

TURKEY: EARTHQUAKE

24 September 1999

appeal no. 19/99

situation report no. 17

period covered: 22-24 September

The Federation's water and sanitation delegate has conducted field visits in Adapazari, Golchuk, and Yalova, accompanied by Austrian Red Cross team leaders and a Federation project assistant and in consultation with local Turkish Red Crescent Society (TRCS) officials. The preliminary recommendations of the Red Cross Red Crescent team will be evaluated quickly, ahead of implementation. Meanwhile, attempts by the International Federation to sign a contract for the lease of dedicated warehousing facilities have yet to be realised.

The context

On 17 August at 03h02 local time a massive earthquake measuring between 7.4 and 7.8 on the Richter scale and lasting 45 seconds hit north-western Turkey. Hundreds of aftershocks have since been reported, some exceeding five on the Richter scale. Izmit, an industrial city of one million in western Turkey, was nearest the epicentre. But the force of the tremor was felt as far away as Ankara, the capital, some 500 km to the east, and across parts of the Balkans. Geophysicists described the quake as one of the most powerful this century, nearly rivalling the 7.9 magnitude earthquake that devastated San Francisco in 1906. On the day of the disaster, the Turkish government declared a state of emergency and requested international assistance.

Update

According to local media reports, an earthquake measuring 5.0 on the Richter scale shook Tekirdag province in north-western Turkey, shortly after midnight yesterday (Thursday). The earthquake was also felt in Istanbul, Canakkale, Balikesir and Edirne. Shortly after the earthquake, people scrambled into streets with panic.

The Turkish Ministry of Education and UNICEF will be implementing a programme to decrease the negative psychological after-effects of the quake on teachers, children and parents and strengthening psychological services in the earthquake affected areas. Teams will be established for programme planning, training and intervention, and information will be developed and disseminated to programme partners. National and international experts are to implement training-of-trainers sessions. The programme will continue through the 1999/2000 school year and into the next decade.

Red Cross/Red Crescent action

Logistics w

As clearly indicated in the previous situation report, the International Federation delegation in Istanbul was planning on the basis of signing a contract this week for dedicated warehousing facilities, complete with personnel, stacking and computer equipment. With this standard of warehousing in place, it would have been possible for incoming goods generated through the Red Cross Red Crescent network to be received and processed in an orderly fashion and within the International Federation's reporting and monitoring procedures. As yet it has not been possible to sign a warehousing contract and, accordingly, the International Federation has taken steps to suspend, temporarily, the shipment of all Red Cross Red Crescent relief consignments for the Turkey earthquake programme. Elsewhere, there are indications, as yet unconfirmed, of possible changes in the modalities of the disaster operation - at both national and local level - which point towards a cautious approach as the most prudent, until the present uncertain situation is clarified. This may take some days. In the meantime, the International Federation, in conjunction with the TRCS, is continuing its work within these parameters.

Water & Sanitation w

The Federation's water and sanitation delegate has conducted field visits in Adapazari, Golchuk, and Yalova, accompanied by Austrian Red Cross team leaders and a Federation project assistant, in consultation with local TRCS representatives. In most cases, local authorities have recognised the needs and, as a result, the construction of water and sanitation facilities is underway. In some areas, UNICEF water and sanitation teams have carried out estimates for the required equipment and facilities and have requested support from the International Federation. Each situation is unique and needs are based on the damage to existing infrastructure, the availability of natural water sources, the terrain and the number of people living in the area. The preliminary recommendations of the Red Cross Red Crescent team will be evaluated quickly and assistance given as soon as possible. The field visits and assessments are continuing. The findings to date, in summary, are as follows:

Sakarya/Adapazari: Near Emirdag tent city in Adapazari, a submersible pump has been installed in a bore hole well and there is good progress in the connection work to the tent city, using a 30 cubic metre holding cistern. Drilling of a second bore hole well is under consideration. The preliminary recommendation is for the International Federation to provide expanded storage capacity, facilities and chemicals adequate for six-month water treatment programmes.

UNICEF has estimated there are 32,500 people living in 8,500 tents in small settlements scattered throughout the Adapazari area. In many places there are no toilets or sanitation facilities available. The recommendation is for the International Federation to provide 100 toilet containers which have 6 toilets each with built-in water and septic tanks, and 40 shower containers which have 5 cabins each, water heating equipment and 150 litre water tanks. In 45 locations, it is now feasible to connect bladder tanks and cisterns already in place to the municipal water mains, but UNICEF has identified a need for 42,000 metres of plastic pipe and associated connectors. It is recommended that the Austrian Red Cross emergency response unit (ERU) continues to produce the specialised water and mass water for the Golchuk area, as many people are dependent on this water and it is unknown when water distribution systems will return to normal.

Golchuk: UNICEF estimates there are 4,300 tents located in and around Golchuk, sheltering about 20,100 displaced persons. The State Hydraulic Works drilled borehole wells in a number of sites just after the earthquake. However, the water is unsuitable for drinking as Golchuk is located on reclaimed swamp. At present, the head of the Municipal Water Works reports that sufficient repairs have been made to the Golchuk water system to supply drinking water to about 75% of the principal city mains serving an estimated 50,000 people.

As an interim measure during the construction of prefabricated units which are to be built in the southern outskirts of the city, the authorities are planning to relocate residents into three large tent cities (Gozlem, Esentepe/Hisareyn, and Yemkoy). These settlements will have an estimated 17,000 people sheltered in 3,500 tents. Technical water works to supply the settlements is in progress and the municipality plans to design water and sewers for the tent cities in a way which will recover 70% of

infrastructure for future development. The preliminary recommendation is for the International Federation to supply 10,000 metres of plastic water and sewage pipes, sewage facilities, 60 toilet containers, and 25 shower containers for these tent cities.

Yalova: UNICEF estimates there are 16,400 people living in 3,200 tents in the Yalova area, which requires 70 toilet containers and 40 shower containers.

Health w

German Red Cross: Following the severe aftershock on 13 September, the staff of the German Red Cross ERU field hospital treated 65 patients for trauma. Another 96 injured people came to the hospital in the following six days. There were 1,163 out-patients treated during the week of 13-19 September and an average of 39 patients stayed in the field hospital wards. The TRCS is providing additional medical staff to treat an increasing number of patients.

Contributions

See Annex 1 for details.

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