

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

AZERBAIJAN

3 November 2003

Appeal No. 01.78/2003

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

Programme Update No. 2;

Period covered: June -September 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.

For more information: www.ifrc.org

In Brief

Appeal coverage: For a live update of contributions, please click on the web link below:

http://www.ifrc.org/cgi/pdf_appeals.pl?annual03/1-2-3%20-%20ap017803.pdf

Programme Summary: The Federation, through its country delegation in Baku and a regional delegation in Ankara, continues supporting the Red Crescent in Azerbaijan to improve the lives of vulnerable people. Most activities progress as planned. The appeal coverage has been good although new contributions arrived late. At the beginning of the year, most programmes were implemented with the funds carried over from 2002. Main donors are the Norwegian government through the Norwegian Red Cross, Swedish Red Cross and the Federation's Capacity Building Fund. The Netherlands Red Cross supports the Red Cross branch development project.

During the reported period, the Red Crescent started volunteer blood recruitment. National and regional youth volunteer boards continue efforts to strengthen their coordination mechanisms. A working group explores ways to diversify the organization's financial base. The presidium announced clearer division between governance and management reflected in the new statutes of the Red Crescent. This, it is hoped, will lead to timely resolution of daily management issues to provide effective services to beneficiaries. A decree signed recently by the Cabinet of Ministers shows their greater attention and appreciation of the Red Crescent and its work, as well as, willingness of the Government to support the only indigenous, volunteer, community based and countrywide organization in Azerbaijan. Additional contributions, arrived in August 2003, enabled the Red Cross to start its mobile technical team project, which had been delayed for months due to lack of funds.

Recent heavy floods affected some activities, particularly under the health and disaster management programmes. To ensure successful implementation of the projects, the Red Crescent adjusted slightly its plan of action. Originally planned awareness campaigns under the disaster management programme will be carried out in 2004. Because of late arrival of contributions, it is expected, that 20 to 25% of the funds received in response to the 2003 appeal will be carried over to continue projects in 2004. The funds will be transferred with donors' approval.

Operational developments

Violent clashes were reported on the streets of Baku in the aftermaths of Azerbaijan's presidential elections in October. At least two people were killed and several hundred injured during the mass protests in the capital. International observers report the poll fell short of international standards.

Azerbaijan's economy continued to grow, owing to external investment in the energy sector. The GDP growth was recorded at 10.1% during the first eight months of the year. The revenue increased to 102% (a 35% increase from the last year). An agriculture and industrial output also improved by 3-5% compared to the last year's indicators¹.

The Government, with the United Nation Development Programme's support, has undertaken to revise its strategy to reduce unemployment. It also initiated a pension reform to benefit 100,000 pensioners (as an initial step) in the north-eastern regions of Azerbaijan that received the least assistance over the years. Statistically, there are 745,301 pensioners in Azerbaijan.

Improving living condition of thousands of internally displaced people (IDPs) from Nagorno-Karabakh and surrounding districts remains a priority too. In August 2003, an IDP camp in Belasuvar was closed and 3,558 families were moved to more durable accommodations. In addition to new houses, these people were provided with agricultural land and livestock.

In response to heavy floods in south eastern Azerbaijan, which was reported in programme update no 1, the Red Crescent dispatched assessment teams and developed an emergency response plan to help 500 homeless families in Neftchala, Sabirabad and Salyan who found shelter with families and friends, or were temporarily accommodated in public buildings, local hospitals and schools. The Red Crescent presented its plan to local donors and counterparts and requested emergency assistance. Partner national societies, such as the Turkish Red Crescent and Iranian Red Crescent, responded. The United States Agency for International Development (USAID) granted additional USD 25,000 to provide affected families with shovels, rubber boots, blankets, bed sheets and hygiene sets. Total assistance provided through the Red Crescent was an estimated USD 68,374. For more information on the Red Crescent floods operation please see Azerbaijan: Floods Information Bulletin No 2 (please click here: http://www.ifrc.org/cgi/pdf_appeals.pl?rpts03/AZFL2.pdf)

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:

- 46 First Aid instructors educated 5,138 IDPs living in Sabirabad and Saatli camps, as well as hostels in Baku region, on family planning, healthy nutrition, personal hygiene and basic First Aid. Another 447 people, Red Crescent's staff in regional centres and secondary school pupils, received training in First Aid.

