

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

TURKEY

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

In Brief

Appeal No. 01.79/2004; Programme Update no. 2, Period covered: 1 June to 30 November, 2004; Appeal coverage: 167.6 %; (Please click here to go directly to the Contributions List)

Appeal target: The original appeal target was CHF 2,394,607 (USD 2,105,620 or EUR 1,568,735); In June 2004, it was increased to CHF 2,454,816 (USD 2,159,315 or EUR 1,608,370) to reflect the revised plan of action developed by the Federation in response to the developments in the national society and its impact on the progress of the original programme as well as a merger of the American Red Cross bi-lateral office with the Federation regional delegation in Ankara (For more details, please see programme update no 1 at http://www.ifrc.org/cgi/pdf_appeals.pl?annual04/01790401.pdf)

Related Emergency or Annual Appeals: Bingol Earthquake Emergency Appeal No. 09/2003 (For details, please see the appeal at http://www.ifrc.org/cgi/pdf_appeals.pl?03/0903.pdf)

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All International Federation assistance seeks to adhere to the [Code of Conduct](#) and is committed to the [Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Disaster Response](#) in delivering assistance to the most vulnerable. For support to or for further information concerning Federation programmes or operations in this or other countries, or for a full description of the national society profile, please access the Federation's website at <http://www.ifrc.org>

Operational developments

Security: Turkey has suffered from a series of bomb attacks during the reported period. Blame for the attacks has been variously attributed to, or claimed by, Islamist radical groups, Kurdish separatists and left-wing militants:

- In June, two bombs exploded; one in Ankara and another on a bus in Istanbul where four died and around 15 were injured.
- In August 2004, a Turk and an Iranian were killed in simultaneous bomb attacks on two hotels in Istanbul, which also injured 11 people. Later this month, an explosion rocked a Turkish Mediterranean resort city of Antalya, killing one teenager and injuring another. Antalya, Turkey's largest resort, is popular with German, British and other European tourists.
- On 19 September, there was another explosion; this time in the southern city of Mersin. A bomb placed under a police car at a pop concert hurt at least 14 people, officials say. The explosion happened during a

performance by a well-known Turkish singer. The same day, bomb disposal experts destroyed another suspicious package at the concert venue.

Fears of terrorist attacks have been running high in Turkey since November 2003, when Istanbul was rocked by a series of deadly explosions. Sixty-two people were killed and hundreds injured when two synagogues, the British consulate, and a branch of the HSBC bank were targeted by suicide bombers.

Developments in the Turkish Red Crescent: On 28 July, the Council of the State, based on the ruling of the Constitutional Court of Turkey, suspended the government's decree that removed the previous leadership and installed a provisional board in the Turkish Red Crescent earlier this year (For details, please see programme update no 1). The ruling is significant as it acknowledges the autonomy of the national society so that it may be able at all times to act in accordance with the principles of the Movement. The court decision, however, has not yet been implemented.

In the meantime, the temporary board of the Turkish Red Crescent has decided to revoke the memberships of the previous members of the national society governance¹ and convened an extraordinary General Assembly² on 7 August. Mr. Talat Yilmaz, the chairman of the provisional board, was elected the president of the Turkish Red Crescent.

The Federation, together with the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), has been closely monitoring the developments. On 29 July, Federation acting head of delegation and ICRC head of delegation met with Mr. Yilmaz, head of the provisional board, and expressed their concerns about the plans of the national society to convene the extraordinary assembly in the midst of uncertainty. The meeting was followed by a joint Federation and ICRC letter to Mr. Yilmaz, with a copy to the Turkish mission in Geneva, to reiterate the points raised during the meeting. On 6 August, Federation and ICRC representatives met with officials at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs too to share their concerns³.

The situation remains unsettled⁴ damaging the image of the national society and affecting the ability of the Turkish Red Crescent to function at its full potential. Since January 2004, many middle level managers and staff members were fired or replaced in the national society.

In September 2004, the **British Red Cross** closed their office in Turkey after completing a bilateral programme with the national society. The British Red Cross had been supporting Turkish Red Crescent branch development in Erzurum, eastern Turkey, since 2001. The project replenished stocks, upgraded a regional warehouse, improved telecommunication to better track and record goods, and trained Red Crescent staff, volunteers and local communities in disaster preparedness.

