

# Operations update



International Federation  
of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

## Pandemic influenza: response and mitigation

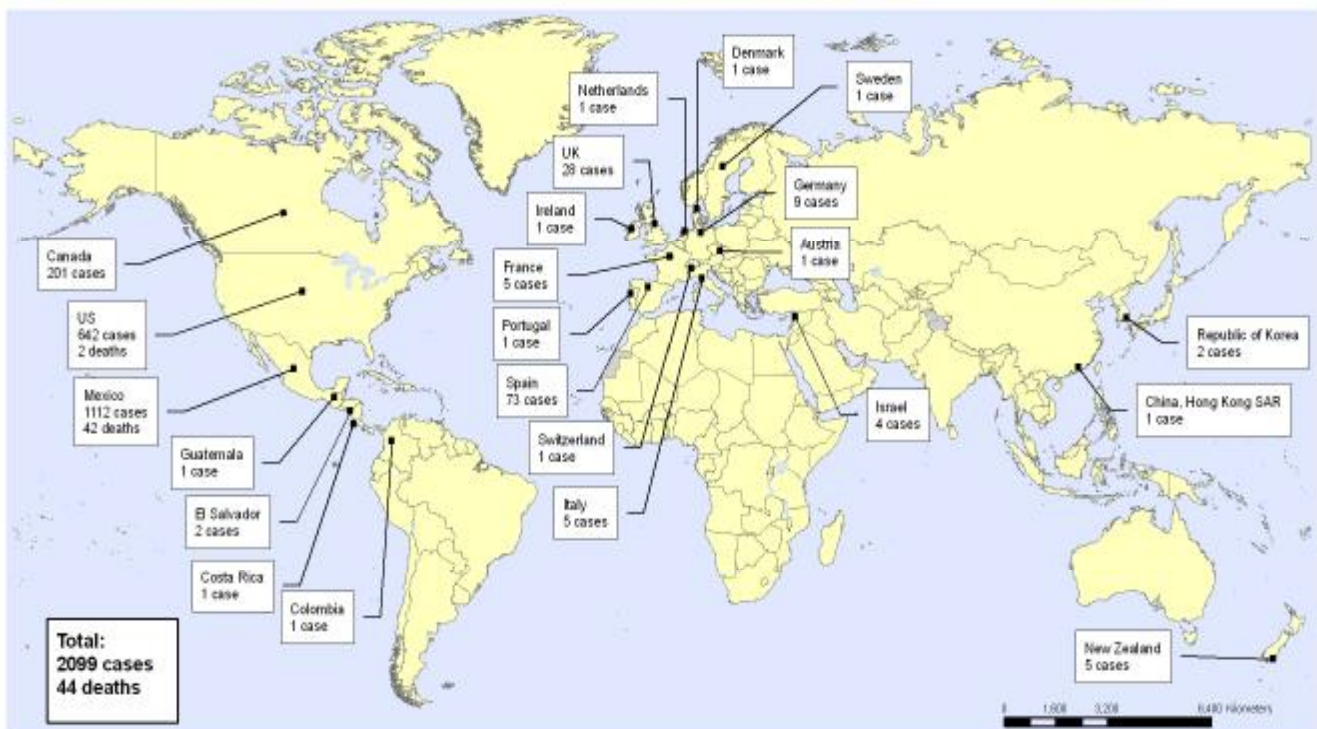
Emergency appeal n° MDR00002  
GLIDE n° EP-2009-000084  
Operations update n° 2  
7 May 2009

### Focus on:

- Business continuity.
- National Society action in the Americas, Asia Pacific, and Europe regions.

New Influenza A (H1N1),  
Number of laboratory confirmed cases and deaths as reported to WHO

Status as of 7 May 2009  
09:00 GMT



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Map produced: 6 May 2009 09:05 GMT

Data Source: World Health Organization  
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and Geographic Information Systems (GIS)  
World Health Organization



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Period covered by this Ops Update: 4 to 7 May 2009.  
Appeal target (current): CHF 5,000,000 (USD 4.4m or EUR 3.3m).

**Appeal coverage:** the only hard pledge to date is from the Japanese Red Cross (CHF 165,000); a number of partner National Societies have indicated a number of bi-lateral contributions, and are encouraged to transmit this information, either to Geneva (Secretariat) or the respective Zone offices so that the information can be properly recorded and acknowledged in future Operations Updates.

**Appeal history:**

- This Emergency Appeal was initially launched on a preliminary basis on 30 April 2009 for CHF 5,000,000 (USD 4.4m or EUR 3.3m) for 6 months.
- **Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF):** CHF 550,000 was allocated from the Federation's DREF to support the Mexican Red Cross to respond.
- Operations Update n° 1 issued 4 May 2009.

