

Programme Update



International Federation
of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

Mongolia

Appeal No. MAAMN001

9 August 2008

This report covers the period 01/01/08 to 30/06/08.



Mongolia Red Cross Society Youth were actively involved in appealing to the public to help people affected by the earthquake in China. **MRCS**

In brief

Programme(s) summary: Snow, wind and fire disasters have swept through Mongolia in the first half of the year, affecting thousands of people, causing the loss of lives and livelihoods across many regions. The Mongolian Red Cross Society (MRCS) has a mandate to respond in natural disasters and assist affected people, especially those most vulnerable. The MRCS continues to build the capacities of its staff and volunteers in order to meet those needs. The past six months included training on communication for secretaries of the mid-level Red Cross branches, providing two trucks for the “Gobi” region that was not involved in the hay project due to excessive drought, and herders’ consultations were held in two branches. Radio programmes were developed jointly with the National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA) and the Mongolian National Radio focused on information about disaster prevention and the work of the Mongolian Red Cross.

On 11 April, the Mongolia Red Cross Society launched an HIV Operational Alliance for the next three years. This follows on the 2007 partner planning meeting in Beijing, during which the MRCS began outlining its three-year plan for scale-up of services under a management structure guided by the seven-ones¹. At the same time, the MRCS continued to implement the planned HIV/AIDS prevention activities that now fall under the alliance structure, including the Australian Red Cross funded bilateral project for peer education/targeted interventions for men-who-have-sex-with-men (MSM), commercial sex workers, people living with HIV/AIDS, university students, and the media. In addition, a Japanese Red Cross funded bilateral project is continuing to establish voluntary counselling, testing, and treatment centres in selected provinces of Mongolia. The International Federation supported interventions for inmates and mid-level branch capacity building were also

¹ The “Seven Ones” set forth by the International Federation’s Global Alliance on HIV include: one set of needs analysis, one set of objectives and strategies, one country action plan with expectation of long term commitment to ensure sustainability, one shared understanding of division of labour among partners, one result-based funding framework, one performance tracking system, and one accountability and reporting mechanism

implemented in the first half of the year.

The first aid programme has continued to expand in its trainings and reach, especially after conducting a survey on the practical usage of first aid in accident victims. This was enlightening for the MRCS in finding gaps in first aid knowledge amongst community members. The social care programme continues to serve the needs of some of the most vulnerable populations in Mongolia, including the elderly, disabled, and the migrant populations in urban areas. The voluntary blood donation programme continues to promote voluntary blood donation and has started a number of Donor 25 Clubs to get youths involved.

Organizational development is still a high priority of the national society, in governance and management issues, as well as finance development. And the promotion of humanitarian values continues, especially through the publication of the MRCS newsletter called "*The Humanity*."

Financial situation: The total (2008) budget is CHF 1,114,011 (USD 1,042,410 or EUR 684,559), of which 51 percent is covered. Expenditure overall was 21 percent.

[Click here to go directly to the attached financial report.](#)

No. of people we help: Estimated beneficiaries of the MRCS's programmes throughout Mongolia number 190,000, which is approximately eight percent of the population. This includes direct beneficiaries, both of International Federation and bilateral funded activities such as trainings and targeted activities, as well as the indirect beneficiaries receiving information and/or participating in activities, through the media, newspapers such as those related to HIV/AIDS and humanitarian values.

Our partners: The MRCS is working with over 40 partners including: Australian Red Cross, New Zealand Red Cross, Netherlands Red Cross, Norwegian Red Cross, Finnish Red Cross, Department for International Development (DFID), Japanese Red Cross, Republic of Korea Red Cross, British Red Cross, German Red Cross, the Red Cross Society of China, the National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA), the World Health Organization (WHO), Ministry of Health, National Blood Centre, Blood Donor Agency, Ulaanbaatar City Governor, Youth for Health NGO, United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), National Centre for Communicable Disease (NCCD), and National Journalists Association/Journalists Union, Deseret International Charities, Mongolian National Radio and Television Broadcasting Agency, Mongolian Educational Channel, local prison authorities, National Youth Association, National Students Union, the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Agriculture, University of Agriculture, National Centre for Diseases with Natural Foci, the Ministry of Social Welfare and Labor, Traffic Authority, Border/Customs Control, local health departments, traffic police, the National AIDS Foundation (NAF), the National AIDS Committee (NAC), the National Voluntary Counselling and Testing VCT Working Group, and the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA).