Global Disaster Management meeting: On 14-18 October, the Ankara regional delegation hosted a global meeting of the Federation regional disaster management coordinators. This year's meeting has attempted to identify how disaster management should be developed in line with the Federation's Strategy for Change. One of the most significant outcomes was a clear and strong recommendation for disaster management to be considered from the local to global levels. In this, the emphasis is on building community, branch and national society preparedness. This is a significant conceptual shift for the Red Cross and Red Crescent from previous paradigms based on a more top-down disaster response approach. It acknowledges that regional and global response mechanisms need to be complementary to augmenting the National Societies' capacities. Another important

¹ The decision was later overruled by a court as only the General Assembly of the National Society can revoke membership.

² The legitimacy of these elections was questioned by a local court. In response to this, the provisional board of the Red Crescent called for another extraordinary General Assembly on 20 November 2004 and held elections again. Mr. Yilmaz and his board were confirmed in their positions.

³ On 1 October 2004, the Federation Vice-President sent a letter to Mr. Yilmaz and Dr. Gonen (previous leadership) advising the Turkish Red Crescent to refrain, in the prevailing circumstances, from attending the Federation Board meeting in Geneva on 11-13 October. Dr. Gonen has agreed. Mr. Yilmaz sent two representatives.

⁴ On 8 November 2004, Federation and ICRC representatives met with the Turkish Ambassador in Geneva to find out about the reasons of delays in implementation of the Council of State ruling. No explanation has been received.

recognition was the need to develop realistic and workable disaster management protocols for regional disaster response based upon revised global protocols.

Disaster management

Goal: Impact of disasters on vulnerable communities is reduced as is their subsequent dependency on humanitarian aid.

Objective: The Turkish Red Crescent has strengthened its position as a key humanitarian actor in disaster management to prevent and alleviate suffering of vulnerable communities through effective mitigation, preparedness and response.

Progress: The Red Crescent inaugurated a new Regional Disaster Response and Logistics Centre in Istanbul Kartal, north-western region of the country, bringing the total number of the centres to eight. The other seven are in Manisa (West), Duzce (Black sea region), Ankara (Central Anatolia), Adana (South), Tokat (Central Anatolia) Erzurum (Northern Anatolia) and Elazig (Southeast Anatolia); all being in Red Crescent regional warehouses. The centres are established as part of a change process to decentralise Red Crescent disaster response structures. This will enable to respond rapidly and effectively to the needs of disaster affected population. The leadership of the Red Crescent and its Disaster Operation Centre (AFOM) in Ankara will provide technical guidance and support to the regional centres. The centres, on their turn, will coordinate the work of the branches within their regions to help them develop and implement disaster preparation, response and logistics activities. The National Society is planning to establish more such centres across the country. Discussion on the number and location is ongoing. Location will be selected based on the evaluation of risk and hazards, population, transportation facilities, economic and social conditions of the regions, as well as regional capacities of the Red Crescent.

Within the branch development project (please see below, under the Organisational Development programme), the Federation, through sponsorship of the American Red Cross, will support the National Society regional centre in Istanbul Kartal, as a pilot initiative. The centre in Kartal will coordinate the work of nine provinces. Within this region, the Bursa branch will have the responsibility of a local Disaster Response and Logistics Centre. Each centre will have a response team (41 staff in total). Additionally, the project will support setting up of two First Response Teams - one in Tuzla and another one in Bursa. The teams will be composed of staff and/or volunteers trained in disaster management. Each team will have a minimum of four members. The number of staff in teams can be increased in direct proportion with the magnitude of disaster and number of people affected.

During the reported period, attention was directed towards improving skills of Red Crescent staff in disaster preparedness and response. Two training sessions were held for 70 people in July and November 2004. One more will be held in December 2004. 25 per cent of the participants were representatives of local authorities, civil defence and the Turkish Disaster Management agency. Their involvement was important to improve coordination, which is essential in any response operation, and particularly, in emergencies to avoid duplication of efforts. To this end, the Red Crescent signed cooperation agreements with the Turkish Disaster Management Agency, Ministry of Works and Settlement, Ministry of Education and a number of research/academic institutions, which are directly engaged in disaster response or promotion of disaster awareness.

