

Annual report



Georgia

MAAGE002

30 April 2010

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



In October 2009 Georgia Red Cross volunteers distributed blankets and mattresses to people affected by earthquake. Photo: IFRC

In brief

Programme purpose: The Federation supported programme activities of the Georgia Red Cross Society contributed to the Global Agenda goals and were in line with the National Society's 2007-2011 strategic plan. The programmes aimed to alleviate suffering and improve the lives of the most vulnerable people through disaster management, health and care and organizational development.

Programme(s) summary: In disaster management focus areas were institutional preparedness and community-based disaster prevention, preparedness and risk reduction. Federation support in conjunction with ICRC has intensified after the conflict in August 2008. In 2009 the society's capacity in disaster management was thus improved through training of response team members; development and promotion of a disaster management strategy for 2010-2013; elaboration of a draft contingency plan; and improvement of the cooperation with governmental structures and other organizations.

Supported health and care programme components included HIV and AIDS; TB prevention; community-based health; psychosocial support; and social support to vulnerable people. In the field of HIV and AIDS and TB the National Society raised community awareness on prevention, transmission and treatment, reaching around 23,600 community members. Moreover 130 drug-resistant TB clients were supported with treatment including direct observation. As a result of community-based health activities awareness among people about universal hygiene behaviour, sanitation and healthy lifestyle and the prevention of communicable diseases was raised. In the area of psychosocial support the National Society continued developing its capacities and drafting a strategy. Moreover, as a result of refreshment trainings the society now has 20 well-trained psychosocial support volunteers. Social support activities reached some 1,500 most vulnerable, older pensioners living alone including homebound older people. Through advocacy the needs of older people were raised and the respect and understanding of older people as an important resource for the society

was promoted.

In organizational development the leadership of 27 branches improved their leadership knowledge and skills. Some 2,600 members were recruited bringing the total number of members to 4,600. Totally 320 staff, youth and volunteers participated in workshops and meetings on local resource mobilization and fund-raising, youth and volunteer management, and project and financial management. Directions for resource mobilization and techniques and tools for fund-raising were defined and the society raised approximately 26,000 Swiss francs in cash and in-kind. Four additional local branches were established in 2009 bringing the total number of branches to 27. Moreover local communities were mobilized and service delivery strengthened in seven branches. A pilot branch development project and a participatory community development initiative increased the number of members and volunteers, and improved branches' image and cooperation with key community stakeholders.

Financial situation: The total 2009 budget was CHF 1,324,605 (USD 1,238,650 or EUR 923,945), of which 88 per cent covered. Overall expenditure was CHF 991,266. Some of the funds were received in the second half of 2009 and is funding for programmes that runs into 2010.

	Amount
Budget	1,324,605
Income*	1,168,819 (88)
Expenditure	991,266 (75)
Balance	177,552

Percentage of budget in brackets.

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

Earthquake operation MDRGE001: <http://www.ifrc.org/docs/appeals/09/MDRGE002dfr.pdf>

No. of people we have reached: In 2009 the National Society reached almost 15,000 people directly. Together with people reached indirectly the Georgia Red Cross addressed the needs of 53,000 people.

Most people were reached with health and care services. Key target groups were vulnerable families, youth, children and Georgia Red Cross volunteers and staff.

Programme area	People reached	
	Directly	Indirectly
Disaster Management	2,250	6,400
Health and Care	11,960	30,500
Organizational Development	700	1,100
Total	14,910	38,000
DREF Earthquake operation (MDRGE001)		822

Our partners: The National Society cooperates with the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) and ICRC as well as with the sister National Societies. Furthermore the society cooperates with governmental, non-governmental, national as well as international organizations. Relationship and partnership building was undertaken with UNDP, the Humanitarian Aid Department of the European Commission (ECHO), the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) and the emergency management department under the Ministry of Interior in Georgia. Please see *Working in partnership* for detailed overview.

Context

The government of Georgia aspires to ensure national unity and the reduction of poverty. However, despite reforms in recent years and due to the financial crisis, poverty remains widespread and the economic situation has worsened for large parts of the population. Large numbers of people previously employed in the private sector have lost their job. Moreover, in 2009 a series of events contributed to polarizing the political environment.

