

Annual report

 International Federation
of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

Russia, Belarus, Moldova and Ukraine (Focus on Belarus, Moldova and Ukraine)

Appeal No. MAA67003

30 April 2009

This report covers the period 01/01/2008 to
31/12/2008



A Volunteers March organised by the Belarus Red Cross on Red Cross day to promote volunteer movement. **Photo: Belarus Red Cross**

In brief

Programme purpose: In 2008, the Red Cross Societies of Belarus, Moldova and Ukraine focused on fields of disaster management, health and care and organizational development. Vulnerable groups such as children from disadvantaged and multi-child families, street children, orphans, people with disabilities and chronically ill patients, elderly people living alone and people living with HIV (PLHIV) were provided with additional nutritional support, home care and basic domestic services. Young people at higher risk of HIV infection were involved in prevention activities. The National Societies improved their governance management structures and procedures according to their strategic work plan, consolidated their status and strengthened the visiting nurses service and the volunteer movement.

Programme(s) summary: Throughout 2008, the Belarus Red Cross successfully implemented its volunteer development programme. A city volunteer council is set up and functioning in Vitebsk, providing a platform for volunteers to develop future plans and voice their opinions in a more organized and coherent manner. In April, the Belarus Red Cross booklet of good practices on community-based initiatives, *Youth in action*, became a laureate of the professional public relations (PR) award in the section, *the best corporation publication 2007*.

In addition, the National Society continued activities in HIV and AIDS prevention and promotion of positive behavioural change, disaster preparedness and organizational development.

Programmes run by the Moldova Red Cross in 2008 helped the National Society to strengthen its capacities in development of volunteering, promotion of gender equality and prevention of domestic violence against women and children, forging partnerships with public authorities and other stakeholders to help prevent and respond jointly to the community needs, specifically in times of

disaster, reducing vulnerabilities of marginalised groups through advocacy, public education and social support. Moreover, the National Society focused on improving its governance, management structures and procedures according to its strategic work plan, the consolidation of the organisation's statutes and strengthening of its volunteer base.

Due to the low appeal coverage such activities of the Ukraine Red Cross as preventing HIV, strengthening disaster preparedness and promoting humanitarian values were not implemented. A programme for developing the organisational capacities of the National Society was scaled down. *Improving Visiting Nurses Service (VNS)* was the active organizational development project funded through the International Federation within the framework of the Appeal 2008-2009.

The National Societies of Moldova and Ukraine were also involved in three disaster response projects: the DREF operations responding to mine blasts in Ukraine, drought in Moldova and floods in Moldova and Ukraine.

Financial situation: Total budget for 2008 for Russia, Belarus, Moldova and Ukraine is CHF 6,211,288 (USD 5,374,946 or EUR 4,236,894) out of which 73 per cent is covered. Expenditure overall was 90 per cent. The total 2008 budget was initially CHF 5,465,604 but this was revised to CHF 5,764,532 then again to CHF 5,907,466. A further revision later in the year with the USAID contribution makes the final budget figure. Out of this total appeal budget, CHF 2,388,060 was for programmes in Belarus, Moldova and Ukraine.

Seventeen years after the breakup of the Soviet Union it is increasingly difficult to attract donors to support Red Cross activities in its former component states. However, the needs remain huge, and in many ways they are increasing. Rampant TB and HIV, homelessness, the depletion of health services – all unthinkable in Soviet times – together with mass migration, human trafficking and other social phenomena mean that Red Cross societies have had to adapt radically to keep pace with the demand that threatens to swamp them.

Apart from the need to provide services to combat these new phenomena, and those that go back to Soviet times, like the results of the Chernobyl disaster, National Red Cross Societies need sharper management, better financial systems, good fundraising techniques, transparent reporting and much more. The International Federation remains optimistic that new and traditional donors will see the rationale for supporting these committed sister societies.

[Click here to go directly to the attached financial report.](#)

No. of people we help: In total 170,436 people directly benefited from the programmes supported by the International Federation. Some 166,565 people will benefit from activities planned for 2009.

Annual Report 2008 – Belarus, Moldova and Ukraine		
Programme	Target groups	People reached
Disaster Management	Elderly people living alone, people with disabilities, homeless people, multi-child families and people with low income, people released from prisons	94,558
	Red Cross volunteers and employees	140
Health and Care	Young people at higher risk and the general public	64,018
	People with disabilities and chronically ill patients, adults and children, elderly people living alone and PLHIV	1,470
	Red Cross volunteers and employees	647
Organizational Development	Vulnerable people, including orphans, people with disabilities and elderly people, unprivileged youth	3,400
	Young people	329
	Red Cross volunteers and employees	5,522
Principles and Values	Red Cross volunteers and employees	352

Our partners: The three National Societies cooperated with eight partner National Societies, the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), UN agencies operating in the region, different nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), national centres for blood donation, national AIDS centres, various governmental organizations at federal and local levels, universities and other educational institutions, mass media, as well as international and local enterprises.

