

OPERATIONS UPDATE



International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies
Fédération internationale des Sociétés de la Croix-Rouge et du Croissant-Rouge
Federación Internacional de Sociedades de la Cruz Roja y de la Media Luna Roja
الاتحاد الدولي لجمعيات الصليب الأحمر والهلال الأحمر

TURKEY: EARTHQUAKE IN BINGOL PROVINCE

7 May 2003

This Ops Update is intended for reporting on emergency appeals.

The Federation's mission is to improve the lives of vulnerable people by mobilizing the power of humanity. It is the world's largest humanitarian organization and its millions of volunteers are active in 178 countries. For more information: www.ifrc.org

Appeal No. 09/2003; launched on 2 May 2003 for CHF 2,384,000 (USD 1,770,079 or EUR 1,579,296) for 6 months for 36,000 beneficiaries

Operations Update No. 1; Period covered: 1-6 May 2003;

IN BRIEF

Appeal coverage: 0%; discussions are underway with a number of donors who have expressed interest in this operation. The updated list of contributions will be made available with the next Operations Update, but is also available on the Federation's website for this appeal.

Related Appeals: 2003 Annual Appeal for Turkey (no. 01.80/2003)

Outstanding needs: CHF 2,384,000

Summary: The initial emergency response activities in the earthquake area have been carried out on a timely and effective basis and the most immediate needs of the population were covered. The TRCS was quick to respond to the tremor, rushing in relief materials - tents and blankets, five tonnes of food, nine mobile kitchens, a field hospital and a mobile clinic, four ambulances and five generators to the quake zone. Meanwhile, coordination forms an important aspect of this operation, and regular meetings have been held with UN agencies and government authorities to ensure effective and efficient support to victims of the disaster. An example of this The Turkish Red Crescent Society (TRCS) is a member of the Crisis Centre established at the Provincial Governor's office shortly after the disaster struck the area. Donors are encouraged to provide timely and adequate support for this operation to enable the appeal objectives and activities to be implemented as planned.

Operational Developments w

Last week's powerful earthquake in the eastern Turkish city of Bingol left 177 people dead and over 520 injured. The earthquake was much localised disaster with an affected population of less than 100,000 people - 70,000 in the town of Bingol and some 10,000 to 20,000 in the surrounding areas. According to the Kandili seismic institute in Istanbul, the quake lasting 17 seconds, measured 6.4 on the Richter Scale and occurred at 03:27 am local time while most residents were asleep.

The earthquake affected the City of Bingol and the surrounding villages, causing significant loss of life and property damage. According to the preliminary damage assessment in the housing sector, of 15,000 dwelling units in Bingol town, 305 houses collapsed completely, about 2,566 are classified as moderately damaged and

inhabitable, while another 2,546 as slightly damaged but habitable. In the rural areas, about 45 villages have been assessed until now and a total of 3,000 houses are reported as damaged and inhabitable. The final figure will probably be higher as assessment is still ongoing.

Education was one of the first victims of the devastating earthquake. More than 90 per cents of the schools in the area were impacted by the quake leaving thousands without facilities to continue education. According to the ministry of education, 31,493 students have been affected by this quake. Of the 27 schools in the city, four had collapsed, nine would need to be torn down, 11 received light damage and three remained unscathed. Additional 75 schools in the surrounding villages have yet to be fully assessed.

Search and rescue operations, carried out by civil defence teams, specialised military units and the Turkish Red Crescent have ended. According to the latest figures reported, 114 school children and teachers at the Celtiksuyu Primary Boarding School in a village 14 km from downtown Bingol, where the greatest death tolls occurred, have been rescued alive and 84 dead bodies have been retrieved out of rubble. The school was a five story structure, which collapsed within seconds when the quake struck. A total of 198 children and teachers had been in the building at the time of the earthquake. Demolition of the rubble has started.

Three hospitals in Bingol were damaged which prompted an evacuation of severely injured patients to other cities. For the moment, services are carried out in tent-based OPDs including laboratory services and container-based OT facilities. The existing referral system is efficient and functioning and patients can be transferred to hospitals in the surrounding towns without delay. German Red Cross carried out an assessment in the disaster affected area to determine the necessity of the medical needs. According to the assessment results, disaster related health needs had been adequately met. The existing health facilities in the region provide effective support to the target population. The outbreak of disaster related health epidemics is not expected.

