

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

TAJIKISTAN

4 July 2003

Appeal No. 01.86/2003

Appeal Target: CHF 6,705,034 (USD 4.96 million / EUR 4.3 million)

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: 27% (As of report release date, for live information click below:

http://www.ifrc.org/cgi/pdf_appeals.pl?annual03/1-2-3%20-%20ap018603.pdf

Outstanding needs: CHF 4.9 million (USD 3.6 million/ EUR 3.1 million)

Operational developments

Tajikistan remains blighted by problems and vulnerability is widespread. Support to those in need is patchy. For instance, this year's state budget is expected to be one-tenth the level in 1990. In spite of substantial increase in international aid, poverty continues to grow. The economic situation is dire. According to a Human Development report for 2001-2002, the average monthly salary is less than US\$ 10 per month. Unemployment is estimated to be over 30 per cent. More than a million Tajik people still rely heavily on food aid, especially in rural areas.

During the first half of 2003 the Red Crescent Society in Tajikistan (RCST) and the Federation implemented activities under the Annual Appeal 2003. In addition it responded to several minor emergencies throughout the country. The Red Crescent, in cooperation with government agencies and international partners, took the lead to supply non-food relief in many cases.

Heavy rainfall during the spring 2003 contributed to floods as well as mud and landslides. Food security in rural areas was affected. Significant damage was also caused to homes and infrastructure. Seasonal disasters hit Tajikistan hard. Poor drainage infrastructure, soil erosion and lack of local capacity to prepare and respond to emergencies all increase vulnerability.

Health and care

Goal: The role of the Red Crescent Society of Tajikistan in health care and water and sanitation is increased to improve the general health of the population.

This section includes two programme components: 1) Health and Care; 2) Water and Sanitation

Health and Care

Objective: By the end of 2003 the capacity of the Red Crescent Society of Tajikistan to improve access to basic health care services is increased through prevention and education, first aid, HIV/AIDS education and TB care at the community level as well as assistance to primary health care institutions.

Progress

Expected result 1: Targeted communities in four regions (Khatlon, RRS, GBAO and Sughd) have increased household awareness of preventing common diseases and basic health care, through health education carried out by RCST volunteers.

RCST, with Federation support, conducted 96 seminars on home care for sick people in Kulyab, Kurgan-Tube, RRS and Sughd regions between January and May. 1,440 volunteers participated. 5,300 albums (on acute respiratory infections, ARI) and 5,000 brochures on home care were printed. Each participant received materials to disseminate among communities.

The trained volunteers spoke with several households – a total of 56,084 discussions - on prevention issues in all regions, except GBAO.

Trainers received 18 flip charts on safe water, hygiene and sanitation, IRA, pregnancy, breast-feeding and diarrhoea to help with their campaign.

Expected result 2: The capacity of five regional RCST branches - Dushanbe, Khatlon, RRS, GBAO and Sughd - in first aid is strengthened through the training of 1,500 volunteers.

Trainers conducted 126 first aid workshops. 1,591 participants (including 188 RC volunteers and 537 secondary schools teachers) attended. Each participant received a first aid kit, manual and booklet.

Monitoring tests revealed that awareness, in general, increased 34%. Five simulation exercises were also conducted on 95 participants to assess the impact on skills.

Expected result 3: Awareness of STD/HIV/AIDS, stigma, discrimination and drug addiction issues is increased among 20,000 people belonging to at-risk groups.

From January to May 2003, RCST trainers and RC youth volunteers, with Federation support, conducted 10 education campaigns on HIV/AIDS prevention, stigma and discrimination. Discussions and lectures were held in 342 schools, 74 universities, and 50 state establishments.

Their efforts reached 16,490 schoolchildren, 5,700 students and 3,770 state employees. Activities included various stage performances, art competitions and quizzes. Prizes were given to the most noteworthy participants. Condoms were also distributed as were 8,000 calendars - with the "Live and let live" message of tolerance.

In addition, several events related to World Red Cross and Red Crescent Day were held on 8 May in Dushanbe, RRS and Sughd.