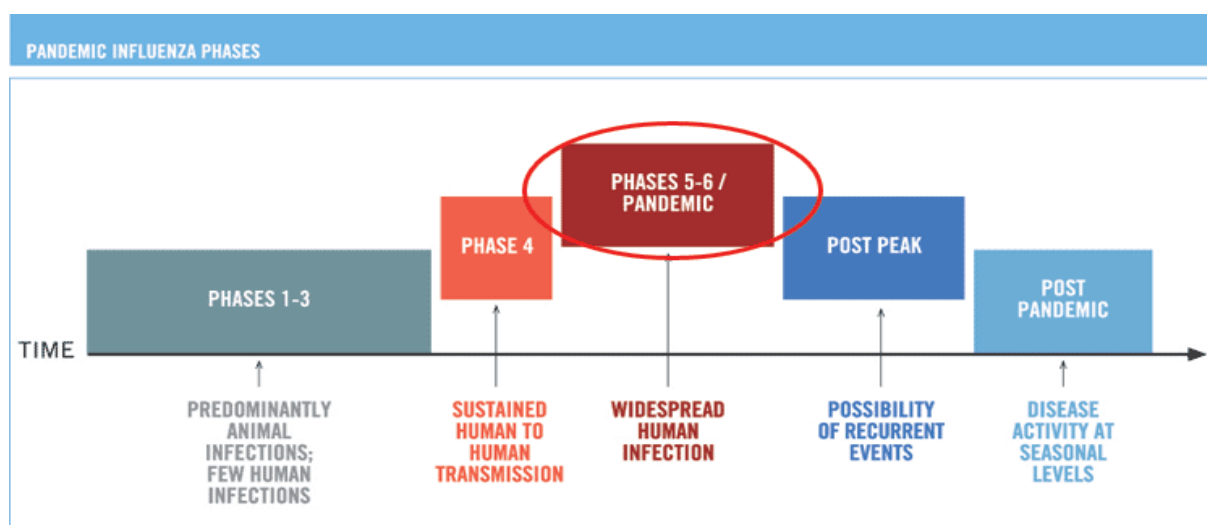
**Summary:** As of 7 May 2009, the number of confirmed cases worldwide has reached 2,099, with a total of 23 countries affected. The situation continues to evolve, and the preliminary nature of the Federation's strategy is being regularly adjusted according to the evolution of the outbreak. Despite the ongoing uncertainty of the situation and the efforts to develop and transmit consistent and accurate information that cautions against complacency while conveying what the Federation considers is the appropriate and balanced approach in its message and response (timely and measured action), support to this appeal remains very limited (the Japanese Red Cross has provided CHF 165,000).

The Federation, however, continues with the planned activities broadly focused on the following:

- Coordination (internal within the Movement and external with partner agencies).
- Responding to funding requests amounting to CHF 313,000 from three Americas National Societies or regional offices (the Belize and Bolivian Red Cross, and the Federation's Caribbean regional office). Additional requests are anticipated from two more National Societies shortly.
- The Federation has procured protection equipment and tamiflu for staff in Geneva and in the Zone offices.
- Combating complacency.
- Reinforcing and providing support to National Societies to develop and formulate their own response and preparedness capacities (working through the Federation's Zonal offices).
- Extensive communications efforts (both internal and external).

## The situation

This Preliminary Emergency Appeal was launched to respond to the outbreak of the influenza A (H1N1) virus (the so-called 'swine flu') that originated in Mexico. On 1 May 2009 the World Health Organization (WHO) raised its pandemic alert to level 5 (characterized by human-to-human spread of the virus into at least two countries in one WHO region). Level 5 is considered a strong signal that a pandemic is imminent and that the time to finalize the organization, communication, and implementation of the planned mitigation measures is short. The WHO has reported that as of 7 May 2009 the number of confirmed cases worldwide has reached 2,099, with 23 countries affected. The level 5 situation remains.



## Coordination and partnerships

The Federation would like to remind and encourage those partner National Societies that are contributing support on a bilateral basis to transmit this information either to Geneva (Secretariat) or the respective Zone offices so that the information can be properly recorded and acknowledged in future Operations Updates.

In the Americas Zone, the following coordination and partnership activities have taken place:

- Close contacts made with PNS in the region so as to avoid duplication of efforts.
- The American Red Cross has made available staff and material to the task force to increase its information management capacity. Some PNS in the region are supporting the involved National Societies bilaterally. The Spanish Red Cross has sent PPE kits to Mexican Red Cross.
- ICRC delegations in Mexico and Colombia are engaged in contingency planning addressing a possible escalation of the current outbreak.

Governments and UN agencies in the region have activated their contingency plans due to the epidemic and the governments of Costa Rica and El Salvador have declared a state of national emergency. The international response of the United Nations agency is led partly by the WHO, and the following actions are worth highlighting:

- WHO has put in place a logistics plan for distributions, due to materialise in the next few week, of 2.4 million of its world antiviral reserves directed to the countries with greatest needs including Mexico.
- In collaboration with other United Nations partners WHO is switching to a more operational mode to respond to the outbreak.
- WHO will complement their existing stocks of antivirals in six regions to strengthen the supplies in the countries. WHO is still negotiating with pharmaceutical companies regarding the most effective way to respond to future needs of antiviral drugs in developing countries.
- WHO and CDC are distributing diagnostic kits to national laboratories.
- With the support of WFP, PAHO has today sent 219,937 Tamiflu treatments for countries in the Americas.
- UNICEF has activated its contingency plan and is doing advocacy work for all the offices in the continent to provide special attention to children.