The conflict between Georgia and the Russian Federation in August 2008 over South Ossetia and Abkhazia resulted in thousands fleeing their homes. Many of these have not been able to return home and reside in temporary housing facilities. Hence, Georgia now has almost 250,000 internally displaced persons (IDPs) with additional thousands living under IDP-like conditions. In

September 2009 Oni and Sachkhere regions were struck by an earthquake measuring 6.2 on the Richter scale. Some 1,460 families were affected and 1,500 houses damaged or destroyed.

The economic, political and security situation in the country thus poses serious obstacles for effectively implementing government programmes. Naturally this also has consequences for social and health development. In recent years the number of cases of infectious diseases has increased, particularly those of HIV and TB, partially due to a mobile population as well as the increased number of injecting drug users (IDUs).

These events and developments demonstrate that the Georgia Red Cross Society is compelled to continue developing its capacities for responding to humanitarian needs in Georgia.

Progress towards outcomes

Disaster Management

Programme component 1: Disaster preparedness at institutional level (org. preparedness).

Component Outcome 1: Established effective mechanisms for efficient institutional preparedness and coordination during disasters.

Component Outcome 2: Strengthened institutional capacities for effective disaster management at both central and local levels.

The National Society continued developing mechanisms for efficient institutional disaster preparedness and coordination. To this end the IFRC and ICRC jointly supported the National Society in 2009. A Federation disaster management delegate was deployed to Georgia to assist the society in improving and strengthening its disaster management capacity through trainings and workshops targeting volunteers and staff, and in drafting a disaster management strategy and a contingency plan. Totally 25 volunteers from 5 local branches underwent intensive training at central and regional level guided by the Federation delegate. To strengthen its response capacity the National Society paid much attention to capitalizing on lessons learned during the recent emergency responses.

As a result the society's capacity in disaster management improved; a disaster management strategy for the period 2010-2013 was developed and promoted within the society and among stakeholders; a draft contingency plan was elaborated; and based on a capacity assessment at local and central level the National Society improved its cooperation with governmental structures and other organizations. The National Society is now a full member of the UNDP think-tank on disaster risk reduction.

Programme component 2: Community-based disaster prevention and preparedness/disaster risk reduction.

Component Outcome 1: Awareness of communities about disaster hazards has increased enabling them to take effective actions during disasters.

Component Outcome 2: Vulnerability of local communities to emergency and disaster outcomes has been reduced through timely information and improved capacities in local Red Cross branches.

In responding to an earthquake which struck Georgia in September the National Society reached 822 people with blankets and mattresses. Following the operation volunteers were trained and later surveyed the humanitarian situation among effected people and sought to find out whether their needs had been met. These efforts were supported by the the IFRC through its Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF)¹.

Constraints or Challenges: Although disaster management is a priority, regular programming is absent due to funding and this somehow reduces the effects of the activities actually carried

¹ Totally CHF 61,016 was allocated from the DREF on 14 September 2009.

out. The current draft strategies on disaster management and psychosocial support need to be translated into Georgian language for discussion at branch level before being approved by the presidium. Lack of funds for facilitating the participation of branches could undermine the initiatives taken within strategy development. The society faces high expectations from both the authorities and individuals which at times can be hard to meet. An adequate number of trained staff and volunteers with proper knowledge and skills in emergency preparedness and response are lacking and retaining staff and volunteers is difficult due to financial challenges. Limited funding meant that planned disaster risk reduction activities were not carried out.

Health and Care²

Programme component 1: Health promotion with focus on HIV and AIDS³

Component Outcome: Reduced vulnerability to HIV and its impact through preventing further infection including harm reduction activities, expanding knowledge about HIV prevention, transmission and treatment.

In the field of HIV and AIDS almost 20,000 community members were reached with information on HIV and AIDS and anti-stigma through 6,500 trained community and youth leaders. The dissemination of information aimed at raising community awareness on HIV prevention, transmission and treatment. Nearly 320 training sessions on HIV and AIDS were conducted for the community and youth leaders. The courses, in which also more than 860 IDPs took part, were held by 140 trained volunteers.

Programme component 2: Drug-resistant TB control in Tbilisi

Component Outcome 1: Supported treatment referral and TB clients under directly observed treatment.

Component Outcome 2: Further infection in communities in Tbilisi and in six target regions of Georgia prevented through expanding knowledge about prevention, transmission and treatment.