In parallel, work has continued on Red Crescent disaster preparedness and response policy guidelines and directives. Operational procedures, structures and job descriptions are being finalised too.

To step up its community-based programmes in disaster management, the Red Crescent has started developing vulnerability and capacity assessment (VCA)⁵ training modules and system. It established a working group to facilitate and coordinate the work. Members of the group include Dr. Ibrahim Sivrikaya, a Red Crescent volunteer (Karaburun branch chairperson, western Turkey) who was trained as a trainer on VCA in Spain earlier this year, and Mr. Hakan Karay, who was trained as a trainer in 2002. The working group will use, as a reference, Federation books on VCA, translated from English into Turkish.

⁵ Vulnerability and Capacity Assessment (VCA) is a basic process used to identify the strengths and weaknesses of national societies and/or communities in relation to disaster management. The process is part of the Federation's efforts to fulfil its commitment to reduce people's risk to disaster.



Within its public education work⁶, the Red Crescent celebrated the First Aid Day on 11 September with simulation exercises in streets of the main cities, distribution of leaflets and brochures to raise awareness and promote the importance of First Aid as a cost-effective, safe and simple way to protect and save lives in an emergency varying from the consequence of day-to-day health problems and accidents to crisis such as conflict or natural disasters. To read more about the events organised by the Turkish Red Crescent on the world First Aid Day: <http://www.ifrc.org/youth/news/0409Turkey/index.asp>.

The simulation exercises on the First Aid Day contributed to promote the importance of First Aid among the public

Humanitarian values

Goal: The spread of HIV/AIDS, as well as, discrimination of people living with the disease is reduced.

Objective: Public awareness, prevention and community tolerance of HIV/AIDS has improved.

Progress: The Turkish Red Crescent is one of the key players in the country combating the spread of HIV/AIDS through education. It is a member of the European Red Cross/Red Crescent Network on HIV/AIDS (ERNA)⁷. Today 36 national societies from Western, Central and Eastern Europe, and from Central Asia, are gathered in the network. Their common objective is to contribute to the reduction of the spread of HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis and other communicable diseases principally among the most vulnerable people. The prime focus is on awareness raising and prevention programmes, particularly for young people.

During the reported period, Turkish Red Crescent trained 4,000 schoolchildren and students of 14-26 years old on prevention of HIV/AIDS in nine youth camps organised by the National Society in Canakkale, Eskisehir, Mersin, Antalya, Bolu and Izmir.

Additionally, the Red Crescent developed, printed and distributed in shopping centres, squares and streets of major cities 17,000 brochures, posters, postcards and bookmarks encouraging people to learn more about HIV/AIDS. The

HIV/AIDS in Turkey:

- The number of people infected with HIV/AIDS has increased from 2 in 1985 to 1,712 in 2003 according to government statistics.
- The UNAIDS estimates the number of those infected ranges between 7,000 and 14,000.
- Scientists predict, without effective prevention, it will increase to 50,000 by the year 2010.
- Several factors make Turkey vulnerable to worsening rates. Poor education, lack of awareness and inadequate health and care are three.
- Cultural barriers and beliefs compound low public awareness of transmission and protection.
- Young people are the most vulnerable and almost half of Turkey’s population is under 25 years old (Hecettepe University).

⁶ Apart from strengthening its own operational capacity to respond to disasters, the Red Crescent has been educating local communities to raise awareness on the most common disasters in the country and mitigate their effects. Kizilay with its community reach is ideally placed to be a lead in this area.

⁷ To read more on ERNA: <<http://www.erna.sk>>

materials are based on the Federation's '*stamps campaign*', a series of designs based on stamps, launched by the Federation in 2003 to counter myths and misconceptions about HIV/AIDS transmission. '*You cannot get AIDS by... being a friend*', '*You cannot get AIDS by... holding hands*' and '*You cannot get AIDS by... talking to someone*' are just a few of the messages that can be seen on the stamp designs.

