaijan Red Crescent has established a strong relationship with all stakeholders, which enables it to make the best use of available resources.**

**Expected result 1: Bilateral and multilateral programmes/projects were coordinated to ensure that the priority programmes of the Azerbaijan Red Crescent were supported and maximum impact was achieved in capacity building and through its assistance to the most vulnerable.**

**Progress/Achievements:** The Federation has been supporting the Azerbaijan Red Crescent to develop strategic partnerships with country-based international agencies/organizations. For example, with the Federation's technical assistance, the Azerbaijan Red Crescent has developed a project on community based first aid, which was submitted for funding to an oil company based in Azerbaijan.

Another good illustration of effective partnership is the rapid response of the Red Crescent to devastating floods in south eastern regions of Azerbaijan. Following the needs assessment, the Azerbaijan Red Crescent supported by the Federation prepared a request for emergency assistance and presented to local donors and counterparts of the Red Crescent. Local partners such as USAID and national societies in the region - Turkish Red Crescent and Iranian Red Crescent - have responded to the request and contributions are being made.



*Changing behaviour: Red Crescent volunteers burn cigarettes as an example of healthier living.*

The USAID has allocated USD 25,000 to provide affected families with shovels, rubber boots, blankets/bed sheets, and hygiene sets.

The Turkish Red Crescent has provided CHF 10,000 (approximately USD 6,000) and the Iranian Red Crescent is assisting with procuring relief items, including 200 tents, 1,000 blankets, 500 water containers, 1,000 pieces of plastic sheeting, 1,000 toilets, and 500 maukets for the most affected families.

The Red Crescent continues its successful cooperation with Statoil, European Commission Exceptional Assistance Programme (EXAP) and Exxon, who provide financial support to help thousands of IDPs in the southern camps survive before they could return home. Their contribution has been instrumental to facilitate reintegration of IDPs from the village of Alkhanli in Fizuli district by assisting them in house reconstruction or rehabilitation with cooperation and input of the homeowners.

**Impact:** Strategic partnerships between the Azerbaijan Red Crescent and country-based international organisations/agencies will help the Society strengthen its position as a key humanitarian player in the country.

**Constraints:** The Azerbaijan Red Crescent has to be more proactive in developing effective networking. The Federation will continue to strengthen coordination with the UN and NGOs as well as various international organisations, who seek to optimise their support to vulnerable people.

**Expected result 2: The cooperation agreement strategy (CAS) is finalised, adopted and being implemented by the end of 2003, contributing to strong working relationships between the Azerbaijan Red Crescent and stakeholders inside and outside of the country.**

**Progress/Achievements:** no progress has been made during the reported period.

**Impact:** CAS will be a key tool in the Federation's efforts to coordinate the programming of various partners. It will help the National Society articulate in what areas it requires support and how its action will fit into a broader and coordinated humanitarian effort to assist vulnerable communities in Azerbaijan

**Constraints:** The CAS process will be launched next year establishing partnership between the Azerbaijan Red Crescent, other components of the Movement and external humanitarian actors.



*Building from the ground: Red Crescent volunteers strengthen dams in floods affected villages*

## International Representation

**Goal: Recognition for the image, accountability and ability of the Federation and the Azerbaijan Red Crescent in their efforts to reduce vulnerability by mobilizing the power of humanity.**

**Objective: To continue to advocate the Federation's Strategy 2010 and policies as well as the priorities of the Azerbaijan Red Crescent within Azerbaijan and the region.**

**Expected result 1. National society and Federation staff contribute to the overall goal in international as well as national forums by promoting the seven Fundamental Principles, the Federation's Strategy 2010 and the strategy and programmes of the national society.**

**Progress/Achievements:** The Azerbaijan Red Crescent/Federation regularly attend coordination meetings with key humanitarian actors in the country promoting Federation policies, Strategy 2010 and the Fundamental Principles.

**Impact:** The Federation's role in Azerbaijan as an effective coordinator of programme in the core areas is maximised.

**Constraints:** The Azerbaijan Red Crescent strives to enhance cooperation with other National Societies in the region. Mutual capacity building, knowledge sharing and best practice experience helps the Azerbaijan Red Crescent strengthen its professionalism resulting in better services to target beneficiaries. The prevailing political situation, however, and unresolved conflict between Armenia and Azerbaijan, makes the task difficult.

**Expected result 2. The national society has increased its presence and voice in the national as well as regional fora and coordinates with the Federation its work vis-à-vis the government and donor organizations to mobilize resources to implement its priority programmes.**

**Progress/Achievements:** The Azerbaijan Red Crescent has been advocating with the government as well as other humanitarian actors on the needs of the flood-affected population. Advocacy in favour of people affected by HIV/AIDS, as well as the need to address intolerance in the community, have been important tasks of the Society's efforts.

**Impact:** The Azerbaijan Red Crescent, a representative Azeri organisation, speaking on behalf of people in need is a powerful voice as the Red Crescent advocates on key issues.

**Constraints:** The national society with Federation assistance needs to build its capacity to represent the voice of vulnerable people at various local, regional and international forums.

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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 (SPHERE Project) in delivering assistance to the most vulnerable.*

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