¹ Source: State Statistics Committee, September 2003.



Advocacy through media: Red Crescent First Aid coordinator tells a journalist from a local newspaper about the Azerbaijan Red Crescent's efforts to improve the population's First Aid skills

- With Medicine sans Frontier (Belgium) financial support, 20 groups, including 20 Red Crescent volunteers and 20 sprayers from the Sabirabad Hygiene and Epidemiology Centre, sprayed anti-malaria chemicals in 14 villages and three IDP camps in Sabirabad, the areas affected by recent floods. In addition, 22,000 leaflets and 2,000 posters on malaria and intestinal disease prevention were distributed to the targeted communities.
- Representatives of the Norwegian Red Cross and the Price Waterhouse visited Azerbaijan to share experience and knowledge on blood donors recruitment with their colleagues at the National Society and the National Blood Transfusion Centre. Following their visit, the

Azerbaijan Red Crescent revised its plan of action for the remainder of 2003. Originally it was planned that volunteers would carry out three to four campaigns a month. Later, however, it was found more appropriate to reduce their number to two to achieve better results.

- The Azerbaijan Red Crescent's health, disaster management, First Aid and youth/volunteer departments conducted a joint awareness campaign under the slogan 'unity is the power' at the Zagulba beach in July 2003. 12 volunteers demonstrated their First Aid skills, while another 200 distributed leaflets on non-remunerated blood donation, HIV/AIDS and how to become a Red Crescent volunteer.
- In August, five volunteers distributed additional 200 leaflets on non-remunerated blood donation to pedestrians at the fountain square in the centre of Baku. This was a pilot action that demonstrated people are willing to learn more and become volunteer blood donors.

Impact:

- IDPs, living in the southern camps and hostels in Baku, improved their knowledge on preventable diseases and first aid. Beneficiaries can better protect themselves now reducing their vulnerability to ill health.
- The anti-malaria spraying averted the outbreak of epidemics in the target areas after the devastating floods.
- During the campaign at the Zagulba beach, the Red Crescent recruited 35 new volunteers and one blood donor.

Constraints: As mentioned above, IDPs from the Belasovar camps, including the Red Crescent's 16 health promoters, were moved to new settlements. The health promotion work has, therefore, been on hold. The Red Crescent regrouped, however, its health promoters to continue the work in the new settlements.

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: Education remains vital element in the fight against HIV/AIDS. The Red Crescent continues to promote awareness of the disease among the population:

- two Red Crescent volunteers from Surakhani conducted a seminar on HIV/AIDS and family planning for 254 sex workers, patients of the skin-venereal hospital.
- Another 35 peer educators discussed HIV/AIDS with 1,308 young people in the seven regions.



Bridging the gap: Red Crescent volunteers teach local communities basic First Aid skills

100 children from families affected by armed conflicts participated in a one-day HIV/AIDS peer education session organised by the Red Crescent at the summer camp in Pirshagi.

In September 2003, HIV/AIDS programme coordinator and head of the youth/volunteers department participated in an annual meeting of the European Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies Network on HIV/AIDS (ERNA) in Jurmala, Latvia.

During the meeting, the European National Societies shared experience and discussed how to contribute to the global fight against HIV/AIDS and tuberculosis.

Impact:

- 254 patients of the republican skin-venereal hospital increased the knowledge of HIV/AIDS and reproductive health.
- 100 teenagers from seven regions, including refugees, know how to protect themselves and others from HIV/AIDS.
- The ERNA meeting enabled the Azerbaijan Red Crescent to strengthen cooperation with other national societies in Europe to fight more effectively this global disease.

Constraints: Funding for the project arrived in late summer only, which has delayed the implementation. Consequently, only 14 % of the original budget has been spent by the time of this report. Some of the planned activities will be carried out during last three months of this year, while others will continue in 2004.

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: In August, the Red Crescent published an updated version of its vulnerability and capacity assessment (VCA)² and policy on disaster management - 150 copies in Azeri and 50 in English. Distributions to stakeholders will be done during forthcoming training sessions in October -November 2003.

² The first VCA was completed in July 2001.

Impact: A shared VCA and a disaster management policy will help the Azerbaijan Red Crescent and other stakeholders understand threats and hazards the communities, including IDPs and refugees, face today in Azerbaijan. It will enable the national society to prioritize areas in its disaster preparedness plan.