As part of its national TB programme the society continued carrying out drug-resistant Tuberculosis (DR-TB) control activities in Tbilisi. Totally 161 DR-TB clients were reached out of which 52 clients were supported with treatment by an adherence consultant and a psychologist. Totally 49 drug-resistant clients in Tbilisi were under direct observation of 6 nurses. The clients received anti-drug resistant TB medicines. Moreover, awareness on prevention, transmission and treatment was raised among 3,600 community members. These activities were implemented by the TB project team and 140 trained volunteers. A “knowledge, attitudes and practices” (KAP) survey showed that the level of knowledge increased for 96 per cent of the people.

Programme component 3: Community based health and first aid

Components Outcome 1: Local communities are strengthened and better able to cope with health challenges as a result of community-based integrated health and first-aid activities.

The community-based health activities aimed at improving the health and hygiene status of people through promotion activities. Two collective IDP centres in Gardabani were targeted because of frequent instances of respiratory diseases and skin illnesses. Totally 130 families were targeted. Of these 324 people received hygiene parcels and in addition 24 workshops on hygiene, first aid and psychosocial support were conducted for more than 410 participants. As a result their awareness about universal hygiene behaviour, sanitation and healthy lifestyle for preventing communicable diseases was raised.

² The first-aid section of component 3 (community-based health and first aid) was not supported and component 5 (voluntary non-remunerated blood donation) was implemented bilaterally (supported by the Norwegian Red Cross).

³ The work of the National Society in the field of HIV and AIDS and TB was mainly concentrated in the following regions: Adjara, Samegrelo, Imereti, Shida Kartli, Kvemo Kartli and Kakheti and Tbilisi.

Programme component 4: Psychosocial support

Component Outcome 1: The capacity of the Georgia Red Cross to provide psychosocial support, to promote the restoration of community networks and coping mechanisms, and to enhance emotional assistance to staff and volunteers in times of disaster or social disruption, is built.

Component Outcome 2: Psychosocial support is increasingly integrated into a number of programmes implemented by the Georgia Red Cross including disaster preparedness and disaster response, first aid, health and social welfare, and care for staff and volunteers.

Component Outcome 3: Local communities are strengthened and better able to cope with psychosocial challenges at times of disaster, social disruption or illness as a result of Georgia Red Cross activities.

Psychosocial support is a new programme priority for the National Society following the 2008 conflict. Since then the society has defined its strategic psychosocial programme directions, trained 85 volunteers and translated and shared relevant materials. In 2009 the IFRC deployed a psychosocial consultant⁴ to assist the National Society in drafting a psychosocial strategy and in policy development in general. Refreshment trainings were conducted for the volunteers and as a result the society now has 20 well-trained volunteers who are ready to render psychosocial support. These are integrated members of disaster response teams in five branches consisting of disaster management and psychosocial support volunteers.

Programme component 6: Social support of elderly people

Component Outcome 1: Improved health and social conditions among vulnerable older people.

Component Outcome 2: Changing attitudes and behaviours of service providers towards older people addressing the causes of older people's exclusion and vulnerability.

Social support was provided to some 2,700 most vulnerable, older pensioners living alone in Tbilisi and Kutaisi aimed at improving their living conditions and health status, and empowering them to become more independent and self-helped. To this end the work focused on resource mobilization, capacity-building and advocacy. The National Society works to develop a model through which services are provided and older people mobilized and empowered. Activities carried out included home-based care, services in social centres and home visits. In total 16,320 visits addressing the needs of 340 homebound older people were conducted.

In terms of advocacy the National Society raised the needs of older people in its work with local, national and international organizations. This work aimed at ensuring support to older people while at the same time promoting respect and understanding of older people as an important resource for the society. Movies, reviews, meetings, workshops and round tables with national and local authorities, NGOs, media and businesses were but some of the activities. Moreover, supported by ICRC the society developed a social support strategy for 2010-2013. The strategy is the result of intensive consultations with key stakeholders. The strategy was promoted among local branches and stakeholders in ten target regions. Agreements for support, mainly related to premises and utilities, were reached with the local authorities in Sagarejo and Akhmeta.