Expected result 4: The treatment of 100 tuberculosis patients in Dushanbe is observed and followed up by the RCST according to the directly observed treatment short course (DOTS).

From January to May, the RCST observed 117 TB patients in Dushanbe. Of this group, 37 completed a full treatment. Two patients were referred to hospital because of complications. In March, the RCST, along with the Federation, opened a soup kitchen for TB patients to provide additional social and nutritional support. The intention was to provide more comprehensive supervision. However, only 50 patients made use of the soup kitchen.

Efforts to increase TB awareness continued. 2,663 bookmarks – flagging awareness - were printed. Education work with families of TB patients was conducted. In addition, volunteers visited 228 households to discuss how DOTS works.

On 24 March, the RCST and the Federation commemorated World TB Day. Materials - such as TB calendars and brochures entitled 'DOTS will stop TB' – were produced in conjunction with the Ministry of Health, project HOPE, Republican and City TB centres. Several related events took place. A big campaign in Central Park, Dushanbe, attracted 1,380 people. An awareness campaign was conducted in state establishments for 120 people.

The scale of the problem was revealed by latest official statistics which revealed the number of new tuberculosis cases in Dushanbe was 338 during the reporting period. More than 120 TB patients were hospitalised.

Expected result 5: The capacity of 644 primary health care institutions in 23 rural districts of Khatlon region is improved through supplies of medicines and education of health staff.

The programme was scaled down after a review. 657,007 patients visited health care institutions of whom 437,150 received Federation medicines. Monitoring teams randomly visited 13,705 patients' homes to confirm receipt of medicines. 100% success was recorded. The teams also visited 14,128 households (32,581 people) to raise awareness on measles, scarlet fever and acute respiratory illness (ARI).

In May 98, 665 institutions in regions under Republican subordination (RRS) as well as Khatlon province received medical supplies. However, delivery of diagnostic instruments was delayed until June. In addition, medical staff received guidelines on administration of drugs. 1,500 editions of the booklet - developed by the Ministry of Health and WHO Pharmaceutical Task Force group - were distributed among primary health workers. Health monitoring teams attended a second seminar - as part of an ECHO supported activity - on use of medical drugs.

The RCST, with Federation support, distributed supplies – from an ICRC consignment - to new surgical and gynecology departments at Beshkent central district hospital. Three district hospitals received emergency health kits.

15 banners, and 8,000 health leaflets containing information of five common illnesses and their prevention were distributed in RRS and Khatlon province.

Impact

Awareness on major health issues improved. Community knowledge of the prevention of diseases such as ARI, measles and diarrhoea increased. Within the RC, volunteer knowledge on home care for the sick also strengthened. Better community awareness of first aid was also demonstrated in emergencies. The TB support programme also made a difference to several patients.

Water and Sanitation

Objective: By the end of 2003, the capacity of Red Crescent Society of Tajikistan and communities to operate and maintain rehabilitated water and sanitation systems is strengthened. Hygiene education, delivery of safe drinking water, proper sanitary disposal and ownership of rehabilitated systems is reinforced.

Progress/Achievements

Funding was confirmed only in May 2003 and assessments are under way for the following planned activities:

- ✓ Construction of 250 pour-flush latrines: GBAO 100 latrines, Khatlon Province 100, and RRS 50
- ✓ Construction and development of springs to 20 villages in Khatlon Province and RRS
- ✓ Borehole rehabilitation at four sites in Sughd Province and five in Khatlon and Kulyab districts

The programme will also include hygiene promotion at all locations.

Meanwhile, raising awareness of hygiene and sanitation in schools continued. Personal hygiene, environmental sanitation, disposal of garbage, storage of water, storage of food, sanitation and prevention of water-borne diseases were addressed. A training of trainers was conducted in 12 districts in Sughd and Khatlon Provinces. The trainers were selected from school teachers. In addition, 44 blocks of pour-flush latrines were constructed in Sughd Province from January to May.

12 project sites in Sughd and Khatlon Provinces were selected for borehole rehabilitation. Work is in progress. Communities are participating by digging trenches and cleaning sites. Water user committees were formed and trained in maintenance and sustainability.