Constraints: 200 instead of initially planned 400 copies of the manual on VCA were printed because of financial constraints. Funding to print remaining 200 copies is being sought.

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:

In August 2003, 70 Red Crescent staff and volunteers conducted a simulation exercise on the beach in Nabran, notorious for water accidents. In addition, volunteers distributed to the public 2,155 brochures and leaflets on non-remunerated blood donation, HIV/AIDS and the Movement's Fundamental Principles.



Effective disaster preparedness: Red Crescent volunteers participate in anti-malaria spraying to avert the outbreak of epidemics in flooded areas

A team leader of the Red Crescent's disaster response mobile volunteer team in Mingechaur conducted a seminar on disaster preparedness for 15 volunteers in the region. Participants received information on the history of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement too. Volunteers committed to establish a disaster preparedness club in 18 schools in Mingechaur.

The Red Crescent celebrated international First Aid day in September. 300 volunteers and staff in Baku and Sumgait participated in the celebrations. First Aid instructors demonstrated their First Aid skills. 3,000 leaflets were distributed to the public. The ICRC donated t-shirts and caps for Red Crescent volunteers.

In June-August 2003, the Red Crescent trained 83 volunteers and seven regional centre coordinators on tracing during emergency situations. The Red Crescent has a tracing network now across the country. Efforts are made to improve cooperation with local media to provide tracing services more effectively.

Impact: The population has increased awareness of the Red Crescent and its work. Increased participation of volunteers will strengthen the Red Crescent's tracing services.

Constraints: Disaster Preparedness training and exercises have been delayed because of involvement of the Red Crescent in the response to the recent floods in southern Azerbaijan. Some activities have been rescheduled: seminars on VCA and trainings on disaster preparedness for mobile volunteer teams will be conducted in October-December 2003, while planned awareness campaigns have been postponed until 2004. The appeal received only 50 % of the amount requested to support the simulation exercises of mobile volunteer teams. The exercises are planned to be continued in 2004 and have been included in the appeal 2004-2005.

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:

- Local authorities have allocated a warehouse of 100m² in Lenkoran. Minor repairs are needed. Work has already started.
- 11 people from the Red Crescent were trained in radio communication during disasters.
- Radio communication between the headquarters and Sabirabad region, as well as, the warehouse in Baku, have been set up and tested. In addition, three vehicles have been equipped with VHS and HF radios.

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: The Red Crescent continues to make efforts to secure communication towers in rural areas from the Government. The Ministry of Communication offered 50 per cent reduction, but the price still remains high. Negotiations continue.

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 September 2003, the Federation repaired or constructed 140 houses. Preparations have started for the next round of the project, from 29 September to 29 October 2003. Savings, made on the utilization of construction materials, enables the Federation to work on 13 houses instead of initially planned five within the eighth, the final round. Therefore, by the end of the project a total of 153 instead of initially planned 143 houses will have been completed under the current project. A local company delivered all construction materials required to complete works.



Psychological rehabilitation through games: Red Crescent organized a boxing competition for internally displaced children living in the southern camps.

After the Belasovar camps were closed, more families expressed willingness to return to the village of Alkhanli. They have approached the Federation for assistance. The Federation contacted the Norwegian Refugee Council and the International Rescue Committee. They are willing to continue the rehabilitation/reconstruction project in Fizuli provided funding is available.

In July 2003, villagers collected their winter harvest, a total of 109 tons from 55 ha of land. After consultations, they decided to divide crops in the following way:

- 15,000 kg of seeds will be saved for the coming autumn planting;
- 71,500 kg of wheat was distributed among 55 small holders; Each smallholder received 1,300 kg of wheat;
- 16,000 kg was sold and income generated was put in the committee's budget;
- 5,000 kg was distributed to workers.

Additional 1,500 kg of wheat were distributed to the most vulnerable people in the village. Each person received 150 kg.

In August 2003, villagers harvested 3,780 kg of onions and 400 kg of sunflower. The harvest was divided equally among farmers.

Savings in the agriculture project enabled the Federation to construct a warehouse in the village to store seeds, equipment and crops. Agricultural committee members actively participated in the construction works.