Constraints or Challenges: Overall, limited funding hampered the implementation of health and care programme activities. Moreover the society experienced difficulties in retaining volunteers because of lack of resources and tools for motivating them. In Tbilisi only 10 out of the initially planned 50 volunteers were actively involved in providing social support to older people and merely 1,500 out of 5,500 older people were reached. Moreover support was provided in Tbilisi and Kutaisi only, while no activities were carried out in Gori and Rustavi. Although psychosocial support has emerged as a key priority for the National Society, the absence of regular programming affects programme effectiveness. Retaining trained staff and volunteers with experience in psychosocial support is difficult due to lack of funding. The draft for the strategy in psychosocial support needs to be translated into Georgian language and discussed at branch level. Lack of funds to facilitate this could undermine the realization of the strategy.

⁴ From the International Federation's Reference Centre for Psychosocial Support.

Organizational Development

Component 1: Improving National Society leadership capacities to develop and implement strategies, to ensure good performance and accountability.

Component Outcome 1: Strengthened organizational foundation allowing the Georgia Red Cross Society to fulfil its humanitarian mandate.

Component Outcome 2: The knowledge and competence of the Georgia Red Cross Society governance and management leaders at central and local levels are well demonstrated.

Component Outcome 3: Improved image through effective external communication and regular dialogue with the general public and partners.

With the aim of building leadership competence, the leadership of 27 branches improved their knowledge and skills in good governance and management, local resource mobilization and communication through participation in 8 thematic workshops and 4 meetings. One induction course was conducted for leaders of the four newly established branches.

Component 2: Ensuring a well-functioning organization with sustainable systems, procedures and staff with desired level of managerial and technical competencies.

Component Outcome 1: Effective and transparent human resource and financial management.

Component Outcome 2: Improved capacities of the Georgia Red Cross Society headquarters and its local branches in programme planning and performance management.

Component Outcome 3: Proper and effective internal communication, accounting and reporting systems.

The National Society's membership rules and procedures were simplified and brought in line with the society's statutes. This resulted in a notable increase in members from 2,000 in 2008 to 4,600 in 2009. Furthermore, to enhance member recruitment a plan for 2010 and 2011 was developed aiming at bringing the number of members to one per cent of the population of Georgia. In terms of volunteer management the capacities of nine branches were assessed and the strategy on volunteer motivation applied. The transparency and visibility of activities increased through conducting and disseminating the external financial audit for 2008. With the aim of building staff and volunteer competence 320 staff, youth and volunteers participated in 12 workshops and 8 meetings focusing on local resource mobilization and fund-raising, youth and volunteer management, and project and financial management.

Component 3: Ensuring financial sustainability.

Component Outcome 1: Georgia Red Cross Society core costs covered by resource mobilization and fund-raising activities performed at central and local levels.

Component Outcome 2: Georgia Red Cross Society has diversified its financial resources through new partnerships established with the government, businesses, and international organizations at national and international levels

In 2009 the National Society defined its main directions for resource mobilization and techniques and tools for fund-raising. Moreover, the society raised approximately 26,000 Swiss francs in cash and in-kind through donation boxes, fund-raising among the public and businesses, charity events and through submitting project proposals. Furthermore, through meetings with key stakeholders the society obtained support from local governmental institutions, business partners and civil organizations.

Component 3: Developing a nation-wide coverage of grassroots units and services.

Component Outcome 1: Strengthened nation-wide network of local branches implementing core Red Cross activities throughout the country.

Component Outcome 2: Improved delivery of quality services by enhanced volunteer and youth management at local branch/ unit grassroots levels.

Component Outcome 3: Strengthened capacities of volunteers within the local communities through trainings in health and care, disaster preparedness and principles and values provided by the respective National Society services within the frame of the appropriate programmes.

Component Outcome 4: Empowered local target communities (two) including IDPs via improved capacities of the local branches to deliver services through the participatory community development approach.

Four additional local branches were established in 2009 bringing the total number of branches to 27. Moreover through the active participation of 22 youth and volunteer groups and “Committees of Five”⁵, local communities were mobilized and service delivery strengthened in seven branches.

In addition, through a pilot branch development project 15 youth and volunteer groups were established and these conducted needs assessment, mobilized local resources and initiated 9 community-based service delivery initiatives in two branches, serving over 380 vulnerable people. Also a participatory community development initiative, including the running of a social centre for older people, was launched with the active participation and support of local authorities. As a result of the two projects the number of members and volunteers increased, the image of the branches was raised and the cooperation with community stakeholders improved.

Constraints or Challenges: Insufficient communication between the headquarters and local branches and between branches themselves, and limited resources and lack of motivation among branch volunteers were elements that affected implementation.

