

TURKEY: EARTHQUAKE

28 September 1999

appeal no. 19/99

situation report no. 18

period covered: 25-28 September

After a short, temporary hold, the International Federation has reopened the pipeline for delivery of Red Cross/Red Crescent relief consignments to Turkey following agreement on the lease of additional warehousing space. Thirty mobile kitchens which can each feed up to 700 persons, donated by the German Red Cross, have been handed over to the Turkish Red Crescent Society (TRCS) and dispatched to tent cities and other relief facilities in Golchuk, Izmit and Adapazari.

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

As reported by the Prime Minister's Crisis Co-ordination Centre (PMCCC), the death toll from last month's quake is now 15,756 and the number of reported injured stands at 24,940. According to the latest damage assessments, there are 66,441 homes collapsed or heavily damaged, 67,242 with medium levels of damage and a further 80,160 more lightly damaged. In addition, 10,761 businesses are collapsed, 9,927 have medium levels of damage, and 9,712 are less seriously damaged. The housing and public works ministry, which has just completed an assessment of destroyed and uninhabitable buildings, estimates that 88,190 households qualify for new housing. The Turkish authorities are due to start a rent subsidy programme for earthquake victims later this week.

The PMCCC reports that the tent city population currently stands at 120,726 people occupying 28,286 tents; thousands more are living outside these settlements. Meanwhile, earthquake victims have moved into 184 homes in the first prefabricated housing community at Duzce. There are now designated sites for ten more communities with some 2,000 prefabricated houses, and assessments are underway at three more sites for 2,450 homes. Surveys are also taking place at five sites which will contain 2,400 permanent homes.

Schools in Bolu, Bursa and Eskishir where earthquake damage assessment has been completed, opened this week. Teachers in these districts have been given training on the psychological effects of the earthquake on children. Parents will be allowed to accompany their children to classes until the children are readjusted to the new schedules. The school semester in Yalova and Istanbul will start early next month. Announcements for school openings in Golchuk, Sakarya and Kocaeli provinces will be forthcoming. However, the extent of the damage to the Adapazari city centre was so great, that the Education Ministry has not yet been able to give a projected date for the opening of schools there.

Red Cross/Red Crescent action

Logistics w

After a short, temporary hold, the International Federation has reopened the pipeline for delivery of relief goods to Turkey, following agreement on the leasing of additional and dedicated warehousing space. Revised shipping instructions for Red Cross/Red Crescent consignments to Turkey are shown in Annex 3.

Meanwhile, the International Federation is assisting the Turkish Red Crescent in the sorting and repackaging of huge amounts of clothing, toys, kitchen equipment - mostly unsolicited - dispatched to the Society from various countries in the aftermath of the earthquake. Some 22 persons have been hired to carry out the work, which will take several weeks to complete at the Society's Maltepe warehouse.

Participating National Societies w

American Red Cross: An American Red Cross liaison delegate is in Turkey for at least a month to work with the TRCS and the International Federation and PNS colleagues to analyse needs, evaluate and support the emergency relief and shelter needs, water and sanitation, and to begin the planning process for the disaster preparedness programme outlined in the Appeal of 8 September 1999.

German Red Cross: Thirty mobile kitchens, donated by the German Red Cross, have been handed over to TRCS and dispatched to tent cities and other relief facilities in Golchuk, Izmit and Adapazari. Each mobile kitchen can provide hot meals for up to 700 displaced persons living in temporary shelter. The units, complete with gas heaters and other equipment, are transported by trailer to the distribution points where household heads receive pot-fulls of meat, rice, vegetables and soup to feed their families.

Kuwaiti Red Crescent: According to a report prepared by the Society, a public appeal by the Kuwaiti Red Crescent (KRCS) raised USD 750,000 and also enabled the delivery of 57 tonnes of relief goods valued at USD 485,000. An initial four-member team from KRCS arrived in Turkey on 19 August and, in conjunction with TRCS officials, conducted rapid assessments to determine the distribution plan for 27 tonnes of tents and blankets. On 24 August, a medical team arrived and set up a medical clinic and camp in Yalova. The team departed Turkey a few days later leaving the medical clinic in care of the Turkish Ministry of Health. Additional aid consignments, including 14,750 blankets, 101 tents, 500 mattresses and pillows, three ambulances, two generators, plastic sheeting, food and health items were distributed in Yalova, Adapazari and Istanbul. The KRCS is currently working with the TRCS, the Istanbul government and the Turkish Embassy in Kuwait to assess the feasibility for directing the cash donations towards a housing project for earthquake victims.

Medical w

The International Federation and TRCS medical coordinators convened a third medical co-ordination meeting in Izmit. For the first time in an open forum, hospital directors from the earthquake affected areas were able to express the immediate and longer terms needs of their establishments. There was some venting of frustration as many hospitals are operating at a reduced capacity in tent facilities. The medical staffs are traumatised by the quake itself and the intense effort of caring for the victims in the weeks after the quake.

Water-sanitation w

At the end of last week, the International Federation's water-sanitation coordinator and assistant met with the management and professional staff of Yalova's water works and sewerage system manager, as part of a continuing assessment of needs in the earthquake affected area.

The Yalova water system is supplied with water from a reservoir located above the city. The dam and reservoir were not damaged in the quake and much of the pumping capacity is in working order, although producing water at a reduced rate. At points along the primary distribution system, sewer and water mains are laid parallel and the risk of sewerage contamination exists.

The system serves the cities of Cinarcik, Yalova, Karamursel, Degirmendere, Golchuk and Ihsaniye. Due to quake damage, Cinarcik, Yalova, and Karamursel currently receive only half of their normal requirement for water, while the system is unable to supply Degirmendere, Golchuk, and Ihsaniye.

By 19 August, 25 ruptures along the main pipeline were discovered and temporary repairs were carried out; more substantial repairs will be required in the future. At present, approximately 90 per cent of the main pipeline is operational, but the secondary links to the main are severely damaged. It is estimated that emergency repairs to the Yalova municipal water system should take approximately four months, much longer for the complete restoration of the system. At present, the amount of water provided by the Austrian Red Cross Emergency Response Unit, and water being trucked in, is covering only the emergency needs. It was also agreed that tent cities should not be located in places without independent water sources, including wells.

Due to the extent of the damage, the present state of repairs to the Yalova water system, the long term nature of the work and the high costs involved, it is recommended that the International Federation should not support the municipal water system repairs. Instead, the Red Cross/Red Crescent will be considering smaller-scale material support for equipment and supplies for municipal water and sewage workers.

Outstanding needs

See Relief Table, Annex 2 for details

Contributions

See Annex 1 for details.

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