

Programme Update



International Federation
of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

Azerbaijan

Appeal No. MAAAZ002

31 August 2009

This report covers the period from 1 January 2009
to 30 June 2009.



Azerbaijan Red Crescent youth department organized an event at one of the elderly people's houses.

In brief

Programme purpose: All programmes and activities of the Azerbaijan Red Crescent Society are aligned and contribute to the Global Agenda goals aiming to improve the lives and to alleviate the suffering of the most vulnerable people through disaster management, health and care, organizational development, and focus on the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement's Fundamental Principles and humanitarian values.

Programme summary: In March 2009, the National Society celebrated its 88th anniversary with various activities organized in the capital Baku and regional branches with participation of staff, volunteers, beneficiaries, partners and representatives of local authorities.

The International Federation continues to support the Azerbaijan Red Crescent Society in its efforts to provide efficient and quality services to the most vulnerable groups of the society. The main activities within the programmes were:

- **Disaster management** with special emphasis on disaster preparedness and response capacity-building, increasing community disaster awareness.
- **Health and care** through harm reduction and social care with special focus on health promotion activities, spreading knowledge on HIV and AIDS and recruitment of blood donors.
- **Organizational development** focusing on financial management and resource mobilization, communication and public relations, and youth and volunteer development.
- **Fundamental principles and humanitarian values** were included in all other programme areas by other programmes and only to some extent directly addressed with specific activities.

Despite low funding the Azerbaijan Red Crescent managed to implement multiple and various programme activities planned for the first half of the year. Some of the activities included in the country plan were postponed or cancelled and some of the activities were carried out with the

National Society's own resources. After consultation with the National Society, the International Federation prioritized activities that are to be supported so they reflect the continuation of previously supported programme activities.

Financial situation: The total 2009 budget is CHF 586,120 (USD 548,899 or EUR 384,922) and is 32 per cent covered. Expenditure versus funding was 67 per cent.

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

No. of people we help: During the first half of 2009 a total of 1,142 people benefited directly from Federation supported programmes.

Programme Update January – June 2009 - Azerbaijan		
Programme	Target groups	People reached
Disaster Management	Vulnerable families, RC staff and volunteers	100
Health and Care	Vulnerable people, youth, children	140
Organizational Development	National Society key staff and volunteers, youth, children	502
Humanitarian Values	Vulnerable people, RC staff and volunteers, youth	400
Total number of people reached		1,142

Table 1: Number of people reached by the Azerbaijan Red Crescent

Our partners: The Azerbaijan Red Crescent had at least five partnerships within the Movement. Outside the Movement the National Society cooperated with numerous actors including state bodies at different levels, the United Nations (UN), and various national and international organizations and agencies.

Context

Reports from financial institutions and rating agencies would suggest that Azerbaijan's national economy is reasonably stable. According to the World Bank Global Economic Prospects for 2009, GDP growth is forecast at 10.4 per cent. Since early 2009, the exchange rate of the Azerbaijan currency, the Manat, to the US dollar has decreased by 0.5 per cent, while to the euro appreciated by more than 9 per cent. The government is pursuing a flexible fiscal policy and prudent policy in mortgage loans.

Despite the growing pandemic risk of Influenza A (H1N1) there have been no registered cases in Azerbaijan according to state officials. The Ministry of Health has established a state commission and taken all necessary measures to prevent a pandemic.

The Ministry of Health has presented the new statistics of people living with HIV. According to the ministry 2,034 people are registered HIV positive and 382 with AIDS. To date, 260 people have died from AIDS-related illnesses in the country. The law on HIV and sexually transmitted infections is being reviewed by a parliamentary commission, with people living with HIV (PLHIV) part of the working group.

Tuberculosis (TB) remains a serious public health threat. According to the most recent WHO global TB drug resistance surveillance report, the highest multi-drug resistant TB (MDR-TB) rate in the world is in Baku, where nearly a quarter of all new TB cases (22.3 per cent) are reported as multi-drug resistant. Since 2003, DOTS (directly observed treatment, short course) case detection rates increased from 29 to 50 per cent. However, DOTS treatment success rate has fallen from 70 to 59 per cent.

Progress towards outcomes

Disaster management

Expected outcome/result: The number of deaths, injuries and impact from disasters has been reduced.

Disaster response capacity building

The Azerbaijan Red Crescent disaster management division held a two-day seminar on *emergency needs assessment and increasing community awareness* for 42 staff and members of the mobile volunteer teams from three regional centres. The training was designed to further increase the disaster preparedness and response skills of key staff and volunteers by employing various assessment techniques and tools.

To further enhance the response capacities of the Azerbaijan Red Crescent one member of the national disaster management team participated in the regional disaster response team (RDRT) training organized in the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. As with all RDRT courses needs and risk assessment and camp management featured prominently, while simulation exercises was a key methodology utilized. Another member participated in the climate change meeting organized in Montenegro.