Impact

Overall, health vulnerability has been slightly reduced. Pupils have access to clean drinking water as well as pour flush latrines. They have more awareness of safe hygiene and are being encouraged to spread the knowledge among friends. More people are using boreholes, which are safer than the ditch water, which is often. Sanitarian and Epidemiological Service statistics suggest a decrease of waterborne diseases.

Constraints

Problems in finding the right construction materials delayed the project. Close follow up with the community is needed to maintain progress on health education. Delays from implementing partners also had an impact.

Disaster Management

Goal: The capacity of the RCST to respond to disasters and alleviate suffering among the most vulnerable is increased.

Objective: By the end of 2003, the RCST network is strengthened in response and preparedness. A national disaster response plan is developed in coordination with the government. Capacity in terms of disaster stocks, supplementary feeding, mitigation activities in high risk areas and training is increased

Progress/Achievements

Expected result 1. Over 9,533 metric tonnes (MT) of food, consisting of wheat flour, vegetable oil, pulses, iodised salt and corn soya blend, is distributed for 77,500 beneficiaries in Khatlon and Sughd in three rounds over eight months until June.

During the last five months, the Federation distributed food in Khatlon and Sughd provinces under the vulnerable group feeding (VGF) programme. 29,620 beneficiaries in Khatlon Province received 4 rations between January and April. Each ration included 12.5 kg of wheat flour, 0.9 litre of vegetable oil, 0.3 kg of iodised salt and 1.2 kg of sugar. A further two rations covering May and June 2003 were distributed in Sovetsky district. Lactating mothers, pregnant women and children - below 29 months - received corn soya blend in addition to the above items. In total, 1,496 tonnes of food was distributed.

47,200 beneficiaries in Sughd Province received the same as recipients in Khatlon. They also received a third cycle of distribution. In total, 687.54 tonnes of food was distributed.

The Federation distributed additional food to beneficiaries not covered by VGF. 584,150 tonnes - comprising 110,000 tonnes of rice, 393,150 tonnes of split peas and 81,000 tonnes of vegetable oil - was distributed in three stages to 62,075 beneficiaries in Khatlon Province.

The Federation office in Khojent received 436,000 tonnes of split peas and 110,000 tonnes of rice. The split peas were distributed in two rounds to five districts. 49,286 beneficiaries received a 4-month ration and 29,332 beneficiaries received enough for six months. The rice was delivered later because of delays. As the amount was not enough for all five districts, the two poorest - Zafarabad and Shahristan - were targeted. 15,492 beneficiaries received rations. The distribution was completed in March.

Impact

Distributions helped vulnerable people increase their coping capacity, exhausted by years of crop failure and drought. Food rations will support beneficiaries until the next harvest.

Constraints

In spite of food assistance from international organizations, about 80% of Tajiks remain vulnerable. The selection process of beneficiaries was also difficult. Severe weather hampered distribution.

Expected result 2. 24,450 beneficiaries (lone ly elderly, bed ridden people, and large families headed by women) in Dushanbe are provided with a supplementary food parcel (32 kg) three times a year , or with hot meals from 13 soup kitchens three times a week.

The 24,450 beneficiaries received the stipulated number of parcels or hot meals between June 2002 and May 2003. Lower prices enabled additional food to be bought. 1,339 tonnes of wheat flour, 88,000 litres of vegetable oil, 2,200 tonnes of peas and 22 tonnes of iodised salt was distributed to 22,000 beneficiaries.

9,560 of the most vulnerable each received an additional 25 kg of wheat flour, 5 kg of split peas, 2 litres of oil and 1 kg of iodised salt. The food ration is intended to cover 70% of the beneficiaries' food requirements for 12 months. A similar supplementary food programme will continue for 25,000 beneficiaries from June 2003 to March 2004.

The programme also includes a food security component (distribution of agricultural inputs). 151 tonnes of vegetable seeds and 60 tonnes of fertilizer were distributed to 2,000 beneficiary households in RRS, who have irrigated kitchen gardens. 100 hectares of land was covered with distributed seeds and fertilizer.