Context

Due to the economic and social situation, the main humanitarian needs in Belarus, Moldova and Ukraine are related to poverty, health and disasters. Transition has been far more difficult for the three states than other ex-Soviet or Warsaw Pact countries due to geopolitical factors. Rampant inflation and the world economic crisis have had a negative impact on the most vulnerable groups of the population such as elderly people living alone, multi-child families, street children, people with disabilities, migrants and homeless people. Each of the vulnerable groups has its own specific needs, but the common problems affecting all are poverty, social exclusion and lack of access to services and opportunities to be heard. Women are a particularly vulnerable group, with employment discrimination, health problems, domestic violence and human trafficking being among the most severe hardships they endure.

The inhabitants of rural areas and small towns are also vulnerable to poverty due to significant rural-urban disparities in incomes, education, employment, demography and access to essential services. In these areas citizens are affected by unemployment and a range of poverty-related problems such as human trafficking, drugs and alcohol abuse, TB and sexually transmitted infections (STIs).

The incidence rates of Tuberculosis (TB) and HIV indicate a major health problem. Adult HIV prevalence among people aged 15-49 is very high in Ukraine (1.4) and Moldova (1.1) and much lower in Belarus (0.3).¹ With regard to the spread of TB, the prevalence rate in Moldova occupies one of the highest places in Europe with 150 cases per 100,000 people.

Moldova and Ukraine are prone to natural disasters. In July, the worst storms in over two centuries led to devastating flooding in some of the most impoverished parts of Ukraine and Moldova. 40 people were killed and some 30,000 people were displaced. A response operation by both National Societies, supported by an emergency appeal launched by the International Federation, is still ongoing, focusing on provision of emergency relief items, food parcels, assisting households in making their damaged houses habitable via mobile repair teams, and providing psycho-social support.

Out-of-date industrial infrastructure often becomes a cause of technological disasters. In Ukraine, on 8 June, 14 miners died in the Donetsk region because of a methane explosion. On 25 December, 27 people were killed after a gas explosion in an apartment building in the Crimean town of Yevpatoria.

These humanitarian challenges define priorities of the three National Societies. In 2008, the programmes in the areas of health and care, disaster management, organizational development and humanitarian values addressed the needs of people and communities that are among the most vulnerable in each country.

Progress towards outcomes

Disaster Management

Belarus Outcomes/Expected results:

- *The Red Cross has developed effective mechanisms for efficient delivery of emergency response and recovery assistance in communities prone to natural disasters;*

¹ Source: UNDP Human Development Report

- *Communities in Belarus are aware of disaster hazards and are capable of acting effectively during the time of disaster;*
- *The Red Cross has improved the nutritional status of people affected by disasters and their access to quality social services;*
- *The Red Cross has strengthened its capacities to prevent human trafficking by raising the awareness of potential victims and the general public and by providing reintegration assistance.*

No funds were received to support the first, second and fourth programme outcomes. In spite of this, with the support of IOM, the Belarus Red Cross continued its efforts to raise the awareness of potential victims of human trafficking and the general public of the risks. Reintegration assistance was also provided.

In order to meet its disaster management obligations, the Belarus Red Cross maintained its disaster relief fund and emergency stocks pre-positioned in each region, and ensured a sufficient number of staff and volunteers are on stand-by in case of disaster. The National Society has its own emergency fund, to which 2 per cent of all its income (membership fees and local non-earmarked donations) is being allocated. This emergency fund has enabled the society to contribute to the International Federation's emergency appeals in support of operations in Myanmar, Ukraine and Moldova.

With financial support from the Swiss Red Cross, the National Society procured 7,308 food parcels which were distributed to 5,500 beneficiaries, including elderly people living alone and people with disabilities, homeless people, multi-child families and people with low income, and people released from prisons in all regions of Belarus. Additionally, within the "Twice Christmas" operation the Swiss Red Cross bilaterally donated five trucks, which contained food, hygiene items, toys, second-hand cloths and shoes. All these have been supplied for further distribution among the vulnerable population in Minsk city and the regions of Minsk, Vitebsk, Grodno and Gomel.

Constraints or Challenges

In Belarus for every project that involves foreign donors, all the money and supplies received from abroad must be registered as humanitarian cargo with the department for humanitarian aid under the presidential administration. The Belarus Red Cross has extensive experience in dealing with international projects and the system of getting money registration certificates runs smoothly. Nevertheless, the procedure can last up to a month, leading to delays in project implementation.

Moldova Outcomes/Expected results:

- *Better trained regional rapid response teams to respond to disasters;*
- *Developed effective tools to strengthen the capacities of the communities prone to disasters;*
- *Strengthened National Society capacities to reduce the impact of disasters on vulnerable communities by providing small pensions and short-term nutritional support.*

Achievements:

Through the "Relief assistance to the most vulnerable" programme Moldova Red Cross has provided supplementary food assistance to 6,849 vulnerable people in Chisinau, Balti and Bender. The activities included the selection of beneficiaries jointly with the Ministry of Social Protection, collaboration agreement with canteens from target areas; daily distribution of hot meals for the most vulnerable people such as street children, orphans and elderly people with minimal pensions. Some 1,000 beneficiaries who could not be provided with hot meals received food parcels and hygiene kits.

The disaster management programme is focusing on Red Cross' capacity building, community-based disaster prevention and preparedness and disaster risk reduction. The project establishes mechanisms for efficient institutional preparedness and coordination during disasters through strengthened partnership with public authorities and other stakeholders. It also works to increase community awareness of what are effective actions to take during disasters, while at the same time reducing the vulnerability of communities in disaster-prone areas through timely information and capacity building activities. In the past year 25 new volunteers have been recruited and trained in disaster management.