The project has entered its final phase. Machinery and equipments purchased within the project were handed over to the village agriculture association to continue agricultural works independently, as well as, raise income through renting out the machinery. The agricultural association does not have the right to sell or gift the machinery and equipment donated by the Federation.

Members of women, agsaggal (old men) and agricultural committees were trained on identification of community resources and their utilisation, development and management of community funds and psychosocial rehabilitation of IDP children.

Impact:

- The project facilitates the return of families to their places of origin after years of displacement. By the end of October 2003, some 300 people will have returned.
- Community development initiatives strengthened self-reliance of beneficiaries. The project facilitated the formation of effective communities. Families were initially reluctant to return because of unemployment, poor water and irrigation systems and lack of infrastructure in the village. Through community development component of the operation, women and agsaggals (old men) combined their efforts and challenged the authorities. The authorities responded and constructed two artesian wells, built a school, repaired a health clinic and electricity cables in the village.



Rebuilding life: Federation helps returnees reconstruct their homes in Alkhanli and start again after years of displacement.

- Through the agricultural component, 55 families in the village of Alikhanli (Kollu) have participated in and completed a one-year cycle of land cultivation, both winter and spring. Villagers can now produce their own food and agricultural products to feed their families, strengthen self-sustainability and reduce their dependency on external aid. They managed to increase yields, which will in longer term, improve their living conditions. The project also provided an opportunity for a meaningful occupation for returnees and enhanced self-esteem of this vulnerable group. Village residents learned how to utilize new machinery and equipments, such as a seed drill, disk harrow, crop sprayer and water pumps.
- The project strengthened capacities of the local agricultural committee to take over the responsibility for the project. Through ongoing training, committee members improved their skills and knowledge. They have received educational materials on crop rotation and agro-technical cultivation of plants. They have also learned the improved methods of cultivation. Gradually the agricultural committee has strengthened its co-ordinating role. Activities and achievements of the committee prove that they can continue the project independently. The committee has 102 has of land, machinery, equipments, 16,000 kg wheat and 15,000 kg of seeds for the coming winter wheat planting, as well as, knowledge, experience, enthusiasm and dedication. Women also started to be involved in the agricultural association's work. One of the members of the regional agricultural association's governing board is a woman. Federation has been helping the committee to strengthen its links with other organizations working in agriculture such as the Norwegian Refugee Council and the International Rescue Committee. The IRC reportedly received funding to support the regional

association *Garabakh* through seed production project. Alkhanli agricultural association is a member of the association and will benefit from the project too.

Constrains:

- The village school can accommodate only 250 of 800 children of school age in the village. Although this issue has been addressed with the Cabinet of Ministers, it remains unresolved. With the remaining construction materials, the Federation is planning to transform a stable into a classroom for another 250 children.



Strengthening self-sustainability: Alkhanli vilage residents collect winter harvest

- Recent assessments identified two main problems facing families in Alkhanli. These are lack of sufficient potable water and poor condition of irrigation facilities. Local water reservoir had not been maintained during the past 10 years because of financial problems. The Federation supplied village residents with water pumps to irrigate fields. The pumps, however, need fuel, which is expensive. A more cost effective and sustainable solution remains to be found. The Federation met with Secretary of the Cabinet of Ministers to address the problem jointly. Plans are being developed.
- At the beginning of the operation, returned families were emotionally vulnerable. They did not believe in their own capacities, their self-esteem

was low, community links were weak and they were not interested in organizing themselves into committees. This slowed project implementation. Continued meetings with Federation community development officer helped villagers restore their self-confidence and resulted in their full participation in project activities.

- Unfavorable weather conditions destroyed pea, bean, maize and beetroot crops. Lack of proper irrigation system had an effect on wheat and sunflower crops too. Villagers collected only two of expected three tons of wheat from each hectare and 400 kg of expected 1.5 tons of sunflower.

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 teenage IDP and refugees completed English language and computer skills training on 30 June 2003. Another 30 girls and boys started six-month courses on 1 July 2003.
- In August 2003, the Red Crescent organised a 15-day summer camp for 35 IDP and refugee children in Hojali with financial support of the Norwegian Embassy in Azerbaijan.
- Another 200 children – internally displaced from Nagorno-Karabakh and refugees from Chechnya - participated in a summer camp in Zagulba. The Red Crescent organised for children various sport, cultural and educational activities, including sightseeing and competitions. Every child received school equipment donated by the ICRC.