Working in partnership

The Georgia Red Cross Society cooperates with Red Cross and Red Crescent partners and with a wide range of central and local governmental institutions, non-governmental, national as well as international organizations.

The ICRC and IFRC have been supporting the National Society since 1992 and 1993 respectively. ICRC has supported the National Society in disseminating international humanitarian law and the Movement’s fundamental principles, training, first aid and leadership building. Following the 2008 conflict ICRC provided financial support to integrated efforts with the IFRC in disaster management and psychosocial support.

Multilaterally the Norwegian Red Cross remains one of the few partners supporting the social support to older people and organizational development programmes. Its support to the HIV and AIDS programme ended in 2009 though. After supporting the social support programme for three years, targeting 1,200 older people in Kutaisi, the British Red Cross withdrew from Georgia at the end of 2009. Since mid-2009 the Danish Red Cross has been contributing to branch development and provided technical support in organizational development. The Estonian Red Cross supported health activities targeting displaced persons from the 2008 conflict. The National Society cooperated with the IFRC, the Danish Red Cross and the Icelandic Red Cross for DIPECHO⁶ funding in 2010 and 2011.

Bilaterally Magen David Adom and the German Red Cross provided support for developing institutional capacity in first aid. The Italian Red Cross supported the society in harm reduction targeting injecting drug users and the Norwegian Red Cross supported blood donation.

The National Society cooperated with various governmental structures and has developed close working relationships with the response management department under the Ministry of Interior in line with the society’s responsibilities in the state emergency response plan.

Active cooperation with non-governmental organizations and the corporate sector is also pursued. The Medical Service Corporation International (MSCI), funded by USAID, supports the drug-resistant TB project in Adjara. Moreover the National Society is member of the Georgian

⁵ The “Committee of Five” is a youth group established to strengthen the service delivery targeting vulnerable people through mobilizing communities; raising awareness about the Movement and its fundamental principles and values; and ensuring volunteer recruitment and involvement.

⁶ Disaster preparedness funds from the European Commission Humanitarian Aid department.

Harm Reduction Network and the Presentation Task Force Group which is represented in the Global Fund Coordinating Mechanism, the WHO health cluster and the psychosocial sub-cluster. Moreover the National Society is a member of the steering committee of the UNDP think-tank on disaster risk reduction working group. The society keeps close contacts with the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation and ECHO.

The National Society is also a member of several Federation working groups including the Steering Committee of European Health Managers; the Global TB and Active Aging working groups; the European Taskforce on First-Aid Education for Vulnerable People and the First-Aid Educational European Network; the Regional Cooperation Programme; and the European Red Cross Red Crescent Network on HIV/AIDS and TB (ERNA). Discussion is ongoing for joining the Global Alliance on HIV.

Contributing to longer-term impact

With support from Movement partners and others the National Society developed its capacities in disaster management and delivered assistance to the most vulnerable people affected by conflict and natural disasters. Its cooperation with the state emergency department and UNDP was strengthened, the profile of the organization enhanced and the number of mobilized volunteers increased. The improved capacities allowed the National Society to take active part in developing an application for DIPECHO funding for 2010 and 2011 which was later accepted. The funds will contribute to developing and widening the society's disaster risk reduction activities at community level.

The strategies and policies in disaster management, social support and psychosocial support allows the National Society to develop an improved and comprehensive strategic plan for 2011-2014, consolidating all the discussions which have taken place over the last two years. Local fund-raising initiatives and correspondence with the authorities has clearly shown that there is a potential for raising more funds and forging closer cooperation. The National Society focuses on developing its corporate partnership programme in the years to come.

Health and social activities will remain a key priority for the National Society. Cooperation with local authorities and communities, of which there are already many success stories, will continue and is likely to increase. The present model of cooperation with the authorities, in which the Georgia Red Cross takes an advocacy role, has become increasingly effective.

Looking ahead

Despite the vast number of partners and achievements recorded, challenges still remain for the National Society. Limited financial resources affect its operational capacities. Owing to different levels of capacity and abilities to take initiatives in local branches, the coverage and frequency of activities subsequently varies. On this background the National Society intends to increase its focus on local resource mobilization and branch development, as well as mobilization of grassroots support through participatory community processes and new partnerships at local and national level. These are longer-term processes to which the society is committed and supported by Movement partners, public authorities and other national and international organizations.

How we work

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".

Global Agenda Goals:

- 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.

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