

# Programme Update



International Federation  
of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

## Georgia

Appeal No. MAAGE002

31 August 2009

This report covers the period 01/01/09 to 30/06/09.



Georgia Red Cross distributed hygiene items to internally displaced people located in collective centres. Photo: International Federation

## In brief

**Programme purpose:** The programme activities of the Georgia Red Cross Society supported by the Norwegian Red Cross, the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and the Estonia Red Cross were aligned with and contributed to the Global Agenda goals aiming to improve the lives and alleviate suffering among the most vulnerable people through disaster management, health and care and organizational development.

**Programme summary:** Based on the priorities of the Georgia Red Cross, the International Federation provides support in the field of :

- disaster management with special emphasis on disaster response capacity-building
- health and care through HIV and AIDS, Tuberculosis (TB), general health and care and social support
- organizational development focusing on capacity building, financial management, fund-raising and resource mobilization, communication and public relations, branch development, and youth and volunteer development

The International Federation began supporting the Georgia Red Cross to develop its capacity in disaster management in the aftermath of the armed conflict in August 2008. Disaster management, along with psychosocial support and first aid were identified as areas to be addressed in terms of capacity building. These components were included in the Harmonized Operational Programme (HOP) agreement between the International Federation and ICRC. Capacity building within disaster management and psychosocial support was thus initiated, supported financially by ICRC and operationally by the International Federation.

In 2009, within health and care six programme components were included: HIV and AIDS; TB prevention; community-based health and first-aid; psychosocial support; voluntary non-remunerated blood donation, and social support to vulnerable people. The main partners supporting these activities were the Norwegian Red Cross for HIV and AIDS; Ely Lilly for drug-resistant Tuberculosis (DR-TB) control project and the Estonian Red Cross for health promotion. The first-aid and psychosocial activities were supported by ICRC and the International Federation's Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF).

Within organizational development the Red Cross has put its main focus on leadership competence building and strengthening of governance and management functions. Institutional reform included strengthening the foundation and volunteer base; expanding the branch network and improving communication and cooperation within the entire organization; besides efforts to improve the financial management of the National Society.

**Financial situation:** The total budget for 2009 was initially CHF 668,675. The budget was revised to CHF 1,198,105 (USD 10,317,316 or EUR 7,344,368) due to an increase in the disaster management and health and care budget. Of the total budget 69 per cent is covered. Expenditure overall was 79 per cent of received funding.

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

**No. of people reached during the reporting period:**

Programme Update January – June 2009 - Georgia		
Programme	Target groups	People reached
Disaster management	Vulnerable families, RC staff and volunteers	6,319
Health and care	Vulnerable people, youth, children	12,978
Organizational development	National Society key staff and volunteers, youth, children	350
<b>Total number of people reached</b>		<b>19,647</b>

**Our partners** The Georgia Red Cross Society cooperates with Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement partners, governmental, non-governmental, national as well as international organizations. (Please see *Working in partnership* for detailed overview.)

## Context

The conflict between Georgia and the Russian Federation which erupted in August 2008 and ended a week later resulted in thousands fleeing their homes. More than 20,000 people have not managed to get back to their places of origin and are still residing in temporary housing, public buildings and collective centres. This adds to the 220,000 internally displaced persons (IDPs) already in the country from the conflict which ended at the early 1990s. Poverty remains widespread and the economic situation is worsening due to the global financial crisis and the consequences of last year's conflict. Large numbers of people have lost their jobs mainly in the private sector, which is the driving force of the Georgian economy.

The country faces immense health challenges. In recent years the number of cases of infectious diseases has increased, particularly those of HIV and TB, partially due to the migration of the population as well as the increased number of injecting drug users. According to the HIV and AIDS National Centre some 1,983 people were living with HIV in May 2009 and the TB national centre recorded 2,657 new cases in 2008.

A series of political events have occurred in Georgia in early 2009, with the political environment remaining polarized from April as thousands of protesters have joined the opposition's protests. The opposition leaders further widened the geographical area of protests in the capital as well as in the regions.

The conflict in Georgia demonstrated that the National Society is in need of developing its capacities for responding to emergencies. Thus, disaster management, psychosocial support and first aid were identified as areas to be addressed in terms of capacity building.

## Progress towards outcomes

### Disaster Management

#### **Outcome/Expected result:**

- Established effective mechanisms for efficient institutional preparedness and coordination during disasters.
- Strengthened institutional capacities for effective disaster management at both central and local levels.