Around 500 people from disaster prone areas have been reached through information campaigns organised by Red Cross.

Within the project *“Prevention of Avian Influenza”*² Moldova Red Cross increases public awareness of people on the dangers of avian influenza in five target districts of Moldova (Calarasi, Glodeni, Ungheni, Soroca, Orhei) and strengthens the preparedness /response capacity of National Society to public health emergencies.

In 2008, 80 volunteers from target districts have been trained on avian influenza prevention. The trained Red Cross volunteers have promoted greater awareness about avian influenza, reinforced general hygiene messages and safe poultry farming practices. To disseminate the campaign messages, the volunteers have organized 165 school meetings, public gatherings, household visits to the families with backyard farms. In addition, ten public awareness campaigns on avian influenza have been organised in project districts with the involvement of Red Cross youth members and volunteers. 25,000 booklets and 1,000 calendars have been printed and distributed at meetings, seminars and to the general public. More than 10,000 people have been reached by the project. To coordinate project implementation, five coordination meetings and two round tables with project partners were organised.

Constraints or Challenges:

As the overall socio-economic situation remains difficult, there is a need to increase the Red Cross's complementary role and services to vulnerable communities. The number of vulnerable people continues to rise, while the resources to meet their needs are diminishing.

Ukraine Outcomes/Expected results:

- *Raised awareness of communities to hazards and strengthened disaster preparedness/response skills to respond to disasters effectively;*
- *Strengthened National Society disaster preparedness/response skills and material resources for emergency relief.*

Achievements:

Although there was no response to the appeal projects, 35 Red Cross staff and volunteers from the Donetsk and Lugansk regional branches were trained in psychosocial support in the course of the DREF operation responding to mine blasts in the country.

DREF Operations

Mine blast in Ukraine

A series of deadly mine accidents in end of 2007 resulted in 106 people killed and 156 injured in Donetsk. Some 140 miners' families, their relatives and community members received psychosocial support through home visits, self-support group meetings and various public events conducted by Ukraine Red Cross staff and volunteers. It facilitated their return to normal life after the tragedy and substantially reduced the trauma.

Food insecurity in Moldova

Extremely high temperatures and minimal rainfall during the 2007 summer led to widespread drought conditions in 28 of Moldova's 32 regions. Over 200,000 people were affected by drastically diminished harvests. Between February and May, the Moldova Red Cross Society, with the support of the International Federation, provided supplementary food assistance to 7,750 vulnerable families in 20 isolated rural farmsteads and villages. The food parcels were distributed to beneficiaries from large families, single-headed households and families with members with disabilities.

Floods Operation in Moldova and Ukraine

The Red Cross Societies of Moldova and Ukraine provided vital services to flood affected communities in some of the most impoverished parts of Moldova and Ukraine. By the end of 2008, 2,763 families in

² This work was funded through the Global Avian Human Influenza appeal (MAA00018).

Moldova and 8,000 families in Ukraine had received relief assistance (food and hygiene parcels, water filters, electric heaters, blankets, etc). Both National Societies have equipped mobile response teams (two in Ukraine and one in Moldova) to the flood affected areas. Equipped with construction tools and materials, the teams visit flood affected families to offer support with minor repairs to damaged homes.

All emergency and DREF reports can be accessed through the below links:

Emergency Appeal Moldova and Ukraine/Floods:

<http://www.ifrc.org/docs/appeals/08/MDR67003ea.pdf>

Moldova and Ukraine: Floods (MDR67003)- [Operations update no.3](#)

Moldova: Food insecurity (MDRMD001) - [DREF operation final report](#)

Ukraine: Mine blast (MDRUA003) - [DREF final report](#)

Constraints or Challenges

There were no major constraints in the implementation of the above mentioned projects.

Health and Care

Belarus Outcomes/Expected results:

HIV and AIDS:

- *The Belarus Red Cross effectively addresses the HIV epidemic by raising public awareness on prevention, healthy lifestyles, stigma and discrimination.*

Community-based first aid:

- *Capacities of communities and households to prevent and cope with individual and small-scale emergencies e.g. household and road accidents have increased*

Achievements:

The Belarus Red Cross involved 64,665 people in various HIV prevention activities such as peer education sessions, film-group sessions, youth actions and seminars (lectures, meetings with studying and working youth, parents, teachers and other educational specialists). Some 277 educational institutions, 37 enterprises and four military units were reached by the programme. 9,013 people took part in peer education sessions. By the end of 2008 a standard six-week HIV prevention model had been introduced in 20 educational institutions covering 758 young people. The total number of Red Cross volunteers actively working in the area of HIV prevention is 647, including 443 newly involved in 2008.

Big events dedicated to AIDS Memorial Day, St. Valentine's Day and World Aid Day were held in the regions attracting a number of local NGOs. A photo exhibition-installation, *The door?!* was opened in Gomel and Brest to promote respect for civil and human rights in the context of HIV and AIDS, to debunk myths about HIV and AIDS and to form humane and tolerant attitudes towards PLHIV.