The National Society has established working relationships with the German Red Cross, which has indicated an interest in supporting the disaster management sphere, with special emphasis on preparedness and increasing community awareness.

Representatives of ECHO visited Azerbaijan to discuss possible cooperation in disaster management. A briefing was organized focusing on the main achievements of the Red Crescent and the challenges it faces, including cooperation with the government. The ECHO representatives in turn underlined the importance and practical effectiveness of this programme. During the visit the representatives also visited one of the National Society's regional centres in Sabirabad to become acquainted with the situation in the field. Further cooperation is expected.

Constraints or challenges

Due to the lack of funds activities related to community awareness were postponed, including refreshment trainings on needs assessment and simulation exercises. As a consequence only one community campaign will be organized in the third quarter of the year.

Health and care

Expected outcome/result: The number of deaths, illnesses and impact from diseases and public health emergencies has been reduced.

Regular cooperation with the Global Fund to fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria, the Republic HIV and AIDS Centre, Public Health Reforms Centre and the Institute of Pulmonology has been maintained. The cooperation includes participation at joint meetings and HIV and AIDS/ TB related events, information on recently issued protocols (the treatment schemes) and documents on health in emergencies. The National Society is also negotiating to become member of the Global Fund country coordination mechanism group and submitted a request to the Global Fund in that regard.

Harm reduction and preventive health

Some 38 new peer educators have been trained in the history of the HIV virus, statistics, terminology, general information on the immunity system, symptoms, who may be infected, ways of infection and its impact to the human body. A videoclip titled, *Protect yourself*, was shown during the sessions. Participants then did an interactive question and answer exercise with each other and discussed providing first aid to PLHIV and people living with AIDS.

The secretary general and the HIV and AIDS coordinator participated at the HIV Global Alliance meeting in Kiev hosted by the Ukrainian Red Cross. It is expected that the National Society will submit an application with a focus on TB to join the alliance.

Work has continued on the human pandemic preparedness initiative which was started last year within the national influenza pandemic preparedness plan. The plan identifies the role of the National Society before and during a pandemic. Financial support will be provided by USAID. The documents were developed by the National Society in consultation with the International Federation's country office, zone office and Geneva headquarters. A team of experts paid a visit in March and met several governmental and non-governmental partners. The latest updated version of the documents was submitted for final comments and approval.

Non-remunerated blood donor motivation and recruitment

There was a blood donor recruitment campaign at one of the universities and as a result 42 students and teachers of the university out of 110 became blood donors. Another blood donor recruitment campaign brought 50 new donors out of 200 participants.

The Azerbaijan Red Crescent participated in all regular meetings of the blood steering committee and round-table discussions to discuss the blood supply situation and donor recruitment process. The role of the National Society was highly appreciated by all members of the steering committee, in particular in the recruitment of new donors.

Constraints or challenges

The Azerbaijan Red Crescent is still working on establishing a network of nurses at the regional centre and branch level. Due to the lack of funds the Azerbaijan Red Crescent was not able to organize the campaigns and trainings it had wished to, or the publication of promotional materials. Activities for people living with HIV were also postponed or cancelled.

Organizational development

Expected outcome/result: Local community, civil society and Red Cross Red Crescent capacity to address the most urgent situations of vulnerability has increased.

Programme planning and management

The National Society has played a more active role in the secretariat's planning process for 2010-2011. An important emphasis was put on the achievements realized so far which were used as a base for newly planned activities. The new plans were prepared more analytically, representing a more realistic approach and within the capacities of the National Society.

The secretary general participated at the dialogue platform meeting held at the Europe zone office. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss several important issues and forthcoming events like the Europe Conference in 2010, the impact of the financial and economic crisis on the Red Cross Red Crescent in Europe and Central Asia, disaster management and the latest draft of Strategy 2020 of the International Federation. Participants also had discussions about humanitarian diplomacy, the auxiliary role of National Societies and Red Cross Red Crescent laws, positioning of National Societies in a domestic context, development of partnerships, including with the public authorities and strengthening of networks. Another National Society representative participated in the first meeting of the working group on *Multicultural interaction in view of increased phenomenon of migration* as part of the preparations for the Europe Conference in 2010. More meetings will take place leading up to the conference in Vienna.

Financial management and resource mobilization

One training session on financial procedures was organized for the accountants and chairs of the branches of Lankaran regional centre. The aim is to assure that standard financial procedures at regional level are maintained.

The National Society fund-raising team contacted several organizations, hotels, companies and markets about placing donation boxes in their premises. The money this brings in would finance

the project on supporting families who have lost their breadwinners as a result of mine accidents, providing 50 internally displaced children at the summer camp with supplies for two weeks, delivering orphans and elderly people living alone from one of Baku districts with humanitarian assistance at least 3-4 times in a year.

