

## ***RUSSIAN FEDERATION: WINTER SUPPORT FOR SIBERIAN AND NORTHERN TERRITORIES***

*6 December,  
2000*

*appeal no. 29/99*

*situation report no. 6*

*period covered: 4 September - 26 November, 2000*

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*This appeal was launched on 29 October to assist 770,000 beneficiaries in 22 far north and Siberian regions. Most of the activities planned by the Russian Red Cross (RRC) and the Federation are coming to an end with distributions nearing completion and reports being collected. Yakutia remains the problem area: now that the river navigation season is closed, all supplies are in local warehouses waiting for winter roads to open (usually at the end of December); some settlements can not be reached by road, and distributions might continue until May 2001 when river navigation is again possible.*

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### ***The context***

From a humanitarian point of view, the impact of Russia's financial crisis of 17 August 1998 is still reverberating. It exacerbated an already critical situation, worsening the cash economy in many areas, causing salary payments to be frozen, putting hundreds of thousands out of work, and highlighting the government's inability to provide adequately for vulnerable groups.

Siberian regions found themselves in the most difficult situation with a failure of the Far North Route, which, in Soviet times, used to channel vital supplies (fuel, medicaments and food) to the most remote Russian regions enabling their people to survive the long winters. Although most of the 31 indigenous groups in the targeted

regions differ in their origin, language, and culture (Yakuts have links to Turkey and Khazakhstan), they are characterised by common types of activities: hunting, fishing, reindeer-breeding and herding. Their traditional occupations are linked to their nomadic way of life. A major problem facing the people and the government is how to assure a sustainable future for indigenous peoples.

In the first quarter of 1995 Siberia contributed 24% to Russia's industrial output and average wages there exceeded Russia's by 32%. These areas are especially vulnerable to the vicissitudes of an unstable economy and where coping mechanisms have already been severely strained. High transport costs triple prices for basic goods.

Winter has set in this part of Russia and governmental services and individual coping mechanisms are insufficient to meet many basic needs. The Russian Red Cross, working with the Federation's Delegation in Moscow, has streamlined beneficiary numbers to target the extremely vulnerable in the poorest, most isolated regions of this vast territory. Limited emergency aid is being given, but this year there is an increased focus on community development, and a strong bias towards community health and sanitation, concentrating on keeping people healthy and out of hospitals. Included in the budget of this year's appeal is a bulk food component for the Northern territories. By assisting isolated communities, emphasis will be placed on recovering traditional coping mechanisms.

The Russian Red Cross has used data from assessment missions, monitoring reports and state statistics to target 21 regions - Nenetsk AO, Altay kray, Altay Republic, Taymyr AO, Evenk AO, Tyva Republic, Chukotka AO, Koryak AO, Magadan, Kamchatka, Sakha Republic (Yakutia), Khakassia Republic, Buryatia Republic, Chita, Komi Republic, Komi-Perm AO, Kirov, Kurgan, Tyumen, Yamalo-Nenetsk AO, Khanty-Mancy AO, Irkutsk and Kemerovo - in West, Central and Eastern Siberia. A major refinement of distribution lists has taken place, with only the most vulnerable five per cent considered as beneficiaries and lone elderly, multi-child families, single-headed families, bedridden invalids, those living in elderly homes and specialised institutions, and homes for orphans and abandoned children are prioritised.

Another appeal aimed to assist the vulnerable people of the Russian North and Far East was launched at the end of September. The beneficiaries will be mainly children, as well as lone elderly. A strong development component is included in this programme in the form of free public canteens to be the base for small-scale economic projects such as, for example, shoe repair or traditional crafts. Some CHF 160,000 have been received for the programme. Tenders for seeds and soil fertiliser procurement have started. Cash support is urgently needed to implement the programme.

A zonal office for the Far-eastern region was opened by the RRC in Vladivostock. A Canadian Red Cross representative was placed in the region to assist local Red Cross committees in development and programme implementation. The British Red Cross is strongly considering providing similar support to the Central Russian region with an office in Kemerovo. They have already conducted a field trip to the region to meet with local Red Cross and administration representatives, and are in the process of assessing the situation.

A programme co-ordinator funded by the Dutch Red Cross, arrived to the Delegation to work on a bilateral programme of medical assistance to socio-medical rooms and institutions in the Russian Far East, and will be based in Moscow till the end of February, 2001.

