

# Annual report



International Federation  
of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

## Azerbaijan

MAAAZ002

30 April 2010

This report covers the period 1 January 2009  
to 31 December 2009.



**Azerbaijan Red Crescent provides affected people with relief items.** Photo: Azerbaijan Red Crescent Society

## In brief

**Programme purpose:** The programme activities of the Azerbaijan Red Crescent were aligned with and contributed to the Global Agenda Goals aiming to improve the lives and alleviate suffering among the most vulnerable people through disaster management, health and care, organizational development, and focus on the Fundamental Principles of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and humanitarian values.

**Programme(s) summary:** Supported by the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) the Azerbaijan Red Crescent implemented activities in disaster management, health and care, organizational development and principles and values. The main activities within the programmes were:

- **Disaster management** with special emphasis on capacity-building in disaster response.
- **Health and care** through HIV and AIDS, tuberculosis (TB) and harm reduction, first aid, psychosocial support, blood donation and general health and care and social support. Initiatives were taken in order to address the risks of pandemics.
- **Organizational development** focusing on capacity-building, financial management, fund-raising and resource mobilization, communication and public relations, branch development, and youth and volunteer development.
- **Principles and values** focusing on prejudice, discrimination, stigmatization and social exclusion of marginalized groups in local communities.

**Financial situation:** The total 2009 budget was CHF 586,120 (USD 556,224 or EUR 408,088), of which 72 per cent covered. Total expenditure was CHF 269,992. Some of the funds were received in the second half of 2009 and is funding for programmes that runs into 2010. Additionally the National Society received CHF 124,836 (USD 120,977 or EUR 82,665) from the International Federation's Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF) to implement a floods relief operation.

Financial figures 2009	
Budget (final)	586,120
Income	419,769 (72)
Expenditure	269,992 (46)
Balance	149,777

Percentage of budget in brackets.

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

**Floods operation MDRAZ001:** <http://www.ifrc.org/docs/appeals/09/MDRAZ001dfr.pdf>

**Number of people we have reached:**

The National Society reached more than 74,000 people in 2009. Of these about three-fourth were reached with health and care services in Baku and several regions. Totally 1,200 people were reached by the DREF operation.

Programme area	People reached
Disaster Management	3,420
Health and Care	56,256
Organizational Development	13,056
Humanitarian Values	1,565
<b>Total</b>	<b>74,297</b>
<b>DREF Floods operation (MDRAZ001)</b>	<b>1,200</b>

**Our partners:** The Azerbaijan Red Crescent works with several Red Cross and Red Crescent partners as well as external actors. Outside the Movement the National Society cooperated with state bodies at different levels and with different functions, the United Nations (UN), and other organizations and institutes (please see *Working in partnership* for detailed overview).

## Context

Economically Azerbaijan has progressed well over the last years. The economy has been relatively stable and major steps have been taken to improve the living conditions of people. In the last five years more than 750,000 new jobs have been created and the poverty rate has fallen significantly in recent years and is presently at around 13 per cent. The average salary as well as pensions has increased notably. At macro-level the state budget has grown at an exceptional rate.

These encouraging economic developments follow the government's pursuit of flexible fiscal policy and prudent policy in mortgage loans and the central bank's monetary policy aimed at promoting stability in the banking sector. Moreover the government is implementing a poverty reduction and economic development programme which runs until 2016. The resource base underpinning this development is related to the country's oil and gas revenues which have risen three times in recent years. The country attaches special importance to developing its energy sector and has become an international supplier of energy.

The economic developments have been mirrored by improvements in the health of the population. According to the Ministry of Health the death rate among children and mothers has decreased during the last years. The maternal death rate has decreased from approximately 3.8 to 2.6 per cent per 100,000 new born children. Health challenges remain though. A total of 220 new cases of HIV have been confirmed in Azerbaijan in recent years. The total number of HIV cases registered since 1987 is 2,034 of which more than 80 per cent were male. Most new cases are related to drug use. Tuberculosis (TB) remains a serious public health threat in the country. According to WHO the highest multi-drug resistant TB (MDR-TB) rate in the world is to be found in Baku where nearly a quarter of all new TB cases are multi-drug resistant. The Ministry of Health reported several confirmed cases of H1N1 influenza. It is implementing prevention measures to keep the situation under control including a ban on import of cargo, animals and animal-derived products from highly affected countries.