**Achievements:** To support the strategy development and planning within the National Society, a disaster management delegate was deployed by the International Federation. The delegate supported the Georgia Red Cross in the planning of all humanitarian response activities.

A regional disaster response team (RDRT) member from the Red Cross Society of Bosnia and Herzegovina also arrived to assist with the winterization project. From January to February 2009 the National Society distributed winter clothing and blankets to 6,250 internally displaced persons from 1,250 IDP families in collective centres in Bolnisi, Gardabani, Rustavi, Tbilisi and Kaspi. The International Federation supported the National Society's staff and volunteers to develop methods for direct distribution, and to establish best practices and run trainings.

#### **Outcome/Expected result:**

- Awareness of communities about disaster hazards has increased enabling them to take effective actions during disasters.
- Vulnerability of local communities to public health emergencies and disaster outcomes has been reduced through timely information and improved capacities of the Red Cross local branches.

As part of the HOP agreement, a series of workshops for disaster response team members and volunteers were organized in February at central and local levels to share experiences and knowledge from the context of the armed conflict. In total 53 volunteers participated. The foundations for the so-called Red Cross action teams were put in place in five targeted branches. These teams consist of Red Cross personnel with competencies in disaster management, first-aid and psychosocial support.

Disaster management basic training was organized at the headquarters in Tbilisi for 16 social project volunteers, conducted by volunteers trained in disaster management. In February three Georgia Red Cross volunteers attended the RDRT training in Macedonia and later in May the disaster management coordinator attended an international meeting organized by the International Federation on climate change and the shelter cluster approach in Montenegro.

**Constraints or Challenges:** Despite the obvious need to develop the disaster response capacity of the Georgia Red Cross Society and the number of achievements in this area, major challenges exist in getting partners interested in supporting these activities.

## Health and Care

### Outcome/Expected result:

- Reduced vulnerability to HIV and its impact through preventing further infection including harm reduction activities, expanding knowledge about HIV and AIDS prevention, transmission and treatment.

**Achievements:** Some 5,200 community leaders disseminated information on HIV and AIDS and anti-stigma messages to 8,000 community members. 290 planned training courses on HIV and AIDS were conducted for community leaders by volunteers in all six target regions and at the headquarters in Tbilisi. The workshops were attended by 863 IDPs.

### Outcome/Expected result:

- Supported treatment referral and TB clients under directly observed treatment (DOT).
- Further infection in communities in Tbilisi and in the six target regions of Georgia prevented through expanding knowledge about prevention, transmission and treatment.

Since January 2009, supported by the International Federation with “Ely Lilly” as back donor, the Georgia Red Cross has run a drug-resistant Tuberculosis (DR-TB) control project in Tbilisi, building up to be part of the national TB control programme.

The activities in responding to TB, including DR-TB, have three main directions. They aim at participating in the national DR-TB control programme management; raising awareness in the community and combating stigma and discrimination against people with TB. In order to combat stigma and discrimination focus group discussions were held and information booklets, leaflets and posters given out.

A total of 154 clients were consulted by Red Cross psychologists. As a result of the efforts of social workers and treatment adherence consultants some 107 clients agreed to treatment. 45 DR-TB clients are permanently under observation by adherence consultants. Nurses trained in DOTS (directly observed treatment, short course) served 51 clients and conducted 1,948 home visits.

Around 1,200 trained community leaders disseminated information on TB signs, prevention, transmission and treatment as well as anti-stigma messages to 3,000 community members. 57 workshops were conducted for the community leaders by National Society focal points and volunteers in all six target regions and at the headquarters in Tbilisi. 12 workshops organized by National Society focal points and volunteers were attended by 250 IDPs.

### Outcome/Expected result:

- Local communities are strengthened and better able to cope with health challenges as a result of community-based integrated health and first-aid activities.

The National Society continued building its network of trained volunteers (young and elderly) providing **social support to elderly people**. The social support aimed to reduce isolation, increase self-respect, inform about rights and entitlements and facilitate opinion exchange, and help with daily tasks. In the first half of 2009 volunteers paid 13,000 visits to 1,500 elderly people.

Trainings on community-based first aid, healthy lifestyle and active aging; infectious diseases; and disaster preparedness and response were conducted for project beneficiaries and volunteers involved in project implementation.

A working group was established, with the purpose of discussing the problems of elderly people and developing action plans to address them, with the participation of the Georgia Red Cross Society and several governmental and non-governmental organizations such as the Office of Georgia Ombudsman, Tbilisi Mayor Municipal Department of Social Services and Culture,

People's Harmonious Development Society, Georgia Young Lawyers' Association and Caritas Georgia. A promising outcome so far is the authorities' recognition of the society's contribution in supporting vulnerable elderly people and the exploration of opportunities for further cooperation.