Context

Mongolia has faced a number of severe weather disasters already in the first half of 2008. At the beginning of the year, a storm of snow and wind, reaching up to 34 metres per second, swept through the provinces in the western region and approximately 3,025 families have been affected. Out of that figure, 45 families lost their *gers* (yurts or tents) due to the disaster. According to the National Emergency Management Agency, over 578,412 head of livestock died due to the extreme cold across the nation, with 303,000 accounted for in the western region.

In late May, an unexpected and heavy snowstorm hit the eastern provinces. Fifty-two



During the harsh winters in Mongolia, livestock must dig in the snow for grass such as this in Henty province. **MRCS**

people were found frozen to death and many more dozens missing, presumed dead as well. The snowstorm's winds were measured at 32 to 40 meters per second. Damages were recorded on *gers* and houses, and also affected infrastructure. It is estimated that about 500,000 livestock were killed.

During the past six months, a total of 135 forest and steppe fires occurred, bringing damage to many hectares of land. These fires not only cause losses in agriculture and livestock, but also degradation of the environment and erosion due to the loss of trees.

The cycle of disasters in Mongolia, from harsh winters to dry springs and summers, to fires and wind/snow storms mean that many agricultural based livelihoods are threatened constantly by the changing climate and its affects. Affected populations move to the urban areas, whether within their own province or to Ulaanbaatar. Many of those who lose their livestock end up becoming beneficiaries of the MRCS. Through its extensive network of branches, volunteers in urban communities are able to identify new arrivals and those living in impoverished conditions and recommend them for services under the MRCS social care programme.

With an increasing urban migrant population, and geographical challenges in reaching other beneficiaries spread throughout the country, public health concerns remain a critical issue for Mongolians.

This year, a serious outbreak of hand, foot and mouth disease (Enterovirus 71) affected 2, 861² individuals and prompted the MRCS to acquire the International Federation's disaster response emergency funds (DREF) funding of CHF 69,000 to immediately launch hygiene promotion activities and build the capacities of the branches to handle public health in emergencies. Most of the people were registered in the countryside, and 83 percent of the cases were children under ten years old.

Basic health services and education on first aid, injury prevention, safe water access and basic sanitation are fundamental components of health. According to the health indicators issued by the National Centre for Health Prevention, the third leading cause of death in Mongolia for the past consecutive five years has been traffic accidents. The statistics of the ministry of health has shown that the number of patients referred to the hospital after having experienced accidents have not decreased, but rather have increased by five to eight percent. The above fact is usually explained in relation to the poor quality of hospital care in the provision of emergency services to injured persons, insufficient measures taken towards the prevention of road accidents, the limited cooperation with the organizations working in similar fields and low participation of general public. The lack of first aid knowledge in the general public has been identified as a key issue.



Mongolian Red Cross volunteers target youth and their parents in hygiene promotion activities in Ulaan Bataar. MRCS

Also, within the nation's commitment to the Millennium Development Goals, Mongolia aims to reduce the number of its citizens who lack of access to safe water and basic sanitation by 50 percent by 2015. In recognition of this, the government of Mongolia instituted the 2008 "Year for Food and Water Safety and Supply Policy Reform". Mongolia Red Cross is participating in this important initiative.

Stigma and discrimination are also two factors that add to the vulnerability of certain populations which, when added with poverty, can make it harder to access health information and services. This is especially true for marginalized groups in Mongolia, such as prisoners, men who have sex with men and sex workers. The HIV response programme of the MRCS continues to work with these groups to not only help them protect their health but advocate for more enabling environments through cooperation and sensitization training of media staff.

Political unrest in Mongolia's capital Ulaanbaatar overshadowed much of the news in Mongolia this summer. On 30 June it was announced that the Mongolian People's Revolutionary Party had won 46 out of 76 seats. The Mongolian Democratic Party refuted the election results stating that voting irregularities and fraud had taken place. On 1 July, mass demonstrations took place in the center of Ulaanbaatar which ended in violent riots, killing five people and injuring 50 others. The headquarters of the Mongolian People's Revolutionary Party was

² As of 31 July 2008

burned as well as part of the cultural centre which included unique antique musical instruments. Nearby vehicles were set on fire, and by midnight, a four-day national state of emergency was declared by the president.