## Red Cross and Red Crescent action

### Progress towards objectives

The Federation continues to emphasize the rapidly evolving nature of the situation, and therefore the Federation's strategic approach of adapting activities flexibly to actual events and expert technical assessments. This appeal document will be adjusted accordingly. The Preliminary Emergency Appeal established the following three main objectives and related expected results and planned activities:

<b>Objective 1: Capacity building -- support National Societies' efforts to increase their capacity, working in partnership with their governments, to tackle influenza at community or local level in affected countries, thereby mitigating the threat of a pandemic and the challenges it may pose and reducing the risk of human cases.</b>	
<b>Expected result</b>	<b>Activities planned</b>
The response capacities of National Societies have been reinforced.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improved communications.</li> <li>• Developing or updating guidance on staff and volunteer health and protection.</li> <li>• Developing, printing and translating information and education materials and communication messages.</li> <li>• Advocacy for National Societies' role in complementing their</li> </ul>

	<p>government's efforts.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mapping of National Society actions and identifying support requirements and actual involvement.</li> </ul>
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**Objective 2: Provide resources and structural support so that countries and communities at risk of influenza can increase their preparations for a possible pandemic and are ready to train their staff and volunteers.**

<b>Expected result</b>	<b>Activities planned</b>
Resources and structural support has been provided resulting in at-risk countries and communities have increased their preparations, including training staff and volunteers.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Public awareness and education campaigns (hygiene &amp; health promotion).</li> <li>• Community-based First Aid.</li> <li>• Prepare country and community level contingency plans.</li> <li>• Training, establishing and organizing National Society and community's response teams (for example, National Disaster Response Teams, community response teams, etc).</li> <li>• Providing logistical support for procurement and stockpiling of emergency medical and non-medical items (masks, gloves, aprons, pairs of rubber boots, and hygiene supplies such as soap and disinfectants would be necessary to cover the needs of volunteers, staff and the general population for six months).</li> <li>• Increasing partnerships at the local level; and improve performance in community-based surveillance, social mobilization and community outreach activities.</li> </ul>

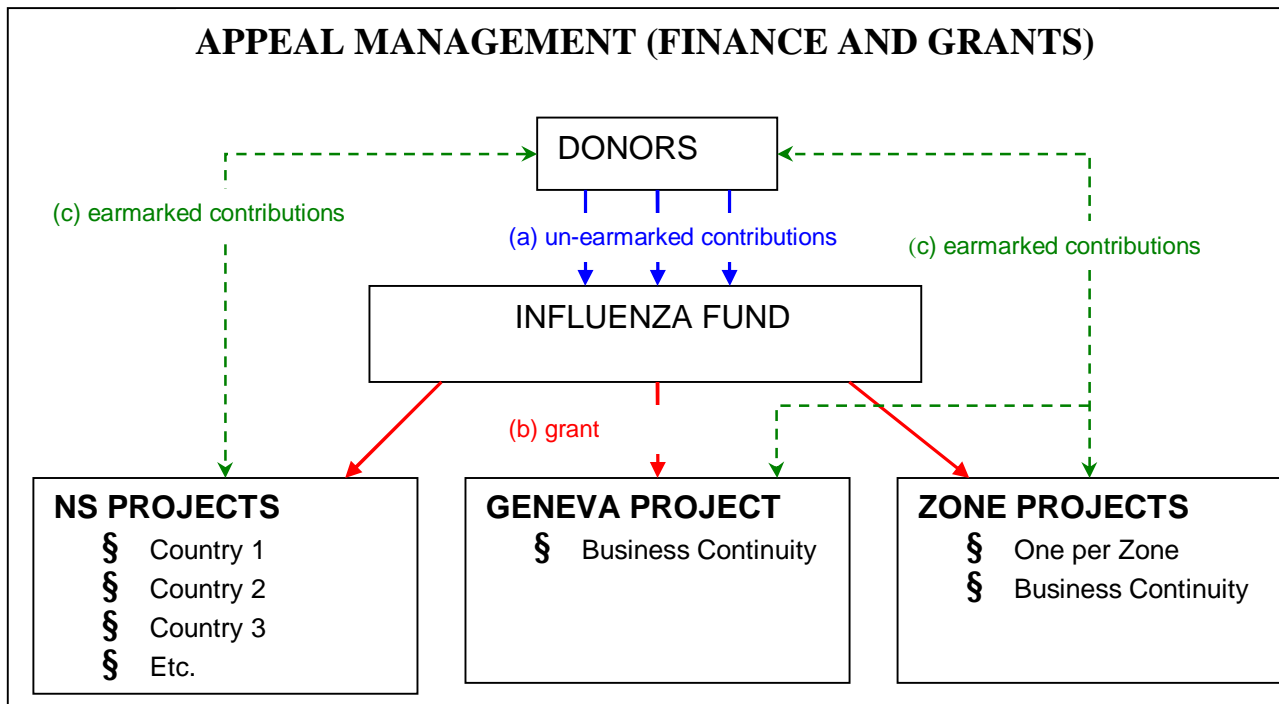
**Objective 3: Plan for and advise on Business Continuity Plan (BCP) initiatives at the global, zonal and National Society levels, thereby ensuring that essential services to communities and coordination of activities are supported or reinforced.**

<b>Expected results</b>	<b>Activities planned</b>
BCP initiatives have reflected progress in supporting or reinforcing essential services to communities and coordination of activities.	Defining roles and responsibilities and identifying capacity needs; and considering organizational and "core business continuity" measures.