The Red Crescent has received 62,520 Swiss francs from membership fees, private donations and donation boxes. Some 58,750 Swiss francs were spent on events for orphans and elderly people, for buying them presents, providing families with food parcels, purchasing wheelchairs, making new donation boxes and covering National Society administration costs. Financial support was provided by the Israeli embassy in Azerbaijan for constructing three safe play areas in districts such as Ter-Ter and Agdam.

Branch development and community capacity building

The National Society held several training sessions on reporting, public relations, health related topics and its core activities among 75 community members from Imishli region. Another training in Imishli branch was conducted among 16 volunteers on fund-raising and marketing skills.

Youth and volunteer development

The Azerbaijan Red Crescent held training sessions on providing social support to children with disabilities and orphans, based on the induction module training course to 45 volunteers of two regional centres. Azerbaijan Red Crescent volunteers in their turn held workshop sessions on Azerbaijan Red Crescent activities and the Movement's Fundamental Principles in schools of the two regions and continued to pay visits to orphanage houses to carry out social activities with children. The aim is to teach children new skills and to provide them with moral support.

The National Society marked the International Protection Day of Children among pupils from the school №150 in the internally displaced people's settlement located in Khuzanli settlement of Aghdam region by organizing football (boys) and volleyball (girls) competitions. The total number of participants was 147. Winners were rewarded with cups and presents from the Azerbaijan Red Crescent. Along with the National Society financial support was provided by various organizations like Azersun Holding and UMCOR. They provided hygiene sets for 150 children from vulnerable families.

Two meetings of youth volunteer boards were held at central and three at regional level. The Azerbaijan Red Crescent will be able to do another 15 meetings at central and regional level.

Constraints or Challenges

Due to the lack of funds the Azerbaijan Red Crescent cancelled several trainings and events on planning, reporting, finance procedures and experience sharing, summer and educational camps, youth and volunteer central and regional board meetings, as well as printing, purchasing and distribution of public and promotion materials. The fund-raising policy is ready, while the marketing and fund-raising strategy is under development.

Humanitarian values

Expected outcome/result: Intolerance, discrimination and social exclusion has been reduced and respect for diversity and human dignity has been promoted.

The Azerbaijan Red Crescent marked the World Red Cross and Red Crescent Day by organizing small-scale events in Baku and in six regions. Press releases were also issued to 18 local newspapers and humanitarian values brochures.

The Red Crescent organized a seminar on humanitarian values for 32 new volunteers from two regional centres. The participants were acquainted with the main topics such as stigma, discrimination and tolerance. The group work included discussing the topic "What is my role in reducing stigma/discrimination?" At the end of the event the volunteers were encouraged to spread out the knowledge on humanitarian values among people in their communities.

Constraints or challenges

A number of activities under this programme area were postponed or cancelled; therefore the expected result was only partially achieved. The main activities were prioritized and implemented reaching a limited number of people.

Working in partnership

Both the Azerbaijan Red Crescent and the International Federation have good cooperation with various Movement partners and a wide range of central and local governmental institutions, various national and international organizations and agencies.

In the context of effective coordination a meeting was held between the International Federation office and the cooperation department of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) to discuss the areas of support provided by both Movement components. The key points from the meeting were presented to the Red Crescent leadership and agreed upon. Several contacts were made with various National Societies including Magen David Adom from Israel and the Red Cross Societies of Norway, Germany and Poland.

Regular contacts were maintained with various ministries at central level and authorities at local level. Regular meetings were held also with UN agencies in the country and World Vision, ADRA, OXFAM, USAID and Save the Children.

Contributing to longer-term impact

The Azerbaijan Red Crescent programmes are closely linked to the Global Agenda goals. The National Society regularly monitored and evaluated its programme activities to ensure the most efficient use of the limited resources available and to continuously assess programme progress towards the overall objectives. Monitoring included a continuous collection of data and analysis of programme activity information. Internal as well as external monitoring was carried out and tools for data gathering included field visits and meetings, reporting and final evaluations.

Gender issues were addressed by ensuring that all activities carried out by the National Society benefited the most vulnerable regardless of gender. Internally equal access and opportunities for participation and decision-making for both genders are an imperative for the Azerbaijan Red Crescent. In the planning process gender equity and diversity was taken into account and emphasized for the rest of 2009 and the same direction will be followed in 2010.

Looking ahead

The Azerbaijan Red Crescent is struggling with financial shortcomings. This situation must be addressed in a proper way, requiring more resources to be invested to ensure a solid, sound and sustainable financial base for future programme development and implementation. Initiatives are being undertaken and these will continue in the second half of 2009.

From the operational point of view, insufficient funding contributed to numerous activities being postponed or cancelled and some partially implemented with the National Society's own resources. However, although funding remained a difficult issue and affected the work towards overall objectives, the Azerbaijan Red Crescent did manage to work within the four programme areas aligned with the Global Agenda goals. This work will continue in the latter half of 2009 and will hopefully improve along with greater access to funds and other resources.

How we work

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.

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