Despite signs of a return to normality, worries that further demonstrations could erupt again remain a primary concern as consensus between the political parties have not been reached. Although election results have been announced, the leadership has not been sworn in as the inauguration can only take place if two-thirds of the parliament are present. The Democratic Party is still demanding justice for those killed and the 200 people who were arrested during the riots and still remain in jail.

The events of the first half of the year, along with the existing challenges within Mongolia, do not only affect beneficiaries, but also the individuals and the organizational capacities of the Mongolian Red Cross Society. Low levels of national income make it difficult for branches to mobilize financial resources in their communities, and support for volunteers becomes an even bigger issue considering local volunteers are paramount in reaching beneficiaries. Towards this end, the MRCS organizational development programme works with other core sectors to help improve both human and financial management and mobilization, building on the strengths and partnerships of the MRCS network to help address funding problems and retain the MRCS valuable base of thousands volunteers.

Progress towards outcomes

Disaster Management

Outcomes/Expected results

Programme Components	Programme Outcomes
National society disaster preparedness and response capacity building	Regional disaster preparedness centres (RDPC) capacity improved
	The disaster preparedness and response capacity of RDPCs is strengthened
	MRCS has established a self sustaining system for stocking hay in six RDPCs
Community-based disaster preparedness and mitigation	The capacity of targeted communities to prepare for and mitigate disasters is enhanced

Achievements

During the sudden snow storm that hit eastern Mongolia this spring, the MRCS sent three trucks of relief items to the affected populations. The Chinese Embassy, with funds from the Red Cross Society of China, donated USD 50,000 and the US Embassy donated USD 25,000 twice to MRCS for disaster response activities. The national society also received various funds from the public and corporations, i.e. approximately USD 5,000 was donated by the employees of the international airport, which included matching funds from the airport authorities; and a gold mining company donated USD 50,000. This is the first time a large donation has been donated from a corporation to the MRCS.

Hundreds of small to medium size disasters occur every year in Mongolia and the MRCS headquarters and regional disaster preparedness centres have rapidly distributed relief items such as blankets, mattresses, childrens' clothes, and boots for women to affected communities. The rapid response from the MRCS was very much appreciated by the local governments, communities and those affected by the disasters.

Over the reporting period, the logistics capacity of two regional disaster preparedness centres has been strengthened with the provision of two trucks (6.5 metric tonne capacities) to transport hay and relief items rapidly to disaster affected populations. During non-disaster periods, the Red Cross branch will rent out the truck to generate income for the branch. This is part of the MRCSs strategy to create more synergies between programmes.

Awareness on disaster preparedness has increased amongst herders and students during this period through the community-based disaster preparedness programme. "*The Humanity*", issued by MRCS, continues to provide information related to disaster prevention and, through this, community awareness on various kinds of disasters in Mongolia has been measurably increased.

The MRCS continues to work with the media to promote life-saving messages. Every month, different kinds of messages on potential disasters have been broadcasted. A television segment on forest and steppe fires was broadcasted by Mongolian National Television and other private stations, with over 60 spots allocated. In order to prevent a further spread of hand, foot and mouth disease, leaflets (5,000 copies) were printed and distributed through Red Cross branches and disaster preparedness volunteers. A television segment, which focused on promoting hygiene to children, was also broadcasted on all stations.

“The Flame”, a performance by secondary school students to disseminate information on disaster prevention in particular earthquakes, forest fires, chemical poisoning and floods was attended by some 300 students.

The disaster management officer of the MRCS headquarters in charge of disaster preparedness conducted field trips to two branches to monitor the main activities on disaster preparedness. The team was able to review the collaboration between local organizations including media, NGOs, local NEMA and observe local disaster preparedness trainings. This enabled the MRCS to better understand the capacity at the sub-province level.

During consultation meetings, herders committed their continuing support to the local Red Cross branches by donating some animals for income generation projects and to financially support micro-projects to help the most vulnerable people. Tripartite agreements to provide small animals to vulnerable herding families have also been made between herders and local branches.