Monitoring revealed that beneficiaries expect on average a yield of 425.2 tonnes of onion from 50 hectares of land, an average of 452 kg per household. For potatoes, the expected yield is 732.35 tonnes from 50 hectares of land (732 kg per household). Beneficiaries intend to save some harvest for the next planting season. A harvest assessment was to be carried out by the end of June.

The soup kitchens provided three hot meals a week to 2,450 beneficiaries between January and May. Of the 13 kitchens, one is for tuberculosis patients under the DOTS treatments programme. Nutritious food combined with treatment increases the chance of full recovery. The initiative is coordinated with Project Hope NGO, which provided medicine while the RCST/Federation provided meals and nursing.

The NS is gradually assuming responsibility of the soup kitchen programme and is due to take full control by the end of 2005.

Impact

Food support helped strengthen coping capacities of thousands of Tajiks. Regular and nutritious food helped bolster vulnerable health levels.

Constraints:

The food distribution programme is not sustainable. The RCST and Federation are experiencing difficulties in planning their exit strategy.

The ration was estimated to cover 12 months. But due to the communal Ifestyle, beneficiaries shared food with relatives, friends and neighbours. To include more households on the beneficiaries list, the local authorities reduced the number of family members eligible. This happened especially with women headed households. As a result, they received fewer rations than planned. Monitoring indicates that one ration - estimated to last for 3 months as a complementary - lasted only 1-1.5 months for the majority of beneficiaries.

Expected result 3: The risk from landslides and floods in four villages in GBAO is reduced through tree planting and the building of dykes and canals.

3,000 trees were planted by locals in two villages in Shugnan rayon, Sokhcharv and Demijona in April and May. This was the main disaster mitigation activity.

Preparation for summer reinforcement of irrigation canals was finalized for Baroch village. Another site will be selected shortly. At the same time, the RSCT DP department continued to train its rescue team in collaboration with the State Emergency Committee. The RCST also strengthened links with its volunteers in the community.

Expected result 4: Incorporating the results of VCA, a national disaster response plan is developed in coordination with government authorities and other NGOs. The plan will be capable of assisting up to five per cent of the population. One disaster response team comprising 16 persons is trained, equipped and capable to react. Repairs are carried out at RCST warehouses and the national society headquarters.

The Red Crescent National Disaster Response plan was developed and translated into English. The capacity of the Dushanbe City branch search and rescue team was strengthened through the supply of equipment. Repairs were carried out at RCST warehouses in GBAO and the national society headquarters.

Expected result 5: An RCST community-based information campaign is carried out – via handouts, video and posters - on how to respond and prepare for disaster. 200 trained volunteers in five provinces will target 150,000 families and 400 schools.

An eight-day disaster management workshop was conducted for Khatlon Province DP coordinators in preparedness, planning, awareness, coordination, needs assessment, information and reporting, coordination, project planning and training skills. A related poster campaign competition was held and more than 365 were gathered from schools. The best five were chosen for distribution to schools and families.

Two computers, two vehicles and communication equipment were distributed to the National Society (NS) branches and headquarters to bolster response capacity. 702 Red Crescent bibs were distributed to 69 Red Crescent branches. 100 Sphere Project books were also distributed.

Seven disaster response simulation exercises were held from January to May 2003. DP stock was purchased for the National society to distribute to seven strategic Red Crescent centres.

Impact

About 10 disasters - floods, landslides, snow slides - occurred during the reporting period. Red Crescent branch performance showed that disaster management workshops, simulation training exercises resulted in a small improvement in assessment, response and reporting. The Federation supported projects submitted by GBAO and Kurgan-Tube Red Crescent branches. These project proposals showed the influence of the workshop training. The school poster campaign helped increase awareness of disasters among schoolchildren.

Constraints

Lack of funding for the disaster preparedness programme is still a major challenge. DP stocks are barely adequate to respond to any mid-level emergency. Branch level capacity to respond is still rudimentary. Many people are aware of disaster risk but few know what actions to take in mitigation. This has a consequence for the design of awareness material as well as design of projects.