## ***Latest events***

At the beginning of November, the Russian President signed a decree concerning a raise of payments to federal employees, judges, prosecutors, and courts' technical personnel. During a working meeting with the head of the government, he discussed government plans for 2001, including a raise of population's living standards in general and Far Eastern development in particular. Over 20,000 Russians died of alcohol poisoning in the first seven months of this year, which is 43% more than over the same period last year. Russia has raised taxes on vodka in the past year, and illegally distilled alcohol forms 20-25% of the liquor consumed in the country.

On 23 November, Russia's Deputy Prime Minister said that Russia wants to sign a realistic economic plan with the International Monetary Fund, and needs its approval for the economic programme to launch negotiations on restructuring Soviet-era Paris Club debts, which total some USD 48 billion, according to the government's most recent estimates. The IMF, citing Russia's failure to carry out structural reforms, froze its support to the government in 1999.

In the first nine months of the year, high revenues from energy markets pushed industrial output up 9.7% in comparison with 1999. Gross domestic product rose 7.3% in the same period. Strong oil revenues have allowed the government to service domestic and foreign debts without new borrowing, and Paris Club creditors have questioned the need for debt relief.

The Russian fire service announced that 11,919 people, including 588 children died in fires throughout Russia in the first ten months of the year. An additional 11,346 suffered serious injuries. Over 70% of fires occurred in apartment blocks, which showed that half of the incidents were caused by careless handling of fires and misuse of electrical goods. However, the number of fires dropped 7% in comparison with the same period last year, to 196,071 incidents.

## ***Red Cross/Red Crescent action***

### **Soup kitchens •**

Soup kitchens stopped operating in October. Preliminary reports were received from the eight targeted regions as follows:

<b>Region</b>	<b>No. soup kitchens</b>	<b>No. beneficiaries</b>	<b>No. hot meals</b>
Nenetsk AO	2	328	45 608
Altai Kray	25	2 091	221 123
Altai Republic	16	1 877	234 652
Taimyr AO	1	179	8 251
Evenk AO	1	345	26 250
Tyva Republic	4	1 932	151 721
Magadan region	12	1 447	126 000
Kamchatka region	7	1 357	127 275

### **Second-hand clothes •**

Second hand clothes distributions are ongoing in 15 targeted regions - Altai Kray, Altai Republic, Evenk AO, Tyva Republic, Komi Republic, Komi-Perm AO, Perm region, Kirov region, Tyumen region, Khakasia Republic, Buryatia Republic, Chita region, Kemerovo region, Irkutsk region and Kurgan region. During the reporting period, 1,096 bales arrived in the Altai Kray; 1,116 in the Perm region; 1,116 bales in the Kirov region; 558 bales in the Khakasia Republic; 558 in the Buryatia Republic; and 1,116 bales in the Irkutsk region. From the beginning of the project, the following amount of second hand clothes was distributed to programme beneficiaries:

<b>Region</b>	<b>No. bales</b>	<b>Weight, kg</b>	<b>No. beneficiaries</b>
Altai Kray	2 205	59 544	30 283
Altai Republic	1 709	40 246	69 814
Evenk AO	572	20 115	2 586
Tyva Republic	558	20 088	-
Komi Republic	1 116	40 176	-
Komi-Perm AO	558	19 013	20 938
Perm region	1 116	37 460	29 355
Kirov region	3 953	136 385	80 992
Tyumen region	593	20 158	12 631
Khakasia Republic	1 664	58 116	65 637

Buryatia Republic	1 151	40 246	17 793
Chita region	593	20 158	23 037
Kemerovo region	1 674	60 264	36 771
Irkutsk region	1 690	59 888	15 374
Kurgan region	558	20 088	10 747
<b>Total:</b>	<b>19 710</b>	<b>651 927</b>	<b>415 958</b>

### Support to children in institutions •

Cash support to orphanages, state boarding schools and juvenile detention centres in seven Siberian regions of Nenetsk, Taimyr, Tyva, Koryak, Kamchatka, Yakutia and Komi-Perm was provided from May to October. Some RUR 500,000 (CHF 30,000) was transferred to 24 institutions every month.

From May to October, a fixed number of 1,862 children received food, hygienic items, medicine, household supplies and stationary.