## Progress and challenges

### Federation Secretariat (Geneva):

The Federation has developed a guiding document referred to as the Appeal Management Process. This guidance (available upon request) broadly articulates planned approaches in the following areas: appeal finance structure (pandemic influenza fund, National Society projects, Geneva projects, and Zone projects), pledge and income process, National Society grant process, zone and Geneva business continuity plans and process. The guidance includes the format for 'Requests for Support'. The graphic below reflects the overall approach:



### Americas Zone action

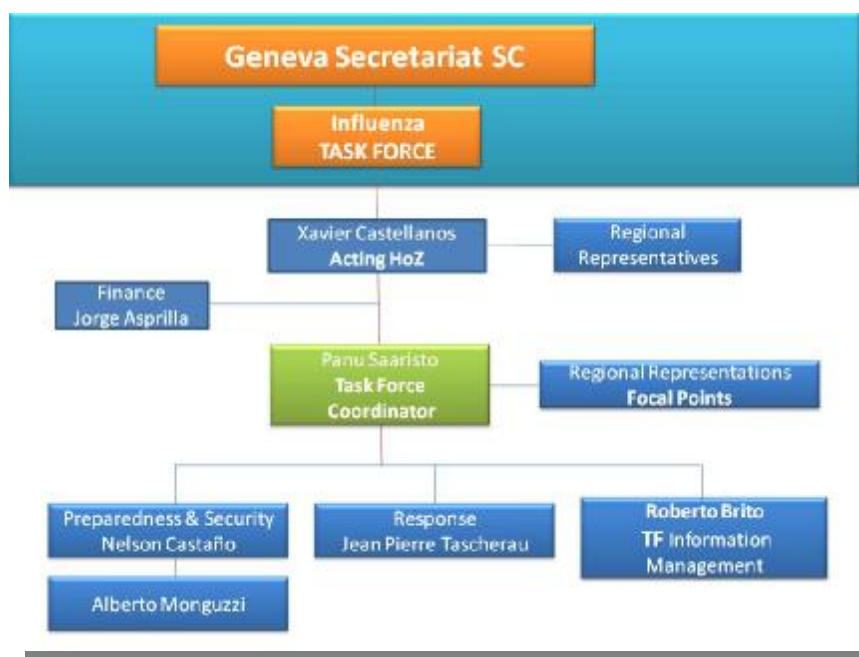
With the number of reported cases of influenza in Mexico, the U.S. and Canada increasing, and in the light of WHO declaring the H1N1 outbreak a public health emergency of international concern, the National Societies of the Americas have activated their contingency and response plans. The main services that the Red Cross in the region offer to the population, and that are considered essential are: health services (medical services including pre-hospital care; community health, blood supply services); and relief operations in case of emergency.

The following National Societies are actively involved in the response phase:

- Mexico: volunteer and health personnel, IEC, protection activities.
- Guatemala: National Society task force activated, the plan of action has been sent to the Secretariat.
- El Salvador: National Society task force activated, the plan of action has been sent to the Secretariat.
- United States: National Society task force activated, IEC to general population.
- Canada: Monitoring the situation and waiting to activate the pandemic contingency plan.
- Bolivia: National Society task force activated, the plan of action has been sent to the Secretariat.

- Belize: National Society task force activated, the plan of action has been sent to the Secretariat.
- Columbia: National Society task force activated; plan of action has been sent to the Secretariat.
- Honduras: National Society task force activated; plan of action has been sent to the Secretariat.

The graphic below describes the division and the reporting lines of the Americas task force.



The task force coordinates its activities with the United Nations System and with the PNS present in the region. The table below reflects the funding requests to date:

National Societies with Plans of Action (PoA)	PoA total (USD)
Belize	68,010
Caribbean regional	161,283
Colombia	220,760
El Salvador	110,717
Honduras	22,631
Guatemala	164,464
Mexico	486,321
Bolivia	86,661
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1,234,186</b>

## Asia and Pacific Zone action

Preparedness and response activities of National Societies and Federation field offices

East Asia region

### China

- The Red Cross Society of China (RCSC) is closely monitoring the situation and coordinating with the government. On 29 March the RCSC participated in meeting convened by the State Council of the PRC on A/H1N1.
- The RCSC has been involved in the 2003 SARS response in China nationwide. Building on these experiences, the RCSC has developed a SARS preparedness plan. This plan will be adjusted to current A/H1N1 outbreak situation.
- The RCSC also sent support to the Mexican Red Cross, in response to A/H1N1, worth 10,000 USD. The Chinese government provided aid to Mexico valued at USD 5 million, in cash and kind.

### Japan

- The Japanese Red Cross Society (JRCS) activated operational guidelines to all 91 Red Cross hospitals. This guideline refers to medical check and care for the flu patients, storage of medicines, prevention of infection within the hospital, health control of the personnel. Narita Red Cross Hospital, the closest hospital to the Narita International Airport, has set up the consultation room for arrivals.
- Published influenza prevention messages in the JRCS public website.
- At 141 RC Blood collection centers, where the whole blood is collected, special instruction was given to collect blood from those who are suspected by the patients.
- The Swine Flu Preparedness Meeting was set in the JRCS National Headquarters on 28 April for information management, monitoring and coordination of the above mentioned actions taken by the JRCS.

### Mongolia

- The Mongolian Red Cross (MRCS) has been asked by their MOH to do risk communication for incoming travellers from abroad for swine flu, to sensitize them about a disease and urging them to go to hospital if sick, give help line number, among others.
- MRCS, together with the health coordinator of Federation's East Asia regional office, is working on the messages in coordination with the Ministry of Health. It is also working on messages that can be quickly released (IEC mock-ups, ready to print) if it eventually hits Mongolia.

### Regional Office, Beijing

- The regional office has held a number of staff briefings, during which next steps were agreed upon.
- A critical incident management team has been established.
- The EA regional office has also drafted a preparedness plan including a business continuity plan and communications call-down network.
- Frequent email updates on the status of the virus in East Asia and actions by the Red Cross will be sent out to regional focal points.
- Contacts have been made with national societies urging them to activate their pandemic preparedness plans, and if it does not exist, develop one and appoint pandemic focal points.