During the reporting period, 3,000 copies per month of Niguusel or “*The Humanity*” was published. These copies are distributed to all volunteers and members of the Mongolia Red Cross Society. Through this newsletter, MRCS disseminates information on disaster prevention measures, relief and emergency work for disaster affected people, all of which are organized by the disaster preparedness and response programme of the MRCS. With the cooperation of the information and dissemination programme, the MRCS has conducted workshops on emergency communication for personnel including secretaries of 36 mid-level Red Cross branches. During these workshops, relevant topics are covered in the agenda, such as current news on world climate change, relief work and communication on Red Cross work including volunteering during disasters. Journalists and professional photographers participated in a workshop and shared their ideas on how to cooperate with the press offices and broadcasting offices during emergencies. The participants’ evaluation was that this workshop was relevant considering global climate change and the increasing frequency of disasters and its varied permutations.

Constraints or Challenges:

Due to the wide geography often affected by disasters, it can be very difficult to identify damage and the needs caused by natural disasters in Mongolia. In a country where about 50 percent of the population is dispersed over a territory three times the size of France, news of small to medium size disasters can take days to reach provincial or municipality centres. One of the preconditions when applying for and receiving DREF funding is for disasters to be declared within 24 hours. Responding rapidly to provide relief to those affected by disasters remains a huge challenge for the MRCS disaster management programme, therefore quick cash allocations are critical in this regard.

Health and Care

The International Federation-supported MRCS health and care programme is comprised of four distinct components; health and first aid, social care, HIV/AIDS and blood donor recruitment.

Health and First Aid

Outcomes/Expected results

Programme Components	Programme Outcomes
Health and first aid	Public knowledge of community-based first aid as well as safety and health is increased
	General health awareness among the targeted public is increased
	The youth have improved first aid skills for themselves and others in emergency time

Achievements

A survey on first aid services to injured people in Ulaanbaatar has been completed. The survey involved a total of 920 people, who were delivered to the trauma and injury rehabilitation centre, and the centre for burns and poisoning in Ulaanbaatar between 18 and 25 April. It was discovered that 84 percent of people who had accidents did not receive first aid. A lack of knowledge and skills by people who were near the victims to deliver first aid was the leading cause for 49 percent of casualties.

The MRCS is responding to the results of this survey by scaling up first aid training and dissemination campaigns. During the first part of the year, branch volunteers, in close cooperation with the social care programme volunteers, are developing a joint plan of action. Mobile dissemination campaigns concerning injury prevention and first aid were conducted twice a week, involving more than 200 people, mostly residents of *ger* districts. The Chingeltei district Red Cross branch established a new first aid team among the communities. All members of first aid teams were trained on first aid. First aid volunteers frequently used a mobile board containing information about first aid knowledge, promotion of road safety, hygiene and safety habits. The branch provided two primary branches with mobile dissemination boards, first aid kits to the volunteers and promotional materials with an intention to make the dissemination activities more effective. New first aid training kits were distributed to the participants and all Red Cross branches.

The International Federation's new first aid policy, which was adopted in Geneva in October 2007, was translated into Mongolian and distributed to all mid-level branches.

A training for first aid trainers was organized in April and May, each for 20-23 people with a total of 58 trainers trained from five mid-level provincial Red Cross branches. The training was beneficial for the trainers of mid-level Red Cross branches and provided them an opportunity to exchange experiences and best practices. Some of the best trainers presented a report on their activities and shared skills and methods to properly manage first aid trainings. The trainers gained more knowledge on proper ways to apply first aid, for example the most recent information on the correct usage of cardio pulmonary resuscitation. During the training, the trainers held group discussions and presented on several topics. The participants expressed their views on the definition of community-based first aid, the role of the first aid volunteers, understanding the "community" and the difference between the communities in rural and urban areas.

Six first aid clubs are receiving support from the MRCS headquarters. Programmes of these district Red Cross branches include the dissemination of the history and principles of the Red Cross Red Crescent Movement and information on the activities of the International Federation as well as the MRCS in each of its dissemination activities.

Water and sanitation project: In cooperation with the Netherlands Red Cross, MRCS has been implementing water and sanitation projects in the *ger* districts of Ulaanbaatar. The *ger* districts have no running water and no sewage system with an estimated 500,000 people living under these conditions. The water supply operation is operating at 14 water kiosks in the four districts where Red Cross branches operate. The kiosks provide clean and safe water for communities in the districts at a small fee. In total, 19,922 tones of water were sold in the 14 water kiosks in four districts of Ulaanbaatar.