Organizational development

Goal: The capacity of the RCST at all levels is increased to fulfil its mandate to alleviate the suffering of vulnerable people

Objective: By the end of 2003, the capacity of the RCST is strengthened through revised management structures, branch development activities, an increased volunteer base and continued youth activities.

Progress:

Expected result 1: Revision of: the role of governance and management; the financial management system; and statutes, in accordance with Strategy for the Movement.

A management meeting in Khoja-Obi-Garm 28-31 January discussed the above issues as well as fundraising, Strategy 2010, the logotype of the RCST and the NS self assessment sent to Geneva in May 2003.

On 11 April, the Presidium of the NS approved four commissions – in law, finance, disaster preparedness and health – to revise statutes. The commissions are working in accordance with the plan of action approved in January. The goal is to have new statutes by the end of 2006. The RCST OD department is working on a training curriculum on governance and management.

A draft on new governance and management structure was developed after the visit of the honorary president of the Armenian Red Cross.

Expected result 2: 40 RCST district branches are supported to conduct vulnerability and capacity assessment (VCA). In 10 RCST district branches community based activities in the four core areas are developed through training of trainers and volunteers as well as involvement of the local population. It will result in 3,800 registered volunteers and 2,000 RCST members. Costs of locally run programmes, totalling 40 per cent, are covered through local fundraising initiatives.

On 31 January a workshop on VCA was held at the Khoja-Obi-Garm meeting. 100 representatives from various authorities, together with staff from the NS HQ and oblast committees, participated. Several local authorities were interested in conducting a VCA. The RCST selected one region - Kurgan-Tube – for a pilot VCA after assessing national society capacity in various areas. Within the region, 16 rayons and city committees along with the regional committee will conduct the VCA. Among these, 3-5 will be selected for community based programmes (CBP).

A new VCA coordinator started in May. The plan of action and budget has been revised, as fewer branches will be included. A framework for CBP is being produced. Branch profiles have been updated in 80% of the rayon and city committees.

To improve RCST volunteer management, a two-day refresher training was held for programme coordinators at headquarters. Training has been held in all rayons but volunteer management at oblast and rayon levels still needs to be improved as many are leaving the NS.

A working group to draft the NS fundraising policy has been established. A first copy was submitted to the presidium on 11 April. The head of the development department went to Moscow to exchange ideas with the Russian Red Cross. The Russian Red Cross fundraising guidebook was ordered through the Regional Delegation in Almaty and has now been distributed to all oblast and rayon committees. Seminars on fundraising have been held in two oblasts. Fundraising activities were organized on World Red Cross and Red Crescent Day, on 8 May. Contacts have been made with private enterprises in Dushanbe to diversify the funding base. However, overall, improvements need to be made on the approach to local fundraising.

Expected result 3: The visibility of the RCST and the Movement is increased on World RC Day. In addition, media events, poster and leaflet campaigns disseminate information on HIV/AIDS, TB and disaster preparedness and response promoting humanitarian values and fighting discrimination.

The first draft of a communications policy was submitted to the RCST Presidium in April. Progress, in this regard, though was already in evidence. Russian and Tajik national TV-channels covered the RCST management meeting in January. In March, media coverage was extensive of the Federation Secretary General's visit to Tajikistan. Television stations - BBC, Tajik National TV and Sugdh TV - radio stations - Asia-Plus and Liberty - and newspapers - Vecherniy Dushanbe, Charhi Gardun, Varorud and Leninabadskaya Pravda – covered the visit.

A special edition of the RCST quarterly leaflet, Nuri Shafkat, was produced for World RC Day.

On World TB-day, two radio programmes - in Tajik and Russian - were devoted to TB prevention and treatment. Vecherniy Dushanbe newspapers covered related events in the capital on 23 and 24 March. Emergency response also provided an opportunity for the RCST to increase its profile. The Dushanbe flood response was covered by three newspapers as well as Tajik National TV and the public Russian TV-channel ORT.