### **Pacific region**

All National Societies in the region have designated senior officials as focal persons for preparedness and response planning and coordination for Influenza A/H1N1 and submitted names and contact details to the regional office in Suva (see list of focal persons). National Societies and Federation field offices undertook the following actions as initial response to the situation:

#### Australia

- The Australian Red Cross Society (ARCS) set-up a task force made up of key emergencies, health and communications staff. Its website has been updated to include influenza-related health information and are keeping its staff informed through the intranet.
- It is also closely monitoring the situation, closely working with national, state and territory authorities and partners.
- ARCS is ready to provide a range of emergency services, including the National Registration and Inquiry System, and personal support if requested by State and Territories.

#### Cook Islands

- The Cook Islands Red Cross (CIRC) has been attending national task force meetings, represented by its health coordinator

- It is working with MoH and supporting them in screening passengers at the airport, identifying persons with signs and symptoms, if any and referrals
- It has submitted the list of its volunteers and staff to the MoH to be called upon to relieve health ministry staff.

Fiji: The Fiji Red Cross Society (FRCS) is a member of the Fiji National Pandemic Influenza Task Force and is currently working closely with all the stakeholders in country.

#### Kiribati

- Kiribati Red Cross Society (KRCS) is a member of a working committee on Influenza (H1N1) set-up by the Ministry of Health.
- MoH has set up a working committee on Influenza (H1N1) and KRCS is a member. The National Society has not yet been allocated any specific task, but will conduct community based awareness activities as and when required.

#### New Zealand

- The New Zealand Red Cross (NZRC) is currently engaged with MOH & Ministry CD EM for pandemic planning and action under the national plan (<http://www.moh.govt.nz/moh.nsf/indexmh/nz-influenza-pandemic-action-plan-2006>).
- Details of NZRC activities in support of the Government response and an update to BCP are being formulated.

#### Samoa

- The Samoan Red Cross Society (SRCS) is working closely with the MoH as a member of the newly formed task force on Influenza A (H1N1). It is awaiting a formal go ahead from the MoH to conduct community awareness campaigns which is part of SRCS role in the national plan.
- The SRCS will support MoH staff in the hospitals and airports and share the workload.

#### Regional office, Suva

- Regularly sharing information with all the focal points in the region
- Adapted the Federation's FAQs for the Samoa Red Cross.
- Getting regular update on the region through PactNet (internet forum of regional and national stakeholders) on the situation.
- Member of the Pacific regional task force on PI – getting regular information from SPC.

#### **South Asia region**

All National Societies in the region have designated senior officials as focal persons for preparedness and response planning and coordination for Influenza A/H1N1 and submitted names and contact details to the regional office in Suva (see list of focal persons). National societies and Federation field offices undertook the following actions as initial response to the situation:

#### Afghanistan

- The health cluster will have a meeting on this issue on 3 May.
- The staff have been updated on the situation.
- Afghanistan Delegation has a stock of Tamiflu.

#### Bangladesh

- The National Society Health Director has had discussions with the Federation's Head of Delegation. The BDRCS has taken an active role and is keen to be involved in the response.
- The Federation's Bangladesh delegation has a stock of Tamiflu.

#### India

A meeting was held with the India Red cross, partner National Societies, the Federation and ICRC on appraising H1N1. The following was discussed:

- Global update on the situation.
- 500,000 brochures on Avian Influenza in 11 languages have been distributed in all states. The prevention messages for both AI and H1N1 are similar.
- Health education messages discussed.
- Community mobilisation, blood bank preparedness, close watch.

- Information will be disseminated to all states to enable community mobilisation.
- PhiE programmes will be activated.
- Information will be included on the IRCS website.
- ICRC extended support and American Red Cross will include H1N1 in its trainings.
- Information on launch of Global appeal was shared.

#### Maldives

- The Federation country office in the Maldives attended meetings of INGOs convened by the UN Resident Coordinator where WHO gave a briefing on the H1N1 situation and UN preparedness measures being taken to address the situation.
  - ü Fact-sheets were distributed with specific information about the outbreak, simple travel related advice, preventive measures and medical contacts.
  - ü UNICEF provided protective masks (N95) for delegates and local staff and their family members.
  - ü Agencies will be advised once Tamiflu drugs will be available
- Basic information on the H1N1 outbreak, preventive measures and medical contacts will be provided to all delegates and national staff.

#### Nepal

- Working with national authorities in the preparation of information materials for distribution to district and sub-district chapters.
- Contact was made with district branches regarding preparations for swine flu response. District branches have placed at the district notice board swine flu information gathered through WHO, CDC and the Federation, while the above is being completed.

#### Pakistan

- Meeting scheduled for next week with the health staff to direct them about the H1N1 and will share information.
- PRCS is using Avian Influenza material from WHO/FAO to give to communities. In case WHO has in Urdu publication on H1N1 we also can disseminate it.
- PPE and hygiene household kits are in stock.
- Started procurement of Tami Flu within Pakistan.
- Health promotion sessions are all directed towards hygiene promotion and during training we are using that Avian Influenza documentary (although not yet translated in Urdu).
- Higher alert at ports and airports in Pakistan. Everybody who comes from boats need to wear masks. 3 IT people who came back from Mexico conference were put in quarantined. One case from Lahore and one case from Karachi airport were referred to hospital. No case confirmed yet.
- PRCS and Federation planned an extra urgent Health Technical Committee (HTC) meeting.
- Federation Senior Health Manager will attend the WHO/MHO cluster meetings.