In parallel, national radio and TV stations have continued broadcasting a 30-second radio spot and 25-second TV spot promoting safe sex and anti-stigma messages. The spots were produced by the Red Crescent earlier during the year and were first aired on 8 May, the World Red Cross Red Crescent Day. Seven major daily newspapers and four magazines have been supporting the Red Crescent in its action against the disease by publishing the national society's campaign materials under the headline '*Start reading! Learn about AIDS!*'.

Organisational Development

Goal: The Turkish Red Crescent as a key part of civil society is better placed to support the country's most vulnerable people.

Objective: The Turkish Red Crescent is a better functioning national society able to provide efficient, effective and sustainable assistance to the country's most vulnerable.

Strategic planning implementation: The strategic plan of the Turkish Red Crescent was developed in 2003 through internal consultations and in cooperation with primary stakeholders, including the Federation and the partner national societies based in Turkey. The plan covers the years 2004-2006 and outlines six priority areas identified by the national society based on its mission and vision statements developed at an earlier stage of the strategic planning process, as well as the Movement's Fundamental Principles:

- Disaster management,
- Health and social services,
- Blood banking,
- Branch development,
- Volunteering system development,
- Media and public relations.

This year, it was envisaged to support the Turkish Red Crescent in implementation of its strategic plan. However, the change over in the leadership of the national society has triggered a succession of events that did not enable to progress in the work (For details, please see programme update no 1).

There have been some positive developments recently. The new leadership of the national society has reviewed the priorities and goals of the strategic plan. A green-light to start the implementation is expected soon.

In the meantime, the Federation is planning to organise a training session on Project Planning Process (PPP, the Federation's main planning tool) for Red Crescent staff at the headquarters to strengthen their planning capacities. A similar training was sponsored by the British Red Cross earlier this year (September 2004) for Red Crescent branches in eastern Turkey. The training was facilitated by the Federation regional organisational development manager together with Turkish Red Crescent representatives from the headquarters. Participants included Red Crescent staff from Van, Mus, Erzincan and Trabzon branches, all are in eastern Turkey.

Branch Development: This component of the organizational development programme was designed to help Red Crescent branches develop the capacity to deliver basic services in accordance with the mission and vision of the National Society and establish a disaster management system capable of meeting the needs as well as expectations of local communities. Specifically, the focus is on:

- Developing, implementing and disseminating standard service programmes for the branches to deliver basic activities in line with the needs of their communities;
- Strengthening communication, coordination and cooperation within and between branches.
- Disseminating communication and marketing policies in branches;
- Assisting the National Society to strengthen disaster preparedness in regions;
- Disseminating community-based disaster preparedness programmes and creating risk mitigation culture in communities;

- Developing a response and logistics system capable of providing the required human resources, materials and equipment at the right time and in the right place to deliver sheltering, food, emergency relief and supportive medical services to people affected by emergency.

Turkish Red Crescent management selected four branches to pilot the programme: one branch is in Bursa, north-western town of Turkey, and other three are in Istanbul, namely Sultanbeyli, Tuzla and Üsküdar districts of the city. The criteria for the selection were the following:

The branches:

- are in the highest earthquake risk zone;
- are in a provincial city centre with a potential and willingness to expand the programmes to other branches in the province;
- have the capacity to expand financial resources to ensure the sustainability;
- are willing to implement community-based programmes;
- have good relations with the local government and the community;
- have the capacity to expand volunteer services

The Red Crescent has set up a working group to coordinate the programme implementation in the selected branches. The group has taken the ownership of the project and has come up with significant cost savings in the areas of meetings/trainings and accommodations. Local partnerships have been created with several guest-houses which will enable to save 35 per cent of the budget.

The working group presented the plan to the National Society director general in August 2004 and it was approved. Branches in Bursa, Tuzla, Sultanbeyli and Üsküdar were shared the goals and objectives, as well as budgets of the programme. The opportunity to work with 18 more branches was discussed too. It was agreed that based on assessments, new branches will be added to the programme, where it is possible.