Impact: The training courses directly help individual beneficiary IDPs to become less dependent on humanitarian assistance. More young people are interested to improve their skills and knowledge. The Red Crescent received 125 requests for help.

The summer camp brought fun into lives of **235** children. Through games, children learned more about the power of humanity, respect for human being, tolerance and coexistence.

Constraints: Funding for Mobile Technical Team project was received only in August 2003 and implementation has just started. An overview will be provided in the annual report.

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 Red Crescent's executive director returned to Azerbaijan after spending 10 months in Norway within the exchange programme with the Norwegian Red Cross. With his return, the presidium announced clearer division of management and governance functions in the Red Crescent as stipulated in the organisation's new statutes. The executive director was announced to address daily management issues at the headquarters level.
- In June 2003, a deputy executive director participated in organisational development training in Spain. The training helped the senior staff member better understand dynamics of organisational change.

Impact: Daily management issues are now solved quicker and effectively.

Constraints: The executive director is taking steps to improve the organisation's management system, but more remains to be done.

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: A two-day seminar on organizational development was conducted for 43 chairpersons of local Red Crescent branches in three regional centres – Lenkoran, Ganja and Sabirabad. Representatives of local authorities participated in the seminars too. The main issues addressed were how to expand the Red Crescent's membership and primary organizations.

In June, the Azerbaijan Red Crescent launched a pilot branch development project in Sumgait and Mingechar 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. The Red Crescent developed a baseline indicator format and held a workshop to introduce a participatory community development concept to regional centre and branch staff. Participatory community development teams have then been formed in each branch. Each team consists of Red Crescent staff and volunteers, as well as representatives of local authorities, health and education departments and non-governmental organisations. Each target branch then selected two communities to initiate the project.

The branch development project has received CHF 293,170. During the reporting period 9 % of income was spent. As agreed with the donor, the balance will be used for planned activities until the end of May 2004.

Impact:

- The organisational development seminars in Lenkoran, Ganja and Sabirabad encouraged the local branches to find creative ways to attract new members and form new primary organizations. Statistically, the Red Crescent has 166,833 to 140,000 members as of January 2003. Since June 2003, 28 new primary organisations have been established, which brings their total number to 2,353. In 28 branches, visited by the Red Crescent's leadership, the local authorities committed in written to support the national society with office premises and warehouse facilities.
- Participatory community development concept has been well received by Red Crescent branches. They have started establishing local working groups. This will strengthen cooperation with the local authorities and other stakeholders.

Constraints: Although the Red Crescent makes efforts to systematise its membership scheme so that it is more consistent source of income generation, collection of membership fees remains low. The president of Red Crescent and head of the organisational development continue dialogue with branches to address the problem.

Preparation for the pilot branch development project has taken longer time than initially envisaged. Preliminary assessment revealed branches have many technical problems that need to be solved to start the project. Local branches are poorly equipped. Many do not have an office even. Branch staff needs to be trained too to strengthen their programme management capacity and increase their understanding of the participatory community development approach.

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: A working group established a detailed plan of action on fundraising and discussed responsibilities of group members. In July 2003, the latest version of the fundraising policy was presented to the Secretariat of the Red Crescent. It has been agreed on, however, that the policy needs further elaboration based on experience and policies of other Red Cross/Red Crescent societies.

In the meantime, the Red Crescent continued to raise income through donation boxes and various advocacy initiatives:

- The Red Crescent collected relief items from private enterprises, local companies and communities. The items were then distributed to **430** vulnerable people in Baku, Dashkasan, Oguz, Gadabay and Ganja districts.
- The Red Crescent branches in Nizami, Kelbajar and Benegedi districts assisted **267** IDP and refugee children with school supplies, food items, video and musical equipment procured with their own financial resources generated through membership fees.
- With income raised through donation boxes, the Red Crescent provided food supplies to **236** vulnerable families.

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

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. The Red Crescent is making progress, but more remains to be done. It will continue to make efforts to diversify the organisation's funding base and help more people in need.

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

Progress/Achievements:

- The Red Crescent law has been submitted to the parliament for review.
- In September 2003, the Cabinet of Ministers issued a decree instructing the Ministry of Economic Development to help the Azerbaijan Red Crescent improve its working conditions and financial bases. The

Ministry of Radio and Telecommunication has been tasked to provide radio and telecom equipment to the Red Crescent and its local committees. The decree further stipulates that the Red Crescent will pay to obtain the license on radio frequencies according to the rules specified for international humanitarian organizations.