The economic impact of the disaster is of significant magnitude considering, that even though compulsory since 2001, the number of households with insurance coverage for natural disasters is very low - national average below 12 per cent. This rate is much lower in the villages.

Communication line and electricity across the region have now been restored and are now functioning at full capacity. There are no major damages on the water and sewage systems. An increased turbidity of the water was reported at the Government Hospital but several microbiological analysis revealed a safe situation.

A number of aftershocks and moderate tremors have occurred which has provoked panic and concern among the local population. People are currently living in tents outside their homes, although some are either lightly damaged or in relatively good condition. As the frequency and intensity of the aftershocks decreases, people are slowly returning to their homes. Fortunately the current mild weather prevented additional problems in this area known for very harsh winter weather conditions.

Coordination w

Coordination is an important aspect of this operation. Regular meetings have been held with UN agencies and government authorities to ensure effective and efficient support to victims of the disaster. The Turkish Red Crescent Society (TRCS) is a member of the Crisis Centre established at the Provincial Governor's office shortly after the disaster struck the area.

The nature of the operation and number of beneficiaries are coordinated with other humanitarian actors. The Federation appeal in response to the earthquake in Bingol was presented to the UN agencies working in Turkey. The TRCS response plan has been also shared at the donors' meeting organised by the UN in Ankara. The findings of the German Red Cross assessment were presented to the participants too.

The TRCS and UNICEF are negotiating the use of 100 school tents with a capacity of four classes each. The American Red Cross intends to provide 14,000 kitchen utensils to the TRCS for the distribution to disaster affected families. Psycho-social support is provided in close cooperation and coordination with the UNICEF and the Ministry of Health, which has also deployed medical teams in the disaster affected area.

Red Cross and Red Crescent action w

The initial emergency response activities in the earthquake area have been carried out on a timely and effective basis and the most immediate needs of the population were covered. The TRCS was quick to respond to the tremor, rushing in relief materials - tents and blankets, five tonnes of food, nine mobile kitchens, a field hospital and a mobile clinic, four ambulances and five generators to the quake zone. A team of 25 volunteers from Mus and Erzincan Branches was immediately deployed to the earthquake area to carry out search and rescue operations. Shortly after the earthquake struck the Bingol Province, the TRCS volunteers were on the disaster site providing water and food to the victims. Some 2,000 people were assisted and 1,000 food parcels were distributed on the first day only. More than 50 Kizilay volunteers and staff are currently on the site providing vital services to thousands of homeless people, who desperately need help.

Objectives, activities and results w

Health and care w

Objective 1. Provide psycho-social support to affected population.

Activities undertaken: A TRCS psycho-social team, in cooperation and coordination with UNICEF and Ministry of Health and supported by the Federation, are in the affected area providing psycho-social support to people, with main focus on teachers and children. It is difficult to tell to what extent children in Bingol have been affected by the traumas of the past few days, but the Turkish Red Crescent is helping their families recognise the warning signs. Listening to people and reassuring them that their reactions are quite normal, having experienced such an abnormal situation, and informing them about what they can do is an essential part of the psycho-social support. Psychological support is provided to rescuers too. During these few days after the earthquake, TRCS provided psychological support to 3,317 adults, children and rescue workers. Over 2,500 brochures have been distributed to the earthquake affected population to help them cope with the trauma and stress caused by the disaster.

Objective 2. Provide equipment and medical supplies to the affected area.

Activities undertaken: According to the initial assessment carried out in the affected area to determine the needs of the medical establishment in the region, all the emergency health needs had been covered and no further health emergencies are expected. A more comprehensive assessment has yet to be carried out and a detailed plan will then be elaborated.

Relief distribution of food and basic non-food items w

Objective 1. Provide hot meals to 60,000 persons for one month.

Activities undertaken: The TRCS has been providing two hot meals to affected population starting on the same day that the earthquake occurred. Kizilay is operating nine mobile kitchens in the city. During the reported period, 60,000 people were assisted and some 3,400 rescuers working on the site were provided with daily field rations.