Recognizing the need to scale up both its activities and capacities to better tackle HIV in the country, the Belarus Red Cross joined the Red Cross and Red Crescent Global Alliance on HIV and TB presenting its HIV National Programme with a budget of CHF 1,487,672 during a recent ERNA meeting in Belgrade. A focal person is appointed within the Belarus Red Cross for consolidating HIV and AIDS activities.

Though no funding has been received under the second programme outcome, a dialogue is ongoing with the French Red Cross and the European Reference Centre for First Aid Education about possible support for the activities.

Moldova Outcomes/Expected results:

Visiting Nurses Service (VNS).

- *Improved National Society capacities to provide socio-medical assistance to vulnerable people through visiting nurses service;*

- *Increased capacities of families and communities to provide social and counseling services to PLHIV and their family members;*
- *Reduced vulnerability to HIV infection and its impact through expanding knowledge of the target groups on prevention, transmission and changing their risk behaviour;*
- *Decreased stigma and discrimination to PLHIV and their relatives and partners;*
- *Increased access of the project high-risk groups (IDUs) to sterile syringes, condoms and counselling services.*

Achievements:

Based on the experience from previous years, the Moldova Red Cross medico-social centres continued to provide vital assistance to vulnerable groups of people. They offered psychosocial consultation; medical check-ups; supply of prescription medicine; distribution of second-hand clothes; home care and awareness-raising on health issues. Jointly with the Association of People with Disabilities and the regional departments of social protection, the centres ran clubs for elderly people living alone, where they celebrated different holidays.

In addition, the Moldova Red Cross has organized charity actions jointly with the social workers and assistants in order to collect clothing to help children with disabilities and involve volunteers in providing necessary services to these children and also to the elderly people living alone.

In 2008 alone, the Moldova Red Cross provided 675 vulnerable people with better quality socio-medical services through 14 centres. In total, 1,470 beneficiaries have been provided with food products, hygiene items and medical supplies and also with services such as shopping, home cleaning and ironing.

As a result of the Red Cross activities, the vulnerable people approached by the Red Cross felt less marginalized and isolated in the society. Communities have increased their awareness of the plight of vulnerable people, including elderly people.

The project was also focused on strengthening professional skills of the Red Cross staff and volunteers in the regions. This was reached through seminars, public events on topics such as methods of providing care to PLHIV, promotion of voluntary blood donation, role of volunteers, social security, status and government privileges for people with disabilities, and the power of compassion.

Constraints or Challenges:

Unfortunately, the National Society's systems, structures and mechanisms to motivate and retain volunteers are not fully developed. Work needs to be continued on strengthening Red Cross human resource capacities. Additionally, there are many patients with chronic diseases, who need correct and effective treatment. However, limited resources prevented the Red Cross from helping them all.

Ukraine Outcomes/Expected results:

- *Improved health and social conditions of PLHIV due to ARV therapy;*
- *Decreased spread of HIV in rural areas of Ukraine due to public awareness and behaviour-changing activities of the Red Cross;*
- *Decreased spread of HIV among injecting drug users (IDUs).*

Due to the lack of funding no appeal-funded health and care programmes were implemented in Ukraine. However, the Ukraine Red Cross has been providing health screening and psychosocial support to the population of Ukraine affected by the Chernobyl disaster in the framework of the Chernobyl Humanitarian Assistance and Rehabilitation Programme (CHARP).

Global Alliance for HIV and TB

The Ukraine Red Cross has been working hard on adopting the Global Alliance approach to its HIV programme in order to become the seventh member of the Global Alliance for HIV and TB in Europe.

Organizational Development

Belarus Outcomes/Expected results:

Volunteer promotion and development:

- *The Belarus Red Cross has developed and improved its systems of volunteer recruitment, retention and management;*
- *The Red Cross volunteers have been actively involved in the National Society programmes through better management and motivation tools.*

National Society capacity development:

- *The performance of the National Society has been improved through strengthening its legal base and capacities.*

Older people – participatory programme design:

- *Life quality of older people has been improved by ensuring their access to information, organizing self-support groups and advocacy of the elder people rights and needs.*

Achievements:

Since January youth volunteer development has been progressing steadily in Vitebsk region with the support of the three-year Capacity Building Fund (CBF) grant. This is in addition to the youth activities, funded by Danish Red Cross bilaterally in Grodno and Brest regions. The project has progressed according to the CBF application and its first year phase is completed. All the activities planned for 2008 have been implemented thus contributing to attaining the project objective. Nine volunteer initiatives were fully implemented during April-December 2008 in Vitebsk oblast. About 240 volunteers were involved in implementing the initiatives in the seven local communities. Over 3,400 vulnerable people, including orphans, people with disabilities and elderly people, unprivileged youth, benefited from youth initiatives. These volunteer initiatives were highly appreciated by local communities, beneficiaries and mass media. The official recognition through letters of support from the local authorities, youth departments, educational institutions, enterprises and local newspapers, resulted in an allocation of local resources for the initiatives – over CHF 10,200, or 76 per cent of the youth initiatives' total budget, has been contributed from local sources. The shopping centre "Omega" became a ground for fund-raising activities in Vitebsk, where volunteers implemented two fund-raising actions bringing an additional CHF 4,000. City volunteer council is set up and functioning, providing a platform for volunteers to develop future plans and voice their opinions in a more organized and coherent manner.