Impact: The Red Cross Law will help the National Society achieve a clearer status in the country. Although it is difficult at this stage to assess the impact of the Cabinet of Minister's decree, it shows the Government's willingness to support the only national, indigenous and community-based organization. The decree demonstrates greater attention and appreciation of the Red Crescent and its work by the authorities.

Constraints: Political instability in the country before and after the presidential elections diverted attention of the authorities from the Red Crescent low. The Red Crescent continues to make efforts to consolidate its legal base.

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:

The Red Crescent distributed a monthly bulletin to youth and volunteers. The bulletin contains news on Red Crescent youth and volunteer activities.



Being proactive: Red Crescent volunteers distribute brochures on HIV/AIDS at the Zagubala beach

In June-July 2003, the Red Crescent organised a 15-day summer camp for **80** orphan disabled children in Shagan. Seven volunteers from the Norwegian Red Cross together with nine volunteers of the Azerbaijan Red Crescent spent time with children in the camp.

With financial support of the Representation of Arabian Islamic Youth Assembly in Azerbaijan and Exxon Mobil Operating Company LLC, the Red Crescent also organised a summer camp in Pirshagi for **100** children from families affected by armed conflicts.

In June-August 2003, regional youth and volunteer boards were established in Sumgait, Sabirabad, Lenkoran, Ganja and Mingechaur

regional centres. There are now six boards across the country. By the end of the year, one more board will be established in Nakhchevan.

In July, the national board held its third meeting. Participants discussed the International Humanitarian Law and the Movement's Fundamental Principles, as well as, First aid, Disaster Preparedness and HIV/AIDS programmes of the Red Crescent in Azerbaijan.

The Azerbaijan Red Crescent's youth/volunteers and dissemination departments participated in an international conference of Red Cross and Red Crescent Youth Coalition for Peace and Friendship on 16-18 September 2003 in Shiraz, Iran. 20 countries were represented at the conference.

Impact:

- Volunteers are motivated and eager to contribute. They show increased interest in the work of the Red Crescent. They have been actively involved in youth bulletin preparation.

- The summer camp for disabled children encouraged the process of their rehabilitation and social adaptation. Interest to orphans and vulnerable children among volunteers and the public has increased.
- The youth and volunteer boards are a forum for volunteers to discuss, share ideas and participate in the decision-making process of the national society.
- The International Conference of Red Cross and Red Crescent Youth Coalition adopted a declaration with recommendations on how to promote peace and friendship all over the world. This Declaration will be brought to the attention of the Federation statutory bodies and the Council of Delegates at the International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent in Geneva.

Constraints: No constraints were encountered during implementation of the project.

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:

- The Red Crescent distributed sleeping bags and baby sets to **98** pregnant women and mothers of three-month babies in the southern camps.
- Women committees in Sabirabad and Saatli camps continue to register and assist orphans and disabled children in the camps. During reported period, children received five wheelchairs.
- In June 2003, the International Rescue Committee organized training on sustainability for volunteers of the women committees and a skills training centre. After the training, volunteers in one of the camps organised a voluntary donation marathon. Income collected will be used to assist the most vulnerable people in the camp.
- Various sports and entertainment activities were organized in summer for **55** IDP children and local communities. 30 IDP children participated in a football tournament and another six in a chess competition. The Red Crescent also organized boxing and tennis competitions.
- **631** children in the southern camps received issues of ‘Shakar Villasi’ – a children’s newspaper. The newspaper includes stories and poems written by children and is a good tool to encourage them.
- **34** IDPs completed a six-month training course on sewing, weaving, hairdressing, mechanics and shoemaking. In August, the IDPs were presented with diplomas. In September, another 22 people started a six-month course.
- In September 2003, the Red Crescent trained eight volunteers as trainers to conduct puppet shows for children in the camps and promote the message of humanity through performance.
- **250** IDP children received training suits donated by the Statoil Azerbaijan. The women committees in the camps identified beneficiaries.
- On 1 June 2003, the International Children Protection Day, the Red Crescent organised a sport, beauty, music and dancing competitions among more than 300 IDP children.