Heavy rainfall flooded hundreds of houses and roads in central parts of Azerbaijan in September, particularly affecting the Hajigabul district in which some 70 per cent of the territory was flooded. More than 5,000 people were affected and some 2,300 houses were either damaged or destroyed.

# Progress towards outcomes

## Disaster Management

*Outcome/Expected result: To reduce the number of deaths, injuries and impact from disasters*

**Achievements:** Training seminars on emergency needs assessment and community awareness on disasters as well as one simulation exercise were carried out at community level in six regions. In total 170 staff and members of mobile volunteer teams took part. As a result the teams successfully assessed the needs of 400 families amounting to about 2,000 people affected by disasters such as floods, fires and landslides, and provided them with temporary shelter and household items from its own stock.

The National Society's disaster management team participated at a training for regional disaster response teams (RDRTs) in Skopje, Macedonia, during which gained knowledge was refreshed and experience shared. The society's disaster management team members became RDRT members.

With support from the IFRC's Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF), assistance was provided to 300 families (1,200 people) affected by floods in Navahi village in Hajigabul region. People were provided with food and non-food items procured through the DREF allocation. The National Society also distributed items from its own stock and parts of the DREF amount allowed the society to add new items in stock as well as to replenish others.<sup>1</sup> Also support to the secretariat's Azerbaijan country plan enabled the National Society to add additional non-food relief items to its stock and to procure a vehicle to be used during emergency operations. The items in stock as well as the experience gained in 2009 will allow the Azerbaijan Red Crescent to quickly respond to future humanitarian needs caused by disasters.

The Azerbaijan Red Crescent contributed to preparing an assessment related to a project proposal on disaster preparedness submitted to ECHO (DIPECHO).<sup>2</sup> Unfortunately the National Society could not take part as a co-applicant together with the Armenia Red Cross and the Georgia Red Cross. Nevertheless, the Azerbaijan Red Crescent gained valuable experience in preparing the proposal which will be of benefit in the future.

**Constraints or Challenges:** Most of the planned disaster management activities were implemented in 2009 with the exception of awareness campaigns at community level. This was due to the level of funding. The relief operations in 2009, of which one was supported by IFRC, revealed that several gaps need to be addressed in disaster management, among others internal and external logistics procedures.

## Health and Care

*Outcome/Expected result: Reduce the number of deaths, illnesses and impact from diseases and public health emergencies.*

**Achievements:** More than 13,500 people improved their knowledge on health related topics, first aid and blood donation. Totally 202 health promoters, first-aid instructors and blood donor recruiters organized learning sessions to this end. As result of the sessions more women signed up for health checks. Totally 12 cases of breast cancer among the women were detected. As result of blood donor recruitment campaigns more than 3,000 people became blood donors. Five first-aid teams in five regions with totally 25 members were formed.

Nearly 35,500 schoolchildren, youth, university students and community members received information on the human immunity system, the impact, transmission and symptoms of HIV. The information was promoted by the Azerbaijan Red Crescent network of peer educators. More than

<sup>1</sup> Please find a link to the final DREF report under the *In Brief* section in this report.

<sup>2</sup> ECHO funds for disaster preparedness activities covering the three southern Caucasus countries.

4,000 people participated in campaigns and round-table discussions on HIV and AIDS. Fifteen people living with HIV were involved in training sessions during the campaign as facilitators and participants. Totally 24 volunteers took part in exchanges between two regional Red Crescent centres and shared ideas for the celebration of the World AIDS Day on 1 December. This exchange was possible due to funds raised through fund-raising activities.

Red Crescent visiting nurses paid visits to former inmates with TB, encouraging them to continue and complete their regular treatment. Twenty inmates were regularly visited by the nurses and so far 14 out of 20 inmates successfully finished the directly observed treatment (DOT) while the remaining 6 continue to receive treatment. Social support and information was also provided to the target group.