Expected result 4: The number of youth groups is increased from 16 to 26 and they are better trained. The number of youth volunteers increased 20 per cent from 263 to 315. HIV/AIDS peer education and drug awareness activities are carried out by the RCST youth, in cooperation with the health department, in the country's five provinces. The status of youth in the national society is clarified through the revision of statutes.

More than 3000 people attending various activities in schools and sports clubs were educated about health issues, including drug abuse, HIV/AIDS, TB and clean water. Discussions were also held on disasters, International Humanitarian Law (IHL) and the RC Movement. Youth volunteers are also working within other programmes of the NS, such as social services and food relief.

Efforts are being made to diversify youth activities so that they are integrated into more areas of NS work. One youth coordinator attended a DP workshop in Almaty and another attended an ICRC seminar on conflict resolution in Tashkent. In some rayons, youth groups are electing leaders to guide their future work.

The number of youth groups has increased to 46 groups and the number of registered youth volunteers is 497, both figures exceeding expectations.

In March, two youth coordinators and a volunteer visited Red Crescent youth in Turkmenistan to share ideas on volunteer management. In April, in Jirgital and Isfara cities, young people, together with ICRC, established youth centres in support of youth traumatized during conflict.

Impact

Much of the work in this area - including revision of statutes and structures, better approaches to fundraising and engagement with community VCA - is in the early stages. It is too soon to assess what difference these initiatives will make.

The most significant progress was made in the area of youth. Young people are getting more involved in the national society. In turn the RCST is making its young volunteers and staff feel more valued and very much part of their future work with vulnerable people throughout Tajikistan.

Constraints

The work of national society youth in the area of drug awareness is being slowed by a delay in the transfer of funds to the provinces. The VCA initiative has been slowed by the lack of a coordinator and the departure of the VCA focal person for Central Asia.

Despite progress in the area of youth, more needs to be done to improve attitudes towards volunteers and their work within the NS.

• Federation Coordination

Goal: All components of the RC/RC Movement and other partners agree upon a framework of cooperation, reflected in the Tajikistan cooperation agreement strategy (CAS) process and document. As such the NS will be more effective in supporting vulnerable people.

Objective: By the end of 2003, a draft version of CAS is available to all partners acknowledging the Federation's coordination role to ensure a coherent approach to strengthening the RCST.

The Federation supported NS programming via technical support, liaison with donors and coordination with other actors, such as the government, UN agencies and NGOs.

On the latter point, the Federation coordinated action with the ECHO representation Office in Tajikistan to ensure programme visibility. In addition, action was coordinated with Project Hope on TB initiatives, German Agro Action on food security and Action Against Hunger on a nutritional survey. At the local authority level, the Federation supported the 13 soup kitchens. A cooperation meeting was held with UNICEF to improve effectiveness.

The Federation is a part of the REACT disaster management team, which coordinates the approach of various actors – such as the government, Ministry of Emergencies, local authorities, UNOCHA, WFP, FOCUS and MERLIN – to the humanitarian needs in Tajikistan.

A management workshop between Federation and RCST counterparts in February discussed the responsibilities of programme managers and coordination issues to improve effectiveness. Recommendations were adopted to improve procedures in this regard.

International Representation

Objective: By the end of 2003, the effectiveness and profile of the RCST is improved – with Federation support – via advocacy on the needs and interests of vulnerable people in Tajikistan.

Expected result 1: By the end of 2003, RCST work related to the International Year of Freshwater is known within and outside of Tajikistan and as such more resources are mobilized on this issue. After discussions, the Canadian Embassy in Almaty contributed considerable funding to the water-sanitation project in this appeal. In addition, the British Ambassador officiated at the inauguration of the water supply system in Leninsky district in April 2003.

The visit of the Federation's secretary-general also highlighted key humanitarian challenges in the country in community, political and media circles.

Expected result 2: By the end of 2003 discussions on a RC Law had progressed.

The National Society prepared a draft RC Law and submitted it to the Ministry of Justice. Feedback is awaited.

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