Objective 2. Procurement of mobile kitchen

Activities undertaken: The TRCS capacity to provide hot meals during future disasters must be strengthened. Five mobile kitchen units will therefore be procured within the framework of the current emergency appeal.

Shelter w

Objective 1. Replenishment of 5,000 tents and 30,000 blankets

Activities undertaken: The TRCS has mobilised its tent and blanket stocks from regional warehouse to respond to this emergency. Some 11,200 tents and 16,232 blankets have been delivered to the affected area and have been distributed to families that are in need of shelter. This fully covered short-term needs for shelter. As the population showed preference for living close to their homes, as opposed to moving to tent camps, it was decided to distribute the tents to individual families. The Government provided 167 prefabricated shelters to accommodate 334 families. According to the UNDAC (UN Disaster Management and Coordination) estimates, in the long run there will be a need of permanent shelters to accommodate approximately 1,399 families who lost their homes.

It is critical that the TRCS stocks be replenished to enable a timely, effective and efficient response to the needs of potential disaster victims.

Disaster Preparedness w

Objective 1. Disaster preparedness - branch development

Activities undertaken: Earthquakes are common in Turkey, which lies at the convergence of three major tectonic plates. The last week's earthquake occurred 70 kilometres (43 miles) south-east of the epicentre of a magnitude 6.1 earthquake that killed one person and injured several others in January. A magnitude 8.0 quake in 1939 killed an estimated 33,000 people about 75 miles north-west of Bingol. Turkey, due to its particular location, needs a strong national society with a well-developed disaster management system to ensure rapid response and efficient coordination at the time of emergency, particularly as TRCS is one of the major players in this field. This will be achieved through training in different areas - first aid, monitoring, reporting, developing international standards and tools in disaster management. The psycho-social component of the operation has been encouraging community participation in the disaster affected area to promote self-reliance among the victims of the earthquake.

Objective 2. Set up a Rapid Disaster Response Team (RDRT) at the Bingol and Mus local branches to respond effectively to disasters at the national or international level

Activities undertaken: Two zonal disaster centres will be adequately developed at strategically selected sites. Emergency relief stocks as well as crisis communication equipment and logistics support units will be pre-positioned at these zonal centres.

Objective 3. Arrange a three-month consultancy mission on Disaster Preparedness

Activities undertaken: A consultant will be recruited in order to further assist the TRCS in developing and strengthening the disaster preparedness capacities of the National Society and its branches.

National Society Capacity Building w

Building or strengthening the capacity of the National Society is the priority of this appeal. All Federation support aims to empower the local Red Crescent Society to provide sustainable support to communities in need. The focus is on strengthening the disaster management capacity. The Bingol operation will be carefully analysed and lessons learned will be included in the planned training to further improve the quality of Red Crescent services in the time of future similar emergencies.

Federation Delegation w

The Federation has a team of experienced professionals in the fields of disaster management, relief, psycho-social support, media/public relations assisting the National Society to provide efficient and effective services to the disaster affected population. The Federation has deployed a psycho-social delegate and a psycho-social officer to support the TRCS psycho-social team. A disaster preparedness and information delegates, as well as the information officer have been also working at the earthquake site.

Advocacy/Public Information w

The TRCS and the Federation have been constantly in touch with representatives of international and national media disseminating information on the needs of the affected population and TRCS response operation. A number of articles were published in the local newspapers. Several stories about the TRCS work in the disaster affected area were posted on the Federation's web page.

Outstanding needs w

Contact has been established with several potential donors and discussions are underway related to support for this appeal. Some anticipated pledges anticipated are in the pipeline (pending agreement and finalisation). The initial low level of donor response to this appeal has raised concern as the Turkish Red Crescent Society and the Federation mobilize their existing resources in the operation. Contributions are urgently needed, with an emphasis on unearmarked funds in order to ensure enough flexibility in the implementation of the operation.

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All International Federation Operations seek to adhere to the Code of Conduct and are committed to the Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Disaster Response (SPHERE Project) in delivering assistance to the most vulnerable.

This operation seeks to administer to the immediate requirements of the victims of this disaster. Subsequent operations to promote sustainable development or longer-term capacity building will require additional support, and these programmes are outlined on the Federation's website.

For further information concerning Federation operations in this or other countries, please access the Federation website at <http://www.ifrc.org>.