During 2008 volunteer movement has developed in Vitebsk oblast significantly; one of the indicators being that 5 of 24 winners of the national competitions "Best volunteer 2008" and "Best initiative 2008" come from Vitebsk oblast. 41 volunteers and Belarus Red Cross staff improved their knowledge and skills in identifying social problems in their local communities, developing project documents, implementing, reporting and evaluating their initiatives and are committed to develop initiatives in their communities. Youth leaders from Vitebsk region and a regional coordinator took part in the national volunteer council meetings and activities; three volunteers from Vitebsk took part in a training for volunteer council members in July, eight volunteers from Vitebsk region took part in Belarus Red Cross youth leaders school held in national park Narochansky (please refer to <http://www.ifrc.org/docs/news/08/08082903/>), five volunteers took part in Brest oblast forum, nine volunteers and regional coordinator took part in national youth forum in December.

In April, the Belarus Red Cross booklet of good practices on community-based initiatives *Youth in action* became a laureate of the professional public relations (PR) award in the section, *The best corporation publication 2007*. The competition was conducted by the Belarusian PR Institute. The booklet *Youth in action* was the only civil society organization publication that was awarded. Noteworthy that all good practices were written by volunteers themselves as well as all booklet pictures were taken by volunteers.

Training materials in leadership, fund-raising and volunteer management, volunteer orientation course and a volunteer handbook for new volunteers, all developed under the *Youth participation in civil society* project, were disseminated among the Red Cross branches in the Vitebsk region and placed on the Belarus Red Cross web-site. The technical support provided to volunteers and staff contributed to the quality and sustainability of the trainings and the activities. The booklet on good practices of Vitebsk oblast was published in December and disseminated among volunteers, chairpersons and staff members, and key stakeholders.

A youth forum in December was a great motivation for volunteers to work further even more actively. Together they developed new ideas to be put into life in 2009. The forum also adopted a resolution which highlighted such issues as further strengthening the status of volunteers in the Belarus Red Cross; involvement in volunteering of both men and women, as well as people of various ages; further improvements in volunteer management; improvements in communications and information flows; further capacity building needs in volunteering, e.g. continuity of volunteering traditions, induction and training.

The financial management function was separated from the accounting function in the Belarus Red Cross as part of the capacity-building effort to create a sustainable, effective and transparent financial management system in the National Society. As a result, the system of electronic bank payments was set up, project budgets for 2008 and 2009 were merged into one consolidated budget to analyse funding sources and expenditure; the system of interaction and financial reporting between the National Society's districts, regions and headquarters has been reviewed. By the end of 2008 the headquarters organigram was revised and new positions of the financial manager and logistics officer have been introduced. A unified salary system has been developed. However, further support is needed towards its introduction and full implementation. Technical assistance is also required for the establishment of the National Society human resource policy.

In terms of legal base strengthening, the Belarus Red Cross statutes were revised and commented by the Joint Statutes Commission. The revised Statutes are to be adopted during the coming National Society congress in April 2009.

Constraints or Challenges

The Belarus Red Cross is facing several risks outside the organization. Uppermost is that the legal base is far from perfect, with no law on volunteering and the absence of a system for state grants to NGOs working in the social field. Furthermore, there is an increasing competition between NGOs working in the social field. This could also be construed as a positive spur to raise standards.

In 2008 the Belarus Red Cross was short-listed for the Intensified Capacity Building (ICB) Fund. The ICB plan was developed as a result of a broad-based consultative and participatory process including self-assessment of the organizational capacity by the Belarus Red Cross itself, however failed to be selected for ICB support. The International Federation's representation and the Belarus Red Cross are exploring possibilities to re-adjust the plan and to attract other sources of funding.

Funding for the third programme outcome *Older people – participatory programme design* was received only in December and the activities will start in 2009.

Moldova Outcomes/Expected results:

- *Strengthened National Society capacities to diversify local resources and develop sound financial management;*
- *Increased number of branches able to assist larger number of beneficiaries;*
- *Increased capacities of the headquarters and branches' staff on project planning, evaluation and reporting;*
- *Clear separation of leadership and management at all levels.*

Achievements:

By implementing the organizational development programme Moldova Red Cross is contributing to achieving Global Agenda goal three, through improved capacities at the headquarters and local branch levels, strengthened volunteer and youth management, and improved services to the communities. The programme helps the Moldova Red Cross to strengthen its volunteer management system through the elaboration of the volunteers' strategy, volunteer toolkit and development of community based initiatives.

Around 130 Red Cross staff and volunteers have been trained in project planning, evaluation and reporting. Two national volunteer management seminars and eight regional workshops were organised in five branches. To increase public awareness on Red Cross work and to improve its visibility 75 information sessions on Red Cross activities were organised in schools, lyceums, and universities. In addition, visibility and information materials (10,000 booklets, 400 T-shirts, 400 caps, 500 pens with the logo) were produced and distributed. On the whole, more than 1,500 volunteers have participated in Red Cross activities conducted in 2008. Regular meetings with project partners to review progress within the project, to discuss constraints and find solutions in a participatory manner were held.