#### Sri Lanka

- SLRCS and the Federation's health Department are preparing an information sheet for internal distribution in the Red Cross based on the material from WHO and Ministry of Health.
- The Head of Delegation has formed a Steering Committee for H1N1 coordination. Tentative meeting has been scheduled for 4 May.
- Sri Lanka delegation is requesting Tamiflu

#### Regional office, New Delhi

- Disseminating information from Secretariat and zone office to focal persons in country delegations.
- In contact with focal persons in country delegations for updates and planning process.
- Monitoring the situation.
- Recommended all country offices to disseminate hygiene promotion measures.
- Staff sensitization will take place on the coming week.
- Recommend the health teams to keep a close dialogue with the senior management and DM teams.

#### **Southeast Asia region**

Cambodia: The Federation country office has created a CIMT and drafted a business continuity plan.

#### Indonesia

- As a member of the national committee on pandemic influenza (KOMNAS FBPI), Palang Merah Indonesia (PMI) has been participating in inter-agency meetings organised by national government where priorities in preparedness and response to Influenza A/H1N1 were discussed. The Federation country office is also participating in meetings led by WHO.
- PMI will support government in disseminating key messages in communities through its network of branches and volunteers. It has already circulated to branches key information on Influenza A/H1N1 using the recent national meeting organised by the Resource Development Division. This will be reinforced by the issuance of circular letters to all chapters along with the dissemination of preparedness and response protocols for pandemic influenza.
- Working with national authorities, PMI is preparing leaflets and brochures to be distributed to chapters and branches, and to communities.
- The Federation country office created a task force to lead and coordinate preparedness and response efforts. It has also updated sub-delegations and in-country offices on status of preparedness.

#### Malaysia

- The Malaysian Red Crescent Society (MRCS) has been participating in coordination meetings called in by MoH; it is ready to support government in public awareness/health education.
- It can also deploy six medical field clinics (for out-patient or basic health care services) to reinforce government health workforce, if requested.
- Some 50T face masks and 10T gloves are available in storeroom

#### Philippines

- The Philippine National Red Cross (PNRC) has been involved in inter-agency coordination meetings organised by the National Disaster Coordinating Council and Department of Health.
- In consultation with the DOH and using materials developed by the Federation's Humanitarian Pandemic Preparedness (H2P) Programme, PNRC are preparing materials to be used by chapters in the conduct of health education campaigns.

#### Timor Leste (CVTL)

- Conducted education sessions for CVTL staff today (30 April); adapted from Federation materials, guidance on swine flu for staff and volunteers highlighting preventive measures is being translated and will be distributed to branch coordinators on Monday next week to enable the latter to discuss with district staff and volunteers.
- CVTL will organise a task force and meet on Monday; meeting will be held earlier if situation worsens.

#### Vietnam

- The Vietnam Red Cross (VNRC), together with representatives of the Federation country office, participated in national coordination meetings called on by the National Steering Committee on Human Pandemics which discussed situation updates and preparedness activities/workplan.
- National headquarters, through the health department, issued a letter of instruction to 63 provincial chapters which contained information about swine flu and prevention messages prepared by WHO and MOH, as well as advice on further dissemination of the messages to members, volunteers and the general public.

#### Regional office, Bangkok

- A Critical Incident Management Team (CIMT) created. Led by the programmes coordinator, the CIMT started working on the business continuity plan which will be completed tomorrow.
- Bangkok office has been supporting Cambodia and Myanmar delegations in the procurement of Tamiflu and protective equipment for staff and dependents.

### **Europe Zone action**

The information below is cumulative in nature, but may also reflect recent updates received from National Societies.

#### Armenian Red Cross

Armenian Red Cross, while noting that no cases of Influenza A (H1N1) have been detected in their country, so far, focuses their efforts on coordinated information and emphasizes the importance of action at the field level.

### Austrian Red Cross

The Austrian Red Cross has a Q&A section on their website (see <http://www.rotekreuz.at>) containing advice on how to minimise the risk of infection / transmission of the flu and a summary of worldwide preparedness measures. With regard to the latter, the Austrian Red Cross notes that "The strong roots of the Red Cross in communities and villages across the world facilitates well co-ordinated measures at the local level"

### Azerbaijan Red Crescent

Azerbaijan Red Crescent is in close contact with the Ministry of Health and with WHO. The National Society is a member of steering committee and will be invited to take part in meetings of relevance to its role, and updated on the process. The National Society will also assist the government in awareness-raising and provision of trainings as mentioned within the National Pandemic Plan.

### Belarus Red Cross

Belarus Red Cross is in close contact with the health authorities (specifically, Belarus Republican Centre for Sanitary Medicine and Epidemiology) and has outlined what had been done, so far, by the National Society, and its plans with regard to pandemic preparedness. The interlocutors on the government side are well aware of the role of Belarus Red Cross and would welcome its involvement in receiving an effective plan in the near future. Due to its previous work in Avian Influenza preparedness, Belarus Red Cross is well placed to respond to the request from the Government of Belarus, and looks to the International Federation to support it in its efforts. The objectives of Belarus Red Cross in this regard is to increase its readiness to act in the current situation and to have a solid plan in place prior to the coming "ordinary" influenza season, usually starting in September.

### Belgian Red Cross

Both the Flemish-speaking and French-speaking sections of the Belgian Red Cross are active and the Belgian Red Cross in its totality engaged in the Influenza A (H1N1) situation. In co-operation with the health authorities, Belgian Red Cross distributes a flier to all passengers arriving in Belgium from all points of departure and at all points of arrival. This has become a 24/7 activity relying on Red Cross Volunteers and port personnel (airports: Brussels, Ostend, Antwerp, Liege, Charleroi, Zaventem; seaports Antwerp, Ostend, Zeebrugge). Passengers are invited to contact a doctor immediately when they have any of the flu symptoms as indicated on the document. A free-phone service has been established to enable visitors to contact the authorities should there be a need.