The health activities at the two collective centres accomodating IDPs in Gardabani aimed at improving the health and hygiene status of people through general health and hygiene promotion.

130 IDP families were identified as target beneficiaries. The assessment of the target collective centers showed that there were frequent respiratory diseases and different skin illnesses. Data analysis has also shown a need for hygiene kits. In April 2009 hygiene parcels were distributed to 324 persons living in the collective centres.

Georgia Red Cross volunteers were managing the registration of beneficiaries as well as the distribution of packages and the stocking of the remaining items at the end of distribution.

24 workshops were conducted for the IDP families, including hygiene, first-aid and psychosocial support workshops, each of them attended by around 15-20 participants.

Workshop	Number of workshops	Number of participants		
		Female	Male	Total
Hygiene and general health	8	109	56	165
First aid	8	86	31	117
Psychosocial support	8	87	45	132

#### Outcome/Expected result:

- The capacity of the Georgia Red Cross to provide psychosocial support, to promote the restoration of community networks and coping mechanisms, and to enhance emotional assistance to staff and volunteers in times of disaster or social disruption, is built.
- Psychosocial support is increasingly integrated into a number of programmes implemented by the Georgia Red Cross including disaster preparedness and disaster response, first aid, health and social welfare, and care for staff and volunteers.
- Local communities are strengthened and better able to cope with psychosocial challenges at times of disaster, social disruption or illness as a result of Georgia Red Cross activities.

Following the conflict in August psychosocial support was set up as a new programme area within the National Society. Focus was put on establishing the foundations for an effective programme and ensuring its sustainability. Thus, initial strategic programme directions were developed along with a plan of action and logical framework and risk matrices, with the support of a psychosocial support delegate deployed through the International Federation within the HOP agreement. In total 85 volunteers in Gori, Rustavi and Tbilisi were debriefed. In addition, resource materials were translated and shared extensively with National Society staff and volunteers.

To recruit specific 'psychosocial volunteers' for the programme, a recruitment package was developed and information about the recruitment process was disseminated in branches in Tbilisi, Rustavi, Batumi Kutaisi and Gori. A training workshop for the 26 selected volunteers, including 8 psychologists and social workers was held.

In June, with the support of Pro Credit Bank, a summer camp for 38 children and 12 parents from Gori and its surrounding areas was held on the Black sea coast to reduce stress within the target group.

**Constraints or Challenges:** Despite the best efforts, there was no success in getting the psychosocial support programme funded beyond February. However, based on discussions with ICRC, some refreshment trainings for the volunteers will be supported between July and September.

## Organizational Development

### Outcome/Expected result:

- Improving National Society leadership capacities to develop and implement strategies, to ensure good performance and accountability.

**Achievements:** Efforts continued towards building the National Society's leadership competence. In June a one-day workshop was conducted for 20 branch leaders, volunteers and youth representatives from Tbilisi, Gardabani, Rustavi, Sagarejo, Akhmeta, Kareli, Gori, Kutaisi, Senaki and Batumi on good governance and management issues, as well as on resource mobilization.

### Outcome/Expected result:

- Ensuring a well-functioning organization with sustainable systems, procedures and staff with desired level of managerial and technical competencies.

The internal procedures for a staff salary system were developed and staff evaluation has been conducted. The internal and external communication system was also improved and cooperation expanded with its supporting media group through regular meetings with media group members at headquarters aiming to further develop the communication strategy.

### Outcome/Expected result:

- Ensuring financial sustainability.

The Georgia Red Cross Society raised 17,250 Georgian Lari (GEL) at local level; 1,937 GEL was raised and utilized during the Red Cross week. The society's activities were supported by local governmental institutions and business partners, such as: the City Hall, Mushtaidi Park, Puppet Theatre, Vake Park, McDonalds, Iberia Business Group, Tkbili Kvekana (Sweet World), Publishing House "Artanuji", and United Colours of Benetton. Funds were raised through donation boxes, with five new boxes placed around public places in Tbilisi. The Georgia Red Cross raised funds for a joint summer camp with ProCredit Bank. The National Society conducted various events and charity activities for vulnerable groups, as well as promoted humanitarian values and Georgia Red Cross Society work.

### Outcome/Expected result:

- Developing a nation-wide coverage of grassroots units and services.