Constraints or Challenges

There is a basic lack of knowledge in the general public on first aid and a lack of experience in the MRCS branches in implementing community-based first aid. This will change as trainings are increasing and more people will be given the skills. There is also a lack of efficiently using volunteers and their services. The MRCS intends to ensure that there are more follow up actions to encourage, motivate and retain first aid volunteers and their services. At the Red Cross branch level, where access to health and first aid services is often limited, trained first aid volunteers only promote first aid for basic injuries and illnesses. An equally important role is in emphasising the importance of prevention as well as the cure.

Social Care Programme

Outcomes/Expected results

Programme Components	Programme Outcomes
Social care programme	Improved access to home care services to improve quality of life of targeted group

	Improved access to social welfare services among the most vulnerable children
--	---

Achievements

The social care programme of the MRCS has been implemented successfully in the first half of 2008. The ability of the targeted beneficiaries and communities to support themselves has been improved through more active participation. The health conditions of the targeted beneficiaries have been improved through volunteer-provided knowledge on health and referrals to health care providers. Long-term, visible impact on selected most-vulnerable families has been enhanced through the monthly provision of support stock (second-hand clothes, toys, etc.) supplied by donors to families in need. Beneficiary participation in social activities has been increased and the psychological conditions of beneficiaries also improved by socialization activities at the Red Cross social care centre. The understanding and support of community members (neighbours of beneficiaries) for vulnerable families has enhanced the support for beneficiaries.



Participants of the vulnerability capacity assessment workshop in April 2008 were from Red Cross branches and headquarters.
MRCS

Eight local Red Cross branches (two districts and six provinces) are providing social care services for 600 beneficiary families through volunteers and social care centres. Each Red Cross branch has 25 volunteers and 200 trained volunteers.

An additional 52 volunteers were trained in a registration/documentation workshop and are now providing assistance for the beneficiaries to get documents which will provide them access, or allowance, to standard government services. So far, at the district Red Cross branches, nine beneficiaries received their children's allowance document and three disabled people have received their disability documents due to the assistance of MRCS volunteers. A total of 12 beneficiary families are able to receive government services due to the programme's assistance in the first part of this year.

Some 150 helpful group members at eight Red Cross branches have been visiting elderly people living alone. Six disabled beneficiaries attended a vocational training for 30 days in April, where they learned skills such as making hand crafted jewellery as a follow up to income generating activities. Over 300 beneficiaries attended and socialized at elderly people's meetings at three established social care centres. As a part of programme integration, the social care and disaster management programmes organized and facilitated a vulnerability and capacity assessment in the districts of Ulaanbaatar city. Among 25 participants, 12 were staff members of the disaster preparedness regional Red Cross centres, eight were the secretaries of the eight district Red Cross branches, and five were staff members of headquarters.

Constraints or Challenges

During the monitoring process, project staff noted that provincial branches had carefully chosen beneficiaries and volunteers but the reward and recognition for volunteers was not very effective. One challenge for branches is to improve their volunteer management systems. Volunteers have requested for Red Cross bags to carry the goods that they bring to their beneficiaries' homes. This not only provides them recognition of their role in the community, but it also helps improve the image of the Red Cross within these communities.

HIV Response

Programme Components	Programme Outcomes
HIV/AIDS response programme	The knowledge, skills, and practice of selected communities on HIV/AIDS is improved
	The knowledge of reproductive health and HIV/AIDS among the teenagers is improved
Programme Components	Programme Outcomes
HIV/AIDS response programme	The knowledge, skills, and practice of selected communities on HIV/AIDS is improved
	The knowledge of reproductive health and HIV/AIDS among the teenagers is improved

Outcomes/Expected results

Achievements

On 13 April, the MRCS successfully launched an HIV Operational Alliance in concordance with the International Federation's Global Alliance on HIV. This alliance will bring many partners together under the umbrella of a unified results-based system (the seven-ones) to align all Red Cross HIV activities in Mongolia and promote a scaling-up of activities. The three-year plan was launched with an appeal totalling USD 1,924,064 (CHF 2,020,263). Partners of the MRCS have joined the alliance and the MRCS is already commencing scaling up activities in HIV.

The HIV/AIDS operational alliance is aligned with the International Federation's Global Agenda Goals, particularly goals two, three, and four, by implementing key projects over the next three years:

Reduce the number of deaths, illnesses and impact from diseases and public health emergencies. The MRCS will increase the ability of key members of the population to protect themselves from the global epidemic of HIV through our peer education work with youth, men who have sex with men, and people living with HIV/AIDS, and to access better medical services and treatment in order to reduce the most harmful effects of this disease.