The Belgian Red Cross ambulance and emergency response services have been put in pre-alarm phase and have been prepared in case there is an outbreak of the flu. A main focus is the security of the personnel involved, providing protective measures in case they have to provide care to an infected patient. As partner of the Belgian Government for emergencies and disaster management, Belgian Red Cross has a large stock of masks ready to be distributed to the Belgian population in case the need arises. A liaison officer has been appointed, located at the Governmental crisis centre, to enable swift action in case of need. The Belgian Red Cross, on its French section website (<http://www.croix-rouge.be/>), provides links to information on hygiene measures and protection against infection.

### British Red Cross

The British Red Cross (<http://www.redcross.org.uk>) has announced it is ready to respond if there is a large-scale outbreak of flu. The National Society already works very closely with the statutory emergency response services and health and social care providers. This includes providing a wide range of services to people at home, as well as first aid and support to the ambulance service. British Red Cross partners include Department of Health, Local Resilience Forums, local authorities, ambulance authorities and social services.

At the end of 2008 a member of staff was seconded to the department of health to prepare information for the voluntary sector on how to respond to a flu pandemic. That information will be distributed to voluntary organisations across the country in the next few days. Area managers of British Red Cross have been asked by partners to provide a range of services including:

1. transport and escort.
2. provide and organise volunteers to be "flu friends" e.g. to collect antiviral drugs and bring them to people who can not get to the pharmacists.
3. help at ports of entry to provide information to people returning from affected areas.
4. One British Red Cross has set up a support line.

The British Red Cross is also ensuring that there are plans in place to continue running critical business services.

#### Bulgarian Red Cross

A working group has been established internally with the participation of the Health Department, Disaster preparedness Department, Public Relations Department and the International Cooperation department. The BRC has established contact with the relevant authorities - Ministry of Health and Ministry of Emergency Situations for regular information sharing and we participate in the newly established crisis working group. The information on the swine flu outbreak is distributed to Regional Councils. A leaflet in Bulgarian on the prevention measures is about to be issued and it will be distributed through regional branches to the population. A 24-hour shift is operating at the Bulgarian Red Cross Mountain Rescue service and it will be available during the holidays for giving basic information and facilitating communication.

#### Croatian Red Cross

The Croatian Red Cross website ([www.hcr.hr](http://www.hcr.hr)) provides links to Ministry of Health and to Federation web pages with information on the influenza.

#### Cyprus Red Cross

Cyprus Red Cross is in close contact with the Ministry of Health, and is preparing an information leaflet meant for the general public.

#### Danish Red Cross

The Danish Red Cross website ([www.drk.dk](http://www.drk.dk)) has a section on its website with general information on the flu situation, the response of the Red Cross Red Crescent, and general advice to the population at large. The message its: "We have access to doctors and medicine. There is no reason to panic and stay indoors behind closed windows in our part of the world. Live your life as usual, and go and see a doctor if you are feeling unwell". The website also provides a fact sheet on the flu and how to avoid being infected.

#### Finnish Red Cross

A case of suspected Swine Flu case was found in Finland: a person coming from Mexico. The National Society website ([www.redcross.fi](http://www.redcross.fi)) carries a daily updated news story about situation in Finland and in the world, story about Mexico RC volunteers, link to IFRC web, and info "What to do" with concrete photos. Under preparation is a hotline for the general public. Red Cross volunteers (health professionals) will be answering in the phone daily from 8-16. It's organised by the Ministry of Social and Health.

The Finnish Red Cross website ([www.redcross.fi](http://www.redcross.fi)) provides information and advice on simple hygiene measures such as hand washing, in Finnish and Swedish, with links to information from Ministry of Health and Social Welfare, to the International Federation.

#### French Red Cross

The French Red Cross, on request from Ministry of Foreign Affairs, provides personnel for the Ministry's effort to respond to numerous inquires in relation to Swine Flu. The Ministry of Health has requested support at the airport Roissy from the French Red Cross in providing information to travellers arriving from Mexico. The French Red Cross receives travellers from regions concerned, distributes brochures containing information on symptoms of the new flu and advice on how to act, and operates an information counter. In addition to information to passengers arriving from Mexico, the French Red Cross in support of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs has handled more than 5 000 telephone inquiries during the first seven hours of operation.

<http://www.croix-rouge.fr/>

#### Georgian Red Cross

Georgian Red Cross is in contact with the Ministry of Public Health and WHO at senior levels. The National Society participates in Health Cluster meetings chaired by WHO. Since August 2008, National Society has been included into National Disaster Response Plan of Georgia and has defined responsibilities in case of emergencies. Georgian Red Cross has provided the Ministry of Health with details of its proposals.

The Georgian Red Cross has prepared information material on Influenza A (H1N1) and is ready to distribute it on branch level. There is good network of volunteers who have contributed to vaccination campaigns last year and they could be involved into any health promotion campaigns in case of need. Also there are mobile volunteer teams in 5 branches and HQ, consisting of staff and volunteers and trained in DM, FA and PSP who could also be involved.

While the influenza A (H1N1) is not high on the agenda in Georgia, it could become as soon as there is a confirmed case. The Georgia Red Cross is taking this situation seriously, but also tries to be careful not alarm the general public without good cause. Influenza related information furnished by the International Federation, and containing information from WHO, been processes in preparation for posting on GRCS's website (<http://www.redcross.ge/>) and for dissemination among GRCS volunteers and staff at central and local levels.