Another significant achievement of the *National Society capacity development* programme was the revision of the National Society's statutes. The statutes was adopted at the General Assembly held on 4 September 2008. The new statutes define more clearly governance and management functions that should ultimately improve the effectiveness of service delivery. Progress was made on establishing a vertical relationship between the three structural levels of the organization – national, regional and community. Rights and responsibilities of the executive committee and the presidium were discussed and agreed upon. This has enabled the decision-making process to be decentralized and increased transparency at regional and local levels.

However, as stated above much remains to be done to put these reforms into effect and the International Federation will be doing all it can to assist Moldova Red Cross to end the current transition phase and ensure true separation of governance and management.

Ukraine Outcomes/Expected results:

Youth and volunteer promotion and development:

- *The Ukraine Red Cross has developed and strengthened its capacities and structure to establish strong youth movement and volunteer recruitment and retention systems.*

Visiting Nurses Service (VNS) capacity development:

- *The quality of the Red Cross visiting nurses service has been improved.*

Achievements:

Out of the two planned projects in organizational development, the Ukraine Red Cross has been implementing the VNS project funded in January-March by Lars Amundsen Foundation and since then by the Capacity Building Fund (CBF). In the framework of the project, some 660,000 leaflets on how to provide first aid were printed in February and distributed to all regional Red Cross branches in Ukraine.

Since April the focus of the project switched to the modernization of social care and social work of the VNS. The objective of the project is to improve the visiting nurses service by strengthening its administrative-legal base and quality assurance component. As a result the following results have been achieved:

- 1) The standard description of VNS employee duties has been completed;
- 2) The standard medico-social card for VNS clients has been developed and printed;
- 3) The tariffs for medico-social services have been worked out;
- 4) The format of a client's personal case and form has been elaborated;
- 5) The existing functions for visiting nurses have been added. All the documents have been sent to the regional branches and distributed among the heads of VNS in the regions;

- 6) The standard regulation on hospice has been developed;
- 7) Visiting nurse diary has been developed and printed in amount of 3,500 copies;
- 8) The collection of documents for VNS which included lists of tariffs, VNS medical card, position instructions, regulation on hospice and others compiled, printed in amount of copies and distributed in all regions.

The implementation of the project raised the confidence of the clients towards the VNS, which at present is very high and the number of clients permanently grows. Developed tariffs for medico-social service give an opportunity for visiting nurses to widen service areas and improve the quality of medical and social support. The majority of the recipients of assistance completely trust the visiting nurses and depend on their assistance.

Principles and Values

Belarus Outcomes/Expected results:

Due to the lack of funding no programmes under Global Agenda goal four were implemented in 2008. Nevertheless, components of dissemination of humanitarian values and reduction of stigma and discrimination were incorporated into other programme activities such as volunteer actions. The Belarus Red Cross submitted its application "Promotion of Red Cross and Red Crescent Principles and Humanitarian Values among youth" to the Empress Shoken Fund for possible support in 2009.

Moldova Outcomes/Expected results:

Promotion of humanitarian values and respect for diversity; combating trafficking in human beings.

- *Strengthened capacities to effectively promote the Movement's Fundamental Principles and humanitarian values;*
- *Increased community awareness about the importance of voluntary blood donations;*
- *Increased National Society capacities to promote tolerance and respect for diversity to victims of human trafficking.*

Achievements:

The priority of this programme is given to dissemination of the Fundamental Principles of the Movement and promoting humanitarian values in the communities and among the staff, members and volunteers of the Moldova Red Cross. The programme is promoting the culture of non-discrimination among people from different ethnical backgrounds, decreasing stigma against people living with HIV (PLHIV), promoting the voluntary blood donation and reducing social isolation of vulnerable children and elderly people living alone.

Some 32 new volunteers have been recruited under this component in 2008 and trained in project management and peer education to disseminate humanitarian values, the Red Cross Fundamental Principles, to promote a healthy way of living, to reduce stigma and discrimination towards marginalized groups in the society, to prevent trafficking in human beings and domestic violence. About 320 volunteers have attended coordination meetings, seminars, workshops and public events on promotion of humanitarian values and human rights, promotion of voluntary blood donation, reducing stigma and discrimination towards marginalized people.

Working in partnership

To achieve better results and generate high quality programme, the National Societies in the three countries continued cooperating with the key stakeholders in the field of health and care, disaster management, organizational development and humanitarian values. Traditional partners of the National Societies are the ministries of health, social welfare, emergency, justice, internal affairs and education. The Moldova Red Cross is a member of the government commission on humanitarian assistance.

The main international partners of the three National Societies within the International Federation are the British Red Cross, the Danish Red Cross, Swiss Red Cross, Norwegian Red Cross, Swedish Red Cross, French Red Cross, Italian Red Cross and the Consortium consisting of the Austrian Red Cross, the German Red Cross and the Swiss Red Cross.