Increase local community, civil society and Red Cross Red Crescent capacity to address the most urgent situations of vulnerability: There is a very high vulnerability to HIV-related with social acceptance, public awareness, poverty, gender (in regards to the special gender needs of the lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender community) and social mobility in Mongolia. The MRCS and local branches, civil society organizations such as MRCSs partner, Youth for Health (a gay organization) and the journalist union, have increased their capacity to conduct targeted interventions to improve the lives of vulnerable people in their communities, including youth, men who sex with men, and people living with HIV/AIDS.

Promote respect for diversity and human dignity, and reduce intolerance, discrimination and social exclusion. Through advocacy work with the media, project staff are working to reduce the discrimination against groups such as lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender community and positive people. The MRCS has promoted the rights of these communities and are helping them gain greater social acceptance through public awareness.

Currently, the HIV response programme is implementing three key projects, funded by the International Federation, the Australian Red Cross, and the Japanese Red Cross, and also on the project with funding from UNFPA. This has showed a scaling up in both activities as well as networking and cooperation with other HIV-related organizations reflecting the launching of the HIV/AIDS Operational Alliance.

From April to May, 20 peer educators selected from MRCS youth were trained to work with targeted youth groups. The youth peer education training is integrated into the HIV/AIDS global alliance policy and activities. The trained peer educators have conducted an HIV/AIDS survey among 1,080 youth.

In preparation of the HIV/AIDS Operational Alliance, the same unique narrative report formats and monitoring and evaluation indicators were provided to every middle level Red Cross branch. Every MRCS branch is now starting to mobilize resource of about USD 600-1,000 (CHF 640- 1,067) to implement the youth peer education

programme. Within the framework of the programme, they have developed and published 20,000 brochures about HIV/AIDS for youth and delivered to the MRCS branches. Also training package materials were provided to the peer educators such as manuals, bananas, condoms, promotional materials, group discussion agendas, pre and post tests, evaluation papers, etc.

Constraints or Challenges

In the 2008-2009 International Federation supported programme budget, CHF 98,650 is designated to cover HIV/AIDS activities. However, up to date, the programme has only received CHF 15,000, which was just enough to cover HIV/AIDS activities with the youth programme. So the activities of the MRCS HIV/AIDS programme have been very limited, and thus directly affecting the ability to effectively scale up. The MRCS is working on improving the capacity of MRCS branch staff as they do not possess working experience in implementing youth peer education programmes.

At the moment the HIV/AIDS programme has difficulties in implementing various kinds of face-to-face campaigns, meetings, training among youths and teenagers due to the sudden emergency of Enterovirus-76 (hand, foot and mouth disease) during which the government has restricted these kind of activities.

Blood Donor Recruitment

Outcomes/Expected results

Programme Components	Programme Outcomes
Blood donor recruitment	Availability of safe blood supply is improved
	Knowledge of volunteer-based blood donors among the youth

Achievements

Cooperation with the border protection authority was agreed upon and voluntary non-remunerated donor activities will be conducted at its six branches within the framework of the non-formal agreement.

In April and May of 2008, two day-long trainings were organized at the MRCS headquarters with the participation of 46 members of the governing board of the Mongolian youth federation, heads of students committee of institutes and students. The training covered areas such as improving information campaigns among the community as well as donor relations, and developing a policy towards reaching the goals of blood donor recruitment. A total of 256 students donated their blood during the voluntary non-remunerated blood donation campaign.

To promote the act of giving blood as a humanitarian activity, a mobilization campaign was organized to recruit voluntary donors and increase the available safe blood supply among the selected five universities in areas of Ulaanbaatar. Selected universities started establishing branches of the "Youth Donor 25" Club.

The Mongolian-translated International Federation handbook "*Making a Difference: Recruiting Voluntary Non-remunerated Blood Donors*" has run out of copies and the MRCS is working on re-printing another 200 copies.

Constraints or Challenges

In the 2008-2009 International Federation programme budget, CHF 59,000 is allocated to cover blood donor activities. However, the programme has only received CHF 15,000 so far from funding by the Finnish Red Cross. Due to this fact, only about a quarter of planned activities were implemented during the reporting period. This general trend of lowered contribution to blood activities of the MRCS may result in a change in focus, possibly moving away from blood donor activities and more into awareness campaigns. This remains to be seen.