The National Society started with human pandemic preparedness (H2P) activities funded by USAID and supported by IFRC and the InterAction Group<sup>3</sup>. The purpose of the project is to develop a pandemic preparedness plan which will later become part of the national pandemic plan developed by the Ministry of Health. Training sessions targeting Red Crescent staff and volunteers and community members as well as meetings with medical authorities and international organizations took place. Moreover promotion materials were distributed. The project will continue till September 2010. In addressing risks related to the H1N1 virus the National Society assisted the Ministry of Health in distributing 15,000 leaflets with WHO recommendations on prevention.

**Constraints or Challenges:** Some activities were either reduced in scope or cancelled due to lack of funds. A health centre for women was not created meaning that health promotion sessions were organized within communities instead. The development of promotion materials and the distribution of condoms and hygiene kits to families of people living with HIV were cancelled. The National Society managed to involve people living with HIV in training sessions, but was not able to organize social activities targeting their needs. The production of video-clips on health promotion and demonstration of first-aid skills during campaigns were also cancelled.

## Organizational Development

*Outcome/Expected result: Increase local community, civil society and Red Cross Red Crescent capacity to address the most urgent situations of vulnerability.*

**Achievements:** So far the total number of Red Crescent volunteers is 19,990 out of which 870 were recruited in 2009 as a result of volunteer recruitment campaigns. In terms of membership the National Society enlisted 6,125 primary organizations and more than 265,000 members at the end of 2009. Compared to 2008 this represents an increase of 12 and 7 per cent respectively.

The National Society organized training sessions on project and programme planning, reporting and financial procedures, public relations, marketing, health and care, first aid, HIV and AIDS, disaster management, dissemination of the fundamental principles and reduction of stigma and discrimination for 4,535 chairmen, youth coordinators, accountants, volunteers and community members from 28 local branches. Ten branches were awarded with honourable diplomas on 10 March which is the foundation day of the Azerbaijan Red Crescent Society. More than 800 women and 520 young people organized events for children and older people, preventive health and first-aid workshop sessions.

In recent years the National Society has shown an increasing ability to raise funds. In 2009 the Azerbaijan Red Crescent collected more than CHF 825,000<sup>4</sup> from membership fees, private donations and donation boxes. Of this amount more than one-third was spent on events for more than 22,000 impoverished families that have lost their breadwinners, people with disabilities and bedridden people, orphans and older people living alone.

---

<sup>3</sup>The InterAction Group is the largest coalition of U.S.-based international NGOs with focus on the world's poorest and most vulnerable people.

<sup>4</sup>Approximatley USD 774,000 or EUR 575,500

With the aim of enhancing volunteers' and schoolchildren's knowledge and skills in leadership and planning, social activities, Movement history and principles as well as first aid, HIV and AIDS, nutrition and hygiene, Azerbaijan Red Crescent youth instructors reached more than 4,300 people with training sessions. Moreover the National Society organized 14 meetings among members of central youth volunteer boards for information sharing.

Events for almost 1,140 orphans, people with disabilities, internally displaced persons (IDPs), children living with HIV, and children from indigent families were conducted with the purpose of providing psychosocial, moral and material support. These efforts were carried out by 79 youth volunteers and representatives of the Azerbaijan Red Crescent.

**Constraints or Challenges:** Some activities were postponed or cancelled due to limited funding such as workshops with the aim of improving communication.

## Principles and Values

*Outcome/Expected result: Reduce intolerance, discrimination and social exclusion and promote respect for diversity and human dignity.*

As a result of the National Society's work to disseminate information on the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement's principles and values, prejudice, discrimination, stigmatization and social exclusion of marginalized groups has reduced in local communities. The National Society continued to advocate for the respect of human dignity and promote a culture of non-stigmatization and tolerance aiming to change attitudes and behaviour towards marginalized groups. Four training sessions on humanitarian values for 65 staff and volunteers were conducted, focusing on how personal initiatives can contribute to reducing stigmatization and discrimination and what the role of individuals can be. HIV and AIDS is also part of this work, aiming to increase the understanding and acceptance of people living with HIV.

On World AIDS Day 1 December, the Azerbaijan Crescent organized several events such as painting and seminars with themes like "Stop spreading AIDS" and "Awareness and Hope Instead of Shame and Fear".

**Constraints or Challenges:** Financial limitations led to cancellations of activities including picnics and a summer camp for people living with HIV as well as the production of promotion materials.