Within volunteer and youth development the Georgia Red Cross Society elaborated and disseminated a questionnaire to assess the capacities of eight target branches on volunteer management. The Georgia Red Cross Society established a "Committee of Five" in two public schools of Tbilisi. The main activities of the "Committee of Five" are to develop a human approach towards vulnerable children in the schools, to raise awareness about humanitarian values, and to ensure youth volunteer recruitment in the Red Cross.

**Constraints or Challenges:** There is a lack of opportunities (technical support, funds) to set the mechanisms for better encouragement and motivation of Georgia Red Cross volunteers especially at local level.

## Principles and Values

Principles and values as a separate programme was not financially supported, but work to promote principles and values has been integrated into other projects. Anti-stigma and anti-discrimination messages were included in all training materials and disseminated during trainings on health and care.

As part of the project on social support to vulnerable elderly people those receiving Red Cross support were reminded of their rights to dignity and were actively involved in an advocacy campaign to enhance protection and support of elderly people so they can find an active role in public life.

Within the organizational development programme the National Society established a "Committee of Five" in Tbilisi public schools where the youth representatives disseminated information on the Movement's Fundamental Principles and humanitarian values and presented the activities implemented by the Red Cross youth, as well as video records of charity events. As a result 30 schoolchildren became Red Cross volunteers.

## Working in partnership

The Georgia Red Cross Society cooperates with the International Red Cross Red Crescent Movement partners and with a wide range of central and local governmental institutions, non-governmental, national as well as international organizations.

The Norwegian Red Cross, being the major contributor to the Federation secretariat's country plan for Georgia, has supported the projects on HIV, social support to elderly people and organizational development. Also, bilateral financial support has come from the Norwegian Red Cross for the blood donation programme to initiate activities within non-remunerated blood donor recruitment. The Danish Red Cross has supported by deploying an organizational development delegate, who arrived in Georgia in early June 2009. Funds have been allocated to support the branch development activities through the Federation secretariat's country plan.

Tripartite agreement on a three-month project within disaster management and psychosocial support has been signed between the Georgia Red Cross, ICRC and the International Federation. The project is to be implemented between July and September 2009.

The Estonian Red Cross provided support to the health project for the population displaced as a result of the conflict which started in August 2008. The cooperation between the International Federation and British Red Cross within the social project for elderly people living alone has concluded in June. From July the project is continuing on a bilateral basis.

The German Red Cross visited Georgia with an assessment mission in March to explore the possibilities of cooperation within first aid. The Georgia Red Cross Society keeps close contacts with UNDP, WHO, the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation, ECHO and other organizations.

## Contributing to longer-term impact

The Georgia Red Cross Society monitors and evaluates its programme activities to ensure the efficient use of limited resources available and to continuously assess progress towards the overall objectives. Monitoring included continuous collection of data and analysis of programme information. Internal as well as external monitoring was carried out. Tools for data gathering included field visits and meetings, reporting and final evaluation.

Gender issues are addressed by ensuring that all activities carried out by the National Society benefit the most vulnerable regardless of gender. Internally equal access and opportunities for

participation and decision-making for both genders is an imperative. In the planning process for 2009-2010 gender equity and diversity was taken into account and emphasized.

## Looking ahead

The International Federation supported programmes are aligned with the Global Agenda goals and support the National Society's 2007-2011 strategic plan. To further strengthen the National Society's capacities, the country plan for 2009-2010 builds upon and capitalizes on the efforts initiated after the August 2008 emergency situation.

The capacity-building process supported by all Movement partners will strengthen the Georgia Red Cross branches to deliver sustainable, focused and responsive services to vulnerable communities with the active involvement of youth and volunteers. In parallel, the society will continue and expand its work with health and social authorities so as to be included in the respective policies and plans of the government. Local resource mobilization will be developed and linked to communications and image issues. It will raise awareness of local authorities and communities on the Red Cross work.

The society will work on developing its disaster management strategy and contingency planning. This will serve as a basis for developing further organizational preparedness for disasters and community-based disaster risk reduction, establishing effective institutional preparedness and coordination during disasters, strengthening capacities, raising awareness and timely information at central and local levels.

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><b>Global Agenda Goals:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reduce the numbers of deaths, injuries and impact from disasters.</li> <li>• Reduce the number of deaths, illnesses and impact from diseases and public health emergencies.</li> <li>• Increase local community, civil society and Red Cross Red Crescent capacity to address the most urgent situations of vulnerability.</li> <li>• Reduce intolerance, discrimination and social exclusion and promote respect for diversity and human dignity.</li> </ul>
Contact information	
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