During the reported period, 27 Red Crescent staff and volunteers were trained as trainers and another three as leader trainers on ABCD in disasters through two workshops in Bursa (on 5-6 July 2004) and Istanbul (on 4-5 October 2004). The training was conducted in cooperation with the Bogazici University, with which the Red Crescent signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) earlier in the year to formalise partnership cooperation in disaster preparedness and public education. The National Society and the University are developing a schedule for similar and other training including on non-structural mitigation and community disaster volunteers in 2005.

In consultation with specialists from local universities, the Turkish Red Crescent also designed a teachers' guide and students' handbooks called '*Learning Safe Life with Kizilay*' to create awareness about natural disasters and how to be protected from them as well as to promote the Red Crescent. The target audience of the books is the 5th and 6th grade primary school students, their families, and teachers. The study contains fundamental information that everybody needs to know to live safely. 33,000 copies of the students' handbooks and 2,500 copies of the teachers' guide were distributed by Red Crescent branches during the Kizilay Week on 28 October-4 November in schools that provincial and sub-provincial national education directorates deemed appropriate (40 provinces and sub-provinces, in total).

In parallel, many steps have been taken to promote communication standards and better marketing of the national society. To mention few:

- The Turkish Red Crescent did a public image survey to identify perceptions about the Red Crescent and benchmark the organisation conducting activities for the interest of the community. Results of the survey will be used by the National Society to develop better and more effective public relations and marketing strategies both at national and local levels.
- The idea of creating an intranet, which will enhance the communication within and between the headquarters and branches, was approved by the national society management. A company was selected to design the intranet and a group, set up in the Red Crescent under the public relations department, started to work with consultants of the company. Branches will be involved too. The intranet is planned to be activated in early 2005.

- Different marketing tools were developed for the branches under the new logo which was designed to strengthen the organisational identity of the National Society. A promotion film as well as various printed materials were produced too and distributed to branches.

The branches targeted through this project will be encouraged to learn from the experience of their colleagues in other branches, particularly Izmir, in western Turkey. Over the last two years, the Izmir branch, supported by the American Red Cross, has done a remarkable work to grow as a leader in the community. It has formed partnerships with the Ege University, Swiss Development Cooperation, Civil Defence and many other small agencies/organisations in their region. The sustainability of the branch has been proven effective by the branch fulfilling its commitment in funding 100 per cent of its three staff salary since July 2004. This was previously paid by the American Red Cross (100 per cent in the first year and 50 per cent in the second).

Volunteering system development: Volunteering system development is one of the priority areas of the Turkish Red Crescent, reflected in the strategic plan of the national society and directed at revitalising Red Crescent volunteer-based services. Recently, some branches as well as departments at the headquarters have started recruiting and involving volunteers in their work. The absence of a unified system, however, to manage volunteers has resulted in a poor coordination lessening the impact. Raising awareness of this as well as creating a common understanding of volunteerism in the national society has been identified a priority and was addressed at a three-day workshop organised by the Federation regional delegation in Ankara in September 2004. Discussions during the workshops covered the basic principles of volunteering and volunteer programme design. Participants included representatives of various departments at the Red Crescent headquarters - youth directorate, which is primarily responsible for volunteer management, and others that are recruiting or are planning to recruit volunteers for their services. Staff of the regional logistic response centres and several branches, including the Izmir and Bursa branches, attended too. They talked about the work they have pioneered in volunteerism at the branch level and demonstrated their website, volunteer handbook, volunteer training modules and forms that may be adopted as a new standard by the Red Crescent headquarters. Representatives of other local non-governmental organisations as well as a General Directorate of Civil Defence were invited too to share their experience on the work with volunteers. The participants were provided with copies of the key Federation documents on volunteering including *Volunteer Programme Design Toolkit*, *Volunteer Training Manual*, *Volunteering Policy Implementation Guide* and *Volunteer 2005*. The latter two documents had been translated from English into Turkish and distributed to the headquarters and branches in 2002. The workshop was successful as it triggered the process of developing a road map to establish an effective volunteer management system. The work will continue in 2005, with the start of the strategic plan implementation.

[*Please click here to return to the title page and contact information*](#)