## Working in partnership

The Azerbaijan Red Crescent cooperated with Movement partners and a wide range of central and local governmental, non-governmental, national as well as international organizations and institutes including:

- The Federation secretariat at zone, regional and country level and ICRC.
- Sister National Societies including the Norwegian Red Cross, the German Red Cross, the Japanese Red Cross and Magen David Adom.
- Ministries and public authorities, agencies and centres covering health, social affairs and labour, science and education, culture, sports, youth, emergency, crisis and rescue and mine clearing.
- UN bodies and agencies including United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the World Health Organization (WHO) and UNICEF.
- Organizations and institutes such as Save the Children, the Open Society Institute (OSI), and the Youth Exchange Organization.
- Networks or membership organizations working in the field of harm reduction, HIV and AIDS and TB including the European Red Cross Red Crescent Network on HIV and AIDS and TB (ERNA), the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria, and the Global Alliance on HIV and TB.

- The National Society is now registered in the the EU Potential Applicant Dated Online Registration (PADOR) which is a prerequisite for applying for grants from the European Commission in the field of external assistance.

## Contributing to longer-term impact

The National Society monitored and evaluated its programme activities to ensure the most efficient use of the limited amount of resources available and to continuously assess programme progress towards overall objectives. Monitoring included a continuous collection of data and analysis of programme activities. Tools for data gathering included data collection in general, field visits and meetings, reporting and final evaluation.

Gender issues were addressed by ensuring that all activities carried out by the National Society benefited the most vulnerable people regardless of gender. Internally equal access and opportunities for participation and decision-making for both genders are an imperative for the Azerbaijan Red Crescent. In the planning process for 2009-2010 gender equity and diversity was taken into account and emphasized.

## Looking ahead

The improved financial and institutional sustainability of the programmes is related to the increased capacity of the Azerbaijan Red Crescent, its strengthened regional and local branch network and improved links with governmental structures, local authorities and partners. The National Society will continue its active work in resource mobilization by establishing contacts with various organizations, sister National Societies and through fund-raising initiatives. The Federation secretariat will support the Azerbaijan Red Crescent in developing the necessary resource mobilization tools and establishing new partnerships within and outside Azerbaijan. This in turn is expected to improve and sustain programme implementation.

In disaster management the Azerbaijan Red Crescent intends to strengthen its human, material and technical resources. Moreover, gaps in internal and external logistics procedures will be addressed by establishing groups of trained volunteers with skills in assessment, distribution and evaluation at regional as well as local level in disaster-prone areas. This should also involve mobilizing and training local communities to be better able to respond to and cope with disasters.

National Societies within the region have been working actively in the field of HIV and AIDS for years and are currently working towards joining the Global Alliance on HIV and TB. Recently established relationships with USAID helped the National Society in coping with the pandemic situations and it is hoped that cooperation will expand to the treatment of multi-drug resistant TB patients also.

How we work	
<p>The International Federation's activities are aligned with its Global Agenda, which sets 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><b>Global Agenda Goals:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reduce the numbers of deaths, injuries and impact from disasters.</li> <li>• Reduce the number of deaths, illnesses and impact from diseases and public health emergencies.</li> <li>• Increase local community, civil society and Red Cross Red Crescent capacity to address the most urgent situations of vulnerability.</li> <li>• Reduce intolerance, discrimination and social exclusion and promote respect for diversity and human dignity.</li> </ul>

## Contact information

For further information specifically related to this report, please contact:

- **In the Azerbaijan Red Crescent Society:** Baylar Talibov, Secretary General: [baylar.talibov@redcrescent.az](mailto:baylar.talibov@redcrescent.az); phone +994 12 493 84 81; fax +994 12 493 15 78
- **In the Europe Zone Office:** Elias Ghanem, Head of Support Services, Budapest; email: [elias.ghanem@ifrc.org](mailto:elias.ghanem@ifrc.org); phone: +361 888 4518, fax: +361 336 1516
- **In the Europe Zone Office:** Leon Prop, Head of Operations, Budapest, email: [leon.prop@ifrc.org](mailto:leon.prop@ifrc.org); phone: +36 1 8884 502; fax: +361 336 1516