The Belarus Red Cross contributes significantly to the implementation of the national strategy for responding to HIV and providing universal access to HIV prevention, treatment and care. The National Society is represented in the republican interdepartmental council on the prevention of HIV and STIs, the country coordination mechanism for interaction with the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria, the consultative council on HIV and AIDS monitoring and evaluation, and it is one of the executors of the state HIV prevention programme for 2006-2010. In all regions of the country the Belarus Red Cross has established teams/groups of trained volunteers whose activities are supported and managed by regional coordinators. The activities are based on the most effective approaches and technologies and thanks to the International Federation support and diversified partnerships they are continuously enriched with new methods and forms of work for HIV prevention and support to PLHIV. Through project activities the Belarus Red Cross provides high quality services to its target groups such as working youth, injecting drug users (IDUs), sex workers and PLHIV. The positive image of the Belarus Red Cross, qualifications of its staff and their dedication to the Movement's fundamental principles help build trusting relations with key population groups such as youth, IDUs and sex workers. State-run organizations have much more difficulties gaining access to these groups. Recognizing the need to consolidate the efforts of all organizations working in Belarus in the field of HIV, the National Society continues to expand and develop partnerships with them, firstly, with organizations of PLHIV which positively contributes to the achievement of HIV projects results. Cooperation and information exchange between Belarus Red Cross and Russian Red Cross programmes had a positive impact on the process and results of the programme implementation.

Cooperation with ICRC is focused on restoring family links, dissemination of International Humanitarian Law (primarily through the *Exploring Humanitarian Law programme*).

In Ukraine, one of the important events of the past year was the celebration of 90th anniversary of foundation of Ukraine Red Cross held on 21st April 2008. Together with Red Cross workers and activists the deputy head of Europe Zone, the acting regional representative from Moscow, the country representative for the three countries, the head of Kiev ICRC regional delegation, the chairlady of the Russian Red Cross, representatives of the Red Cross Societies of Italy, France, Luxemburg and Germany participated in this event. Numerous workers and volunteers of the Ukraine Red Cross were received at the celebration governmental awards.

In November, a regional meeting on preventing the spread of TB and HIV epidemics took place in Kiev. The representatives of Moldova, Ukraine, Belarus and Russia Red Cross Societies and the Kazakhstan Red Crescent as well as the International Federation staff took part in the meeting. The participants analysed the National Societies' capacity to implement collaborative TB/HIV interventions, identified a niche for the National Societies in the implementation of the WHO Policy for Collaborative TB/HIV Activities and reviewed performance indicators for TB/HIV proposed by the working group. As a result of the meeting, the participants developed individual short-term workplans for TB/HIV. The longer-term goals will be defined by the National Societies and incorporated in the HIV Global Alliance programme. The Kiev representative conducted negotiations with the American Red Cross with an intention to launch anti-HIV projects in Ukraine. The bilateral project actually started in December 2008.

The International Federation, through its country office in Chisinau, representation in Minsk, regional representation in Moscow and zone office in Budapest is assisting the Moldova Red Cross in strengthening its capacities to deliver high quality services to people in need. Partnership with international organisations (UNHCR, IOM, partner National Societies) and access to international experience provide a solid foundation for further activities. Also, the Moldova Red Cross continues its partnerships with local authorities and other stakeholders in delivering emergency response and recovery assistance to communities affected by the drought and floods.

Contributing to longer-term impact

All the projects implemented by the National Societies of Belarus, Moldova and Ukraine are aligned with the International Federation's Global Agenda. The health and care programmes, in alignment with Global Agenda goals two and four, aim to raise public awareness of HIV and AIDS, promote healthy lifestyles and fight stigmatization and discrimination towards PLHIV. They also strive to develop effective community-based first-aid programmes. The organizational development programmes are in line with the Framework for Action's ten areas of improvement.

Regular visits are organized in the field to ensure evaluation of the programme activities, to find out the best practices of cooperation with local authorities, to ensure qualitative assistance to the beneficiaries and to share experience and communication with the branches.

In Belarus, the volunteer project contributed to the improvement of the National Society's experience and strengthened its capacities in fostering volunteer movement. Volunteers take part in decision-making in the organization by interviewing candidates for the position of regional coordinator, participating in youth forums and developing the resolution of the forums, in making up city volunteer councils and planning various activities. Young people involved in volunteering have improved their human capital by strengthening self-initiative, self-reliance, responsibility and innovativeness. The opportunity to conduct youth actions and implement their own initiatives are strong incentives for attracting, retaining and motivating the volunteers. Furthermore, youth actions, activities organized jointly with other organizations, publications and broadcasts raise the image of Belarus Red Cross, attract public attention to issues regarding key population groups and contribute to the consolidation of efforts of governmental, non-governmental organizations and local communities and help mobilize local resources. Effective cooperation with the PLHIV community has contributed significantly towards further developing and strengthening of the programme component to reduce stigma and discrimination towards PLHIV.

In Ukraine, during the implementation of the VNS project, monitoring was carried out in the five regional branches - Crimea, Vinnitsia, Cherkassy, Kharkiv and Kiev. This gave an opportunity to study more deeply all the problems which nurses face in their day-to-day work. Inquiries and questionnaires were used in the monitoring in order to evaluate the VNS work independently, to find out the best practices of cooperation with the local authorities and to render the qualitative assistance to VNS clients. The application of the VNS best practices facilitated strengthening the infrastructure in service provision, improved the process of rendering assistance to the most vulnerable groups of population, upgraded the conditions of work, and enlarged the sphere of services as well as their quality. It increased the effectiveness of clients' involvement and their confidence to the VNS.