### Tyva and Altai Republics •

Three rounds of family food parcels (FFPs) distributions ended in the two regions. Each food parcel contained 2 kg of wheat flour, 2 kg of buckwheat, 2 kg of haricot bean (red or white), 2 kg of macaroni, 2 kg of sugar, a litre of vegetable oil, four cans of beef (1.3 kg), two tins of sweet condensed milk (800 g) and 0.5 kg of tea.

Region	1st round		2nd round		3rd round		TOTAL	
	<i>parcels</i>	<i>beneficiaries</i>	<i>parcels</i>	<i>beneficiaries</i>	<i>parcels</i>	<i>beneficiaries</i>	<i>parcels</i>	<i>beneficiaries</i>
Tyva Republic	11 600	49 189	11 700	49 751	11 700	51 086	<b>35 000</b>	<b>150 026</b>
Altai Republic	11 600	37 638	11 700	38 321	11 700	38 487	<b>35 000</b>	<b>114 446</b>

Approximately USD 100,000 was saved under the operation, and it was decided to produce additional 9,400 FFPs for the Tyva Republic only, due to a larger number of beneficiaries there. Hygiene kits were produced and distributed together with FFPs third round during the reporting period, each containing: 2 bars of soap, 2 bars of household soap, 900 g of washing powder, 420 g of shampoo, 2 tubes of tooth paste and 2 tooth brushes - 12,000 for each Republic. Also, 10,500 hygienic kits were delivered to five radiation affected communities in Altai Krai. Reports are being collected in the regions.

### Chukotka, Magadan, Kamchatka and Koryak

38,000 hygienic parcels were produced in Moscow and sent to all four targeted regions - 3,000 for Koryak, 4,000 for Chukotka, 15,000 for Kamchatka, and 16,000 for Magadan - together with information leaflets on house and personal hygiene.

A total of 10,500 family food parcels (FFPs) was produced in Petropavlovsk-Kamchatsky, and distributions started in eight targeted districts of Kamchatka; 13,500 FFPs were produced in Magadan, and distributions among nine targeted districts started there. Each food parcel consists of: 4 kg wheat flour, 1 kg of buckwheat, 1 kg of rice, 1 kg of macaroni, 2 kg of sugar, 900 g of butter oil, 2 cans of beef, 4 cans of sweet condensed milk and 0.5 kg of tea.

A full compliment of 8,625 kg bulk food (dried fruit, sweet condensed milk, butter oil, tea and cocoa) was procured in Petropavlovsk-Kamchatsky for distributions among children's institutions in Koryak; and 10,350 kg of similar bulk food was procured in Vladivostock to be distributed among children's institutions of Chukotka. Two out of three targeted districts of Koryak AO received Red Cross cargo and started distributions. Penzhinsky district could not receive the commodities due to poor meteorological conditions. All relief items for Chukotka are staying in an Anadyr (the capital) warehouse waiting for transportation to the three targeted districts.

Nenetsk AO, Taimyr AO and Yakutia •

Nine types of relief commodities were procured in Moscow and sent to the regions in the following amounts:

Region	FFPs	Hygienic kits	Warm suits	Rubber boots	Felt boots	Fisherman's boots	Children's clothes	School sets	Fist aid kits
Nenetsk	7 000	7 000	2 285	835	835	2 285	2 285	2 285	3 495
Timyr	11 000	11 000	3 600	1 330	1 330	3 600	3 600	3 600	5 450
Yakutia	14 000	14 000	4 115	1 835	1 835	4 115	6 115	6 115	7 055

All items were distributed in Nenetsk AO during the reporting period to 2,750 vulnerable families (some 8,000 people). Distributions are continuing in Taimyr with three remote districts of Volochanka, Khantaiskoye Ozero and Ust-Avam left. Yakutia Red Cross committee received the cargo and stored it in four warehouses across the region, where it might stay till May 2001 (when river navigation is again possible) due to harsh climatic conditions, which prevent distributions to the most remote areas. Some settlements started to receive the humanitarian cargo by winter roads and/or helicopters.

Kirov, Komi-Perm and Komi Republic •

60 MT food were delivered to Komi Republic; 4,900 FFPs to Komi-Perm; and 5,400 FFPs to Kirov during the reporting period. Each food parcels contains: 2 kg of wheat flour, 2 kg of buckwheat, 2 kg of rice, 1 kg of peas, 2 kg of macaroni, 2 kg of sugar, 1 litre of vegetable oil, 4 tins (1,3 kg) of canned beef, 2 tins (800 g) of sweet condensed milk, and 500 g of tea. The first round of FFPs distribution ended in all three regions. Kirov and Komi-Perm regional committees closed the second and the third rounds of distribution and are collecting reports. The Komi Republican committee started the second round of FFPs distribution.