Organizational Development

Outcomes/Expected results

Programme Components	Programme Outcomes
Enhanced programme integration of Red Cross mid-level branches	A more integrated approach to programme implementation to increase the impact of programs on targeted communities
Enhancing public image	Increased awareness of Red Cross principles and the national society's work and mandate to increase diversified support

Achievements

The capacity of the national society was strengthened by organizing meetings such as the central committee meeting, and participation of the senior management at the partnership meeting where future plans were introduced to MRCS main partners. The monitoring and evaluation systems have partly been improved at mid-level branches as well as at primary-level with regular visits. The finance development project is well on track and future needs have been defined.

For this reporting period, the programme has focussed on enhancing the capacity of the primary-level branches and ensuring their sustainability. The key highlight of this reporting period was the sustainable management and mid-level Red Cross branch annual review meeting, which was organized by the MRCS headquarters in February. All the secretaries of the mid-level Red Cross branches participated in the meeting and initial steps. Successes and challenges of the programme implementation at mid-level Red Cross branches that contribute to the achievement of 2010 Strategy goals were discussed during the meeting.

In the first quarter of 2008, the central committee meeting was held in Ulaanbaatar in order to improve the functionality and efficiency of Red Cross governance and management. A total of 120 people came from all mid-level Red Cross branches, including the chairman, secretaries and governing board members. As part of the cooperation with the International Federation and sister national societies, a delegation headed by the secretary general of the MRCS participated in a partnership meeting in Beijing from 30 March to 3 April 2008.



The Mongolia Red Cross Society branch annual review meeting at headquarters reflects a very important progressive way of working, learning and looking forward. **MRCS**

As for internal monitoring and auditing, heads of the financial department and administration department visited Bulgan, Dornod and Khentii provinces, where mid-level Red Cross branches have weak development of their financial systems. The finance development project at headquarters is ongoing with personnel in the finance department now having mastered the new system. Further programming of the software is in the pipeline, strengthening the capacity of the system. The enhancements are being funded by the Australian Red Cross, British Red Cross and the Icelandic Red Cross. The programming work will continue through the year and well into 2009. Once finished, the plan is to cascade the system into the largest mid-level branches.

MRCS youth activities continue to be integrated and implemented in most programmes such as

disaster preparedness, first aid activities, social care programme and blood donor recruitment, building the future volunteer base of the national society.

Constraints or Challenges

The programme still lacks funding, and as a result, is not able to target all branches equally and limits its activities by providing support to only a few select branches at a time. The MRCS is still striving to create new income generating initiatives. However, income generation projects face challenges as MRCS personnel have

minimal experience in running businesses. As a result, some income generation initiatives end up failing or not bringing in enough funds. On the positive side, membership fees are on the rise bringing steady income for the national society. Later in the year, the MRCS plan to get together the main stakeholders of the national society and create an organizational development strategy which will guide the work for the next five years or so.

Humanitarian Values

Outcomes/Expected results

Programme Components	Programme Outcomes
Publications	Community awareness of MRCS activities is increased
Mass media	The public image of the MRCS is improved
Public events and campaign	Community interest and involvement in humanitarian activities is increased

Achievements

Under the objective of the information and dissemination programme, The “Humanitarian Hero” award ceremony was organized by the Mongolian Red Cross Society and awards were handed to ten people and two organizations at the Mongolian Wrestling Palace on 30 April 2008. Articles regarding the ceremony were published in daily newspapers, broadcasted on the “Education” television channel. “*The Humanity*” provided information on humanitarian activities in the recent years to the public, and as the face of the MRCS, it has a regular readership. This improved knowledge of Red Cross activities among the general population and relevant organizations. “*The Humanity*” was distributed free to MRCS members and volunteers in the past but readers are now paying the subscription fee. It now has over 6,000 subscribed readers which provide a good income generation activity for the MRCS’s capacity building. In order to attract readers, the content of the newsletter is not only about Red Cross, it also covers other interesting topics such as interviews with famous people in Mongolia. MRCS has revamped its website, and is also selling MRCS mementos such as watches, cups and souvenirs for fundraising purpose.



