

RUSSIAN FEDERATION: DISASTER PREPAREDNESS AND RESPONSE, HEALTH, AND CAPACITY BUILDING

1 February, 2000

*appeal no. 01.44/99
situation report no. 4
period covered: October - December, 1999*

The last Situation Report (No. 3 issued on 18 November, 1999) indicated an appeal coverage of over 84%, a figure that included an ECHO contribution of CHF 1,556,686. However, this contribution has now been reallocated to the correct programme (Appeal No. 8/99; TB/HIV/AIDS/STIs in Belarus, Moldova, Ukraine, and the Russian Federation). As a result, Appeal No. 01.44/99 has actually received funding of CHF 1,010,026, or 33% coverage.

An initial analysis of the 1999 programme in 1999 has been encouraging, with the Russian Red Cross (RRC) involved in the implementation of 37 programmes (five in collaboration with the ICRC, and 27 with the Federation) in some 42 territories of Russia with an estimated 3,409,000 beneficiaries assisted.

The context

The Moscow Delegation supports the Russian Red Cross across the 21 republics, 49 oblasts, six krais, and ten okrugs, that make up the Russian Federation. The Federation's 1999 programme in Russia was intended to respond to the effects of the crash of the Russian rouble in August 1998, a situation which caused new levels of poverty for a population already suffering from the collapse of the Soviet era systems and the hardships imposed by a transition to an alternative economic system. The side effects of this situation, particularly in the health arena, were dramatic, with increased vulnerability to disease, alcoholism and malnutrition. With the harsh living conditions of many vulnerable people aggravated further by disasters such as floods, drought or fires, the Federation programme was also intended to focus on improving disaster response and preparedness mechanisms.

The Delegation also serves as a regional financial management base for Belarus, Moldova and Ukraine, and supplies logistical and information support to other Federation Delegations and National Societies in the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS).

Latest events

President Boris Yeltsin resigned on 31 December, and Prime Minister Vladimir Putin assumed the duties of head of state. Russian parliamentary (Duma) elections were held on 19 December, and Presidential elections are due to take place in March 2000.

The conflict in Chechnya intensified, and two Ingush Red Cross representatives were killed on 29 October when a missile hit a truck column on the Nazran-Grozny road. At least 25 civilians were killed and 70 were injured.

Winter conditions worsened the lives of most ordinary Russians, but particularly the 250,000 or so who had fled Grozny and other parts of Chechnya for the relative safety of Ingushetia and other neighbouring republics.

Red Cross/Red Crescent action

Health ●

Visiting Nurses Service (VNS)

One of the current VNS programmes financed by the Swedish Red Cross Society ended in December. A meeting is planned for January to evaluate the results and produce a final report.

During the reporting period salaries were paid to six visiting nurses, each assisting eight people in Sverdlovsk under a project funded by the German Red Cross. Medical room equipment and social assistance was purchased in Ekaterinburg and Pervouralsk as well as medical equipment for a city hospital in Kamensk-Uralsky. Visiting nurses kits are in the process of being procured.

The TB/VNS project funded by the Swedish Red Cross is ongoing in seven regions. A VNS training centre was established and equipped in Belgorod to provide home care training for visiting nurses. A Basics for Home care workshop was conducted in Kaluga for 16 visiting nurses.

HIV/AIDS - Youth/VNS

A new programme to continue youth peer education on HIV/AIDS and other STD prevention and control projects was designed in collaboration with the Norwegian Red Cross Society for six regions - Moscow, Kaliningrad, Murmansk, Arkhangelsk, Krasnodar and Sochi.

First Aid

The final two Resource Development seminars for 11 regions participating in the First Aid programme (Novosibirsk, Chelyabinsk, Kemerovo, Tomsk, Abakan, Krasnoyarsk, Irkutsk, Ulan-Ude, Yakutsk, Khabarovsk and Vladivostok) were conducted in October in Novosibirsk and Irkutsk to promote the programme's self sustainability.

Preparatory work related to including two more committees (Penza and Stavropol) to the programme continued. Working meetings with the committees' chairpersons were held to discuss organisational questions and future seminars. Equipment was purchased and sent to the committees as well as methodological literature and programme certificates. First aid courses for the general public were held in both Penza and Stavropol.

A first aid manual for parents was prepared for printing. First aid kits for medical and social assistance in 10 participating regions (Penza, Stavropol, Astrakhan, Volgograd, Rostov, Orenburg, Samara, Moscow, Moscow region and Voronezh) are being procured.

A two-day seminar to discuss programme development in 2000 was held on November 28-30 in Moscow with the participation of eight regional committees' representatives, the RRC Central Committee headquarters, the Canadian Red Cross, and Canadian Embassy representatives. The seminar

focused on self-sustainability and fund raising through selling first aid courses, manual, leaflets, and kits.

Blood Donor Recruitment Programme

The project received support of CHF 61,678 from the Finnish Red Cross, and started in October 1999 with the appointment of a programme co-ordinator, the establishment of a plan of action, and specifying participating regions (Moscow city, Moscow region, Nizhny Novgorod, Tver and Belgorod).