The National Societies strictly follow the approach of gender equity and ensure the equal participation of women and men through appropriate information and publicity materials in the design of key project activities and access to the opportunities they offer. An appropriate male/female balance is also sought in the project management structure and the activities themselves. However, it should be mentioned that the beneficiaries of the VNS are mainly women because in Ukraine the life expectancy for men is much lower.

The Moldova Red Cross through relief assistance and activities directed towards the dissemination of humanitarian values has improved its image among the general public. Newly recruited volunteers are trained in project management and peer education to disseminate Humanitarian Values, the Movement's Fundamental Principles, to promote a healthy way of living, and to reduce stigma and discrimination towards marginalized groups in the society.

Looking ahead

For 2009 the priorities of the National Societies will be on health and care, disaster management and organizational development.

To strengthen its leading role in responding to HIV and providing support to the people affected by the epidemic, the Belarus Red Cross identified the following main priorities of work in 2009-2010: development of a complex approach towards HIV services by consolidating all ongoing Belarus Red Cross projects into one programme which will help build the capacities of the Belarus Red Cross and improve the quality of its services. During 2009 the Belarus Red Cross will further develop youth programme activities ongoing in Brest, Grodno and Vitebsk regions, as well as replicate its successful volunteer development model to Mogilev region. This work in Mogilev region will be supported bilaterally by the Danish Red Cross and by the Norwegian Red Cross through the International Federation. The Norwegian Red Cross and the International Federation will at the same time support social inclusion and empowerment approaches towards elderly people both in Mogilev region and through the network of Railway Red Cross organizations. The International Federation will continue ensuring synergy and linking with bilateral projects supported by the Danish Red Cross and the Consortium of the Austrian, German and Swiss Red Cross Societies. The start of the new *HIV prevention at workplaces and in vocational schools in Belarus* programme with financial support from GTZ (German international cooperation enterprise for sustainable development) has been delayed and it is now expected to be launched in 2009.

Building up its organizational capacity at national and regional levels remains vital for the Moldova Red Cross. Weak volunteer and staff management systems undermine the organization making it a less than valued partner for the government and funding bodies. Therefore it is of paramount importance that the National Society, in formulating its humanitarian programmes, focuses on a smaller number of activities with higher impact; ensures that the selected programmes are aimed at the most vulnerable; ensures efficiency, cost effectiveness and accountability; explores non-traditional sources of revenue and finance; builds partnerships; ensures sustainability; recruits, retains and nurtures competent staff, and ensures true division of governance and management.

Since Ukraine has the most severe HIV epidemic in Europe, the Ukraine Red Cross programme priorities include activities aiming at awareness increase and behaviour change as well as implementation of harm reduction projects. In particular this will be done within the the framework of the HIV project funded by the American Red Cross which will be focused on promoting the care and support of people living with HIV.

The Ukraine Red Cross with the assistance of Kiev Federation representation has prepared and submitted an application for a project on human pandemic preparedness (H2P). The one-year project launch is planned in May 2009 with a total budget of CHF 500,000. Within the project a pandemic preparedness plan will be developed by the Red Cross and implemented in selected pilot regions. The plan will include trainings for nurses and volunteers, coordination of efforts on pandemic preparedness with other stakeholders, publication of information materials. A similar plan is in preparation for Moldova.

Another priority programme will be disaster management focused on improving disaster preparedness and response skills of Red Cross staff and volunteers through training, competitions and first-aid education, as well as further development of Red Cross infrastructure, including creation of a disaster preparedness centre. The International Federation and Ukraine Red Cross will seek necessary funding for these important programmes.

How we work	
<p>The International Federation's activities aligned with its Global Agenda, which set out four broad goals to meet the Federation's mission to "improve the lives of vulnerable people by mobilizing the power of humanity".</p>	<p>Global Agenda Goals:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduce the numbers of deaths, injuries and impact from disasters. • Reduce the number of deaths, illnesses and impact from diseases and public health emergencies. • Increase local community, civil society and Red Cross Red Crescent capacity to address the most urgent situations of vulnerability. • Reduce intolerance, discrimination and social exclusion and promote respect for diversity and human dignity.
Contact information	
<p>For further information specifically related to this report, please contact:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In Belarus Red Cross: Viktor Kalbanau, Secretary General, Belarus Red Cross, phone/fax 375 (0) 17 227 14 17; email: belarus.redcross@tut.by • In Ukraine Red Cross: Alla Khabarova, Executive Director, Ukraine Red Cross, phone: + 380 44 235 0334, email: international@redcross.org.ua • In Moldova Red Cross: Vasile Chernenky, Executive Director, Moldovan Red Cross, phone: +373 2272 58 24, email: redcross@mts.md • In the Federation Representation for Belarus, Moldova and Ukraine : Joe Lowry, Representative for Belarus, Moldova and Ukraine; Minsk; phone: +375 172 23 63 61; fax +375 172 23 90 60; email: joe.lowry@ifrc.org • In the Regional Representation for Belarus, Moldova, Russia and Ukraine: Jaap Timer, Regional Representative, Moscow; phone +7 495 937 52 67; fax + 7 495 937 52 63; email: jaap.timer@ifrc.org • In the Europe Zone Office: Leon Prop, Deputy Head of Zone, Budapest, phone: +36 1 8884 502; fax: +361 336 1516; email: leon.prop@ifrc.org 	