Impact:

- Psychological behavior of children in the camps has improved.
- In September 2003, three graduates of the skills training centre found a job: one woman started to work at the hairdresser’s in Baku, while two others joined a sewing workshop in Sabirabad.

Constraints: 15 graduates from the skills training centre did not receive their diplomas because their families have been resettled from Belasovar. Diplomas will be presented to them after the resettlement has been completed in October 2003.

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 drafted a communication strategy and submitted it to the executive secretary in September 2003 for his review. The strategy is due to be approved by the presidium before it can be shared internally.
- As reported in the programme update no 1, the Red Crescent branches in Lenkoran and Mingechar were provided with internet/e-mail communication systems. The e-mail connection works well. Regional branches receive regularly various reports, promotion materials, pictures and press clippings.

Impact: Thanks to the improved communication systems, volunteers and staff in regions share information with the headquarters timely. The communication strategy will serve as a basis for providing clarity and direction for Red Crescent communications activities at national and regional levels. It will ensure consistency in decision making throughout the organisation as well as defining the boundaries for the conduct of its staff.

Constraints: The Lenkoran branch had a technical problem that disrupted its e-mail connection. The problem has now been solved and the system works well again.

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:

All Azerbaijan Red Crescent activities and special events, such as, celebrations of the International Children Protection Day and World First Aid Day, as well as, blood donor recruitment campaign and relief distributions to floods affected families were largely covered by local media. Volunteers too through distribution of leaflets and posters spread information about the Red Crescent and its work.



Reaching communities: Through competitions, Red Crescent strengthens knowledge of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and its Fundamental Principles among children in IDP camps

Ten Red Crescent volunteers in Baku participated in a campaign 'clean town' organised by a local newspaper in cooperation with the Ministry of Ecology in July 2003.

Red Crescent volunteers together with journalists of the newspaper cleaned central streets and parks of Baku city. They talked with pedestrians urging them to keep the place clean from bottles, papers, packages or cigarette stubs.

The Red Crescent invited journalists to spend 24 hours with refugee and IDP children from Sabirabad in the summer camp in Zagulba. Life and interests of these children were

then widely highlighted in a local newspaper.

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.
- Work and role of Red Crescent volunteers was highlighted too encouraging more people to join the organisation.
- Through newspapers, the public has increased awareness of the plight of IDP and refugee children.

Constraints: No constraints were encountered during implementation of the project.

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: In August 2003, a three-day seminar on information and dissemination for 11 Red Crescent volunteers from six regional centres was held in Ganjlik, Zagulba district. It was the second training of this kind and covered topics such as:

- relations with media;
- how to conduct an interview;
- how to organize training, seminars, meetings, presentations and conferences;
- aims and forms of public and promotion materials;
- dissemination;
- how to increase awareness of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and the humanitarian values, and
- advocacy.

The CD 'From Principles to Action' was one of the main tools used by the Red Crescent during the seminar. Volunteers received Russian copies of the CD to continue training in their regions.

Two Red Crescent volunteers in Mingechavir trained another five volunteers on humanitarian values. One of the topics covered by the training was '*volunteers are our power*'

Impact: Volunteers strengthened their communication skills.

Constraints: No constraints were encountered during implementation of the project.

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 initiated meeting with the health authorities in the flooded areas in Sabirabad, Salyan and Neftchala. As a result of the Federation's advocacy, the Red Crescent in cooperation with local health personnel conducted a health awareness campaign among the floods affected population to avert the outbreak of epidemics. Leaflets and posters on anti malaria measures and diarrhea were distributed.

Impact: The Red Crescent has established good cooperation with local health authorities including the Hygiene and Epidemiology centre in Sabirabad. This was the first time in recent years that the Red Crescent and health authorities at districts level conducted a joint activity.

Constraints: The Azerbaijan Red Crescent has to be more proactive in developing effective networking. The Federation will continue to assist the National Society in strengthening coordination with the UN and NGOs as well as various international organisations and local authorities to maximise the impact of their support on 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. The CAS will be updated after the Red Crescent has finalised its strategic work plan in February 2004.

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.

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.

There is nothing of substance to report in this programme area. An overview will be provided in the annual report.

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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.

For support to or for further information concerning Federation programmes or operations in this or other countries, please access the Federation website at <http://www.ifrc.org>