In November, a working meeting with representatives from the regions identified above was held to define educational and information objectives of the programme and regional needs in information and education on giving blood. As a result, a plan for information-educational materials for the programme was designed and approved, including the production of posters, information leaflets, bookmark calendars, stickers and pens with the programme and Red Cross symbols.

Disaster Preparedness and Response ●

During the reporting period a collaboration plan was established and agreed with the Ministry for Emergency Situations (EMERCOM).

Population Movement (PM) Programme ●

During the reporting period the following projects were continued:

- a reception point for forced migrants in Moscow;
- psycho-social support for refugees;
- RRC medical centres for forced migrants in Moscow;
- Pskov socio-medical centre;
- RRC reception points for forced migrants in eight regions;
- psychological rehabilitation network for forced migrants;
- hot meals in Ingushetia for Chechen internally displaced persons;
- providing 300 anti-typhoid vaccines for the Dagestan Health Ministry through the Dagestan Red Cross committee;
- additional assistance to RRC reception points for Chechen IDPs in eight regions;
- food products and hygiene kits for elderly Baku refugees in Moscow; and
- RRC assistance to Chechen forced migrants on Russian territory out of the conflict zone.

Regular contacts were maintained with the respective regions. A working meeting was held under the Chechen forced migrants project, as well as a seminar to discuss the launch of the project with the participation of 10 regional committees. According to the Federal Migration Service, as of 28 December 1999, 33,000 forced migrants had moved from Ingushetia and settled in other cities out of the conflict zone. The PM programme continues in six regions (Stavropol, Krasnodarsky krai, Rostov, Volgograd, Astrakhan and Saratov), assisting close to 10,000 people. A three-day training seminar was conducted for 12 psychologists working under the project on December 22-24, to discuss basic aspects of rendering psychological assistance to IDPs. From December 8-29, six field trips to all the targeted regions were conducted to monitor regional Red Cross committees' preparedness for implementing the project, to meet local administration, and to co-ordinate actions between the RRC Central Committee and regional committees. Medical equipment and medication were purchased in all regions except Volgograd. The following assistance was sent to the regions:

Region	Family Food Parcels	Hygiene Parcels	Bed Linen Kits
Astrakhan	820	2,000	435
Rostov	840	210	--
Krasnodar	840	2,000	300
Saratov	1,680	2,000	405
Stavropol	2,520	4,000	990
Volgograd	840	2,000	210
TOTAL	7,540	14,000	2,550

Distributions have started in Krasnodarsky krai, Saratov and Rostov regions.

During the reporting period the RRC Central Committee legal advisor conducted a seminar under the Population Movement programme to discuss legal questions and problems. A meeting with Swedish Red Cross representatives was held in the middle of November to discuss further collaboration. The first information bulletin for forced migrants was prepared for printing.

Institutional / Resource Development and Capacity Building ●

A meeting of the RRC Central Committee Presidium and two meetings of the RRC Central Committee Presidium Bureau were held to discuss the work of the Russian Red Cross in 1999 and during the reporting period.

Thirty two institutional development seminars were held during the year, including a series of workshops for RRC accountants. Resource development work was improved by establishing a club for corporate partners. During 1999, USD 1,523,700 was raised locally in cash and in-kind donations.

The following five (out of eight) regional Red Cross offices were established across Russia under the RRC reform process for better monitoring and programme implementation: Vladivostock (Far East), Irkutsk (East Siberia), Stavropol (North Caucasus), Moscow region (Central Russia) and Pskov (North West). Three zonal offices will soon be opened in West Siberia, Ural and Volgo-Vyatsky area.

Development of RRC Youth

The RRC youth department prepared a programme of youth movement development in three areas: Central Russia, Povolzh'ye and East Siberia.

Youth department volunteers participated in a water rescue workshop held from 20 November to 5 December. A new water rescue programme is planned for 2000.

RRC Membership Card Project

Some 679,800 common membership cards and 1,545 honorary membership cards were sent to 85 regional RRC committees since the beginning of the programme in 1998.

Nineteen committees distributed the full complement of membership cards received. Some RR 766,600 (USD 28,392) were sent to the RRC Central Committee from 61 regions, and more than five million roubles (some USD 185,180) have been raised under the RRC Membership card project to date.

Outstanding needs

A winter programme co-ordinator and a relief co-ordinator are both urgently needed.

Support is needed to improve and develop the RRC eight zones project under institutional development: three out of eight offices are still not established.

The youth peer education programme on HIV/AIDS has not received funding, and further support is needed to continue this activity.

External relations - Government/UN/NGOs/Media

Information material for the Media Service was prepared during the reporting period on the following issues: explosions in Moscow, RRC rescue team activities, CIS National Society meetings in Druzhba and Astrakhan Peace Voyage "50th Anniversary of the Geneva Conventions". Two articles for the RRC magazine about the RRC Migrant Children Camp in Pskov and about the results of the WEA 1998-1999 were written by the Information officer.

Preparations were made for the launch of the Siberian Winter Appeal for 2000 which took place on 2 November with the participation of local and international media.

Contributions

See Annex 1 for details.

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