#### German Red Cross

The German Red Cross, on its website, recognises the seriousness of the Swine Flu situation, but encourages the readers to maintain calm, pointing out that so far no cases have been detected in Germany. Nevertheless the German Red Cross advises individuals who have recently arrived from Mexico and have symptoms to seek medical attention.

Following the situation closely, the German Red Cross is also closely following up on data and information concerning swine flu as the basis for regular communication with all staff, volunteers and federal state branches of the Red Cross. Regular co-ordination meetings are held at the headquarters level, and human resources plans have been updated in preparation for the eventuality of staff shortage. In addition, the German Red Cross is undertaking preparations to enable it to respond to media inquires as well as to questions from the public, and a set of "Frequently Asked Questions" (FAQ) is under preparation.

With its rescue services, hospitals, blood services, institutions for the aged and other, the German Red Cross forms part of the "critical infrastructure" the continued operation of which must be assured. "As a result of planning and preparation during the past years we are better prepared for a pandemic than ever before" said the German Red Cross President, adding that "The situation is serious, but we should remain calm". Providing basic information on hygiene measures the German Red Cross website ([www.drk.de](http://www.drk.de)) also provides links to official information from the health authorities and others. The German Red Cross co-ordinates its actions and initiatives closely with the relevant authorities at national and federal state levels.

#### Icelandic Red Cross

A press release was issued. The National Society is part of the national response plan. The Icelandic Red Cross website ([www.redcross.is](http://www.redcross.is)) provides links to official sources of information on the flu situation and measures individuals can take to protect themselves.

#### Italian Red Cross

The Italian Red Cross is working closely with the relevant authorities and has already become operational in medical control of passengers and crews returning to Italy thus establishing and maintaining the first isolation barrier against possible infection. Information is available on the Italian Red Cross website ([www.cri.it](http://www.cri.it)).

#### Kazakhstan Red Crescent

Kazakhstan Red Crescent is in contact with the Ministry of Health, and has been informed by the latter of the actual situation in the country – no cases so far detected – and the measures instituted by the authorities of Kazakhstan to prepare for a possible pandemic.

#### Malta Red Cross

The Malta Red Cross is in direct contact with the health authorities. The Malta Red Cross is preparing a leaflet for the general public. It is ready to assist the government in the area of pre-hospital care.

#### Norwegian Red Cross

The Norwegian Red Cross ([www.redcross.no](http://www.redcross.no)) is following the situation closely in order to be prepared. The National Pandemic Preparedness Plan specifies several possible roles for the Norwegian Red Cross, which is basing its recommendations and information on advice from the central government Directorate of Health.

#### Netherlands Red Cross

Netherlands Red Cross' website (<http://www.rodekruis.nl/>) provides general information on the situation and advice on basic hygiene measures and a brochure providing more information on how to protect against infection

#### Romanian Red Cross

So far, no cases of Swine Flu have been registered in Romania, but the Ministry of Health has begun informing the population systematically, including placing news on its website and distributing fliers at the airport, as well organizing meetings with partners and setting up a crisis cell. The Romanian Red Cross has offered its support in these efforts. The Romanian Red Cross has also provided information in relation to Swine Flu to its branches, and apprised them of their communication with the Ministry of health. In a question and answer format, the Romanian Red Cross through its website (<http://www.crucearosie.ro/>) provides extensive information on the flu.

#### Serbian Red Cross

Serbian Red Cross is integrated into the planning for pandemic by Ministry of Health. From national headquarters, the Serbian Red Cross has supplied its branches with information materiel regarding Influenza A (H1N1), together with two suggestions for action: to contact local authorities and local emergency HQ and be on disposal; and to disseminate information about the flu to marginalized populations (Roma populations and others).

#### Spanish Red Cross

A press release was issued, highlighting the coordination between the Spanish Ministry of health and the Spanish Red Cross. Responding to numerous media interest in Spanish-speaking delegates present in Mexico

#### Swedish Red Cross

Swedish Red Cross provides information, at its website ([www.redcross.se](http://www.redcross.se)) on the global response, and links to sources of official information from the authorities.

#### Swiss Red Cross:

Swiss Red Cross provides information on its website (<http://www.redcross.ch/>) on the global response, and links to sources of information. The Swiss Red Cross organisations have for nearly three years prepared the measures necessary to be ready to act fast in case of a pandemic. Through this, the Swiss Red Cross will ensure that its services will be available also in a situation of massive spread of Influenza A (H1N1). For the same purpose, the Swiss Red Cross is in contact with the authorities.

Uzbekistan: Government has established sanitary checkpoints at airports, and two railway stations (north and south), and the intercity bus station in the border point. Health authorities say there are no cases detected, confirmed by WHO. The Ministry of Health and WHO closely co-operating in planning and prevention.

## How we work

***All International Federation assistance seeks to adhere to the Code of Conduct for the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and Non-Governmental Organizations (NGO's) in Disaster Relief and is committed to the Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Disaster Response (Sphere) in delivering assistance to the most vulnerable.***

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.

## Contact information

**For further information specifically related to this operation please contact:** Flemming Nielsen, Head, Operations Coordination Team; phone: +41.22.730.42.33; email: [flemming.nielsen@ifrc.org](mailto:flemming.nielsen@ifrc.org)

**[<Updated donor response report will be made available shortly; click here to return to the title page>](#)**