## *Outstanding needs*

The programme is coming to an end, and at this time there are no further outstanding needs.

## *External relations - Government/UN/NGOs/Media*

Regular contacts with administrations and governments are on-going in the targeted regions. The programme is highly supported by regional authorities. At the end of October, the programme co-ordinator visited the British Embassy and ECHO office in Moscow to discuss the progress of the ongoing programme. At the end of November, a meeting with USAID representatives was held to inform on them about Red Cross relief programmes.

From 25 to 30 October the Information delegate together with the Reporting officer and "Moscow Times" (English-language newspaper in Moscow) correspondent and photographer conducted a field trip to Taimyr to cover the relief programme implementation. They met with the local Red Cross and administration representatives and travelled to remote settlements to visit beneficiaries. Pictures for the Federation's web page were sent to Geneva, filming for Reuters was made and submitted. An article for the Russian Red Cross magazine was prepared. A front page article together with a photo essay was issued in the "Moscow Times" soon after the trip.

From 23 to 26 November the Information delegate and the Information officer conducted a field trip to Nenetsk together with 13 journalists from NTV Russia and five international companies - BBC, Sky News, Reuters, Knight Ridder newspapers, Icelandic TV and Swedish TV to cover Red Cross activities under the programme. During the trip, local industrial enterprises and social institutions supported by the programmes were visited in Naryan-Mar; a helicopter trip to Indiga, a settlement of indigenous people, including reindeer-breeders, at the Barents Sea was conducted to cover FFPs distribution to beneficiary families; a local hospital and school were also visited; regional administration and Red Cross workers were met. The trip was made possible due to a donation from the Icelandic Red Cross.

## *Contributions*

See Annex 1 for details.

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RUSSIA - WINTER EMERGENCY						ANNEX 1
APPEAL No. 29/99		PLEDGES RECEIVED			12/11/00	
DONOR	CATEGORY	QUANTITY	UNIT	VALUE CHF	DATE	COMMENT
<b>CASH</b>						
REQUESTED IN APPEAL----->				47,500,000	01/01/99	38.92%
AMERICAN - PRIVATE		1,000	USD	1,665	10.04.00	
AUSTRALIAN - RC		11,635	AUD	11,675	11/05/99	
AUSTRALIAN - RC		110	AUD	108	23.05.00	
AUSTRIA - RC		50,000	EUR	78,625	05/02/00	
BRITISH - GOVT/RC		1,455,639	GBP	3,770,105	03/21/00	DFID FUNDS
BRITISH - RC		25,000	GBP	62,500	12/08/99	
CANADA - GOVT		1,250,000	CAD	1,355,875	03/23/00	FOR VARIOUS ITEMS
DANISH - RC		500,000	DKK	107,460	12/10/99	
ECHO/GERMAN RC		900,000	EUR	1,440,000	01/15/00	
FINNISH - GOVT/RC		508,263	EUR	750,959	21.06.00	37'300 FOOD PARCELS FOR SIBERIAN NORTHERN TERRITORIES
JAPANESE - RC		3,000,000	JPY	47,184	15.08.00	WINTER SUP0PORT SIBERIAN NORTH. TERRITORIES
SWEDEN - RC		5,000,000	SEK	931,500	12/06/99	
SWEDEN - RC		1,500,000	SEK	280,050	03/17/00	
SUB/TOTAL RECEIVED IN CASH				8,837,706	CHF	18.61%
<b>KIND AND SERVICES (INCL. PERSONNEL)</b>						
DONOR	CATEGORY	QUANTITY	UNIT	VALUE CHF	DATE	COMMENT
CANADA - RC		300,000	CAD	335,940	06/21/99	delegates, assessment & evaluation (direct support to the prog. not channelled through the Federation)
SWEDEN - RC		50,000,000	SEK	9,315,000	12/02/99	SECOND HAND CLOTHING AND SHOES
SUB/TOTAL RECEIVED IN KIND/SERVICES				9,650,940	CHF	20.32%
<b>NOT REQUESTED IN APPEAL</b>						
DONOR	CATEGORY	QUANTITY	UNIT	VALUE CHF	DATE	COMMENT
SUB/TOTAL RECEIVED				0	CHF	