A long term dedicated blood donor receiving a medal. Every year, MRCS has a special medal ceremony where different people, including Red Cross volunteers receive a medal for their special and dedicated humanitarian contributions. **MRCS**

Constraints or Challenges

The participation of government organizations in training went as planned, but more could be done by the government in this area. Promotional activities, events and the likes are regularly organized by the MRCS, however there is a need to organize social events among the media staff in order to motivate them into covering more humanitarian issues.

Working in partnership

The MRCS maintains several partnerships both within and outside the Movement in different programme areas. This has contributed to scaling up outreach and quality of assistance to target beneficiaries.

Partners in health and first aid programmes include the positive life community-based organization for HIV positive people, Youth for Health, UNICEF, Global Fund, National AIDS Foundation, NCCD, and National Journalists Association/Journalists Union as internal partnerships; the Australian Red Cross Society, Japanese Red Cross Society, and UNFPA are partners within the Movement.

At this time, the social care programme of the MRCS is partnering with Voluntary Services Overseas (VSO) Mongolia, an international NGO focused on helping volunteer-based organizations. With their help, the MRCS is

looking to improve its management of volunteers and provide updated manuals and brochures on volunteering. One of the challenges the MRCS faces is the retention of trained volunteers. The MRCS shared its lessons learned with VSO with other local partners; for example MRCS headquarters and VSO partners organized a "Volunteer Management System" workshop for the ministry of labor and welfare. The result is an enhanced chance for cooperation between branches and local government agencies.

In disaster management, Movement partners are mainly the Australian Red Cross and the Finnish Red Cross. The Department for International Development (UK), the National Emergency Management Agency, Mongolian National Radio and the National Centre for Infectious Foci are also active cooperation partners. National Emergency Management Agency is a close partner of MRCS. In times of emergency, all emergency information is being issued by National Emergency Management Agency. At the local level, they have regular contracts with the Red Cross branches which reflected the agency's' role to cooperate and coordinate emergency activities.

Contributing to longer-term impact

All MRCS programmes are implemented according to International Federation approved standards, the International Federation Global Agenda Goals and the Fundamental Principles of the Red Cross Red Crescent Movement. Significant progress towards ensuring equity for all groups and gender concerns has been made, and starting next year the MRCS will start a small gender initiative aimed towards sensitizing the staff on gender issues. Community empowerment remains a key theme for all activities, where community leaders, groups, and agencies are consistently consulted with and work together with Red Cross staff to accomplish goals.

The eight core programmes continue to contribute to the main Global Agenda Goals of reducing the impact of disasters, for example through the strengthening of the regional disaster preparedness centres ability to respond and provide relief to affected families, as well as reducing the impact of diseases through programmes such as HIV response and avian influenza preparedness, which educate communities most at risk on how to protect themselves from disease as well as ensure treatment and care for those affected.

Looking ahead

Over the past six months, 40 percent of all planned activities were implemented. Some activities are carried out at all levels in Mongolia. Every regional disaster preparedness centre has different climate changes to deal with, which is why MRCS is encouraging each centre to develop television segments reflecting all kinds of disaster prevention and preparedness options. The MRCS is also looking towards implementing vulnerability and capacity assessment in every province to identify the problems and solutions as well as the capacity of their local communities.

Information and implementation of projects related to disaster preparedness dissemination of the forest fire and the hand, foot and mouth disease (EV71) are being planned in the coming next months so as to raise awareness of the virus which is still on the rise, and as per the DREF operation in June, for funding of prevention activities over the summer.

As the operational alliance on HIV/AIDS was launched this year in Mongolia in cooperation with the International Federation, the MRCS will continue to implement the activities that are planned to help scale-up HIV/AIDS in Mongolia.

How we work	
<p>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".</p>	<p>Global Agenda Goals:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 report, please contact:

- Mongolian Red Cross Society, Mr. Ravdan Samdandobji, secretary-general, email: redcross@magicnet.mn, phone: +976 11 312578; fax: +976.11.320.934
- Federation country office in Mongolia: Mr. Thor Danielsson (head of country office); email: thor.danielsson@ifrc.org, phone: +976.11.321.684; fax: +976.11.321.684
- Federation regional office in China: Mr. Carl Naucler (head of regional office); email: carl.naucler@ifrc.org, phone: +86.10.65327162, fax: +86.10.6532.7166
- Federation zone in Kuala Lumpur: Mr. Jagan Chapagain (deputy head of zone); email: jagan.chapagain@ifrc.org, phone: +603-2161 0892; fax: +603.2161.1210