

Final report



International Federation
of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

RUSSIAN FEDERATION: HOSTAGE CRISIS IN BESLAN, NORTH OSSETIA

Final report
Emergency appeal n° 19/2004
16 May 2008

Period covered by this Final Report: September 2004 - December 2007

Appeal target (current): CHF 2,603,081 (USD 2,603,081 or EUR 1,653,799);

Final Appeal coverage: 101 %; [<click here to go directly to the final financial report, or here to view the contact details>](#)

Appeal history:

- The **Emergency Appeal** was launched on 6 September 2004 for CHF 864,844 (USD 680,000 or EUR 563,000) for 12 months to assist 2,000 beneficiaries.
- With operations update no.3, the appeal budget was revised to CHF 1,867,348 (USD 1,612,625 or EUR 1,234,490) to assist 5,000 beneficiaries until August 2006.
- With operations update no.4, the appeal budget was revised to CHF 2,341,334 (USD 1,880,705 or EUR 1,526,575).
- With operations update no.6, the appeal budget was revised to CHF 2,478,497 (USD 1,876,228 or EUR 1,583,704) to assist 5,000 beneficiaries for three years.
- In July 2007, the budget was revised to CHF 2,603,081.
- **Disaster Relief Emergency Funds (DREF)**: CHF 50,000 was initially allocated from the International Federation's DREF, which was fully reimbursed on 29 September 2004.



Russian Red Cross visiting nurses on duty at former school no°1 on the mourning day in Beslan on 1 September 2007. Photo: Russian Red Cross

Summary: In the period of 2004-2007 the community-based programme of psychosocial rehabilitation in Beslan aimed at strengthening community resilience by re-establishing the social involvement of the affected population. Some 7,000 people were provided with psychological assistance and were involved in community activities, trainings, events and children's summer camps. Among the beneficiaries 200 families were selected for home care provided by Russian Red Cross visiting nurses trained in psychosocial support (PSS).

The situation

In September 2004, more than 1,200 people were taken hostage by armed fighters in a school in Beslan, North Ossetia. The three-day siege ended in a carnage that killed 334 hostages, including 186 children and 13 police officers, and left 783 people injured. It was a tremendous loss for the small town with a population of some 32,000. The local authorities registered 578 families as directly affected. 27 children lost both parents and 154 people, including 74 children, have been disabled.

The assessment conducted by the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies in Beslan in 2004, pointed out that people did not only need medical attention and material goods but they were in great psychological distress that had to be addressed. Hundreds of people were not able to return to their normal lives. The whole community of Beslan changed dramatically, people were plunged into deep grief, social ties were disrupted, and mistrust and lack of faith increased.

Red Cross and Red Crescent action

Based on the assessment, and in agreement with the Russian Red Cross, a psychosocial programme was launched by the North Ossetian branch with the overall aim of providing the affected population in Beslan with psychosocial assistance to cope with the human losses and anxiety. The initial number of beneficiaries of 5,000 was increased to 7,000 in 2007 by including people who were not directly affected by the disaster but applied for Red Cross support through group meetings and public events. The emergency appeal budget totalled 2,523,275 Swiss francs. In July 2007, thanks to the additional funds provided, the budget was revised to 2,603,081 Swiss francs.

The original programme, designed for 18 months, was revised twice. The intermediate assessment mission carried out by the International Federation's Reference Centre for Psychosocial Support (<http://psp.drk.dk/sw2955.asp>) in May 2006 revealed that the psychological and social effects of the crisis were still prevailing and it was decided to continue the psychosocial support programme and to redirect the interventions towards involving the affected population in social activities.

Psychosocial support

Objectives:

- ***Address the emergency and long-term psychological needs of the affected population (as auxiliary to existing interventions) through a community centre aimed to support the rehabilitation of the affected population and through schools***
- ***Provide psychosocial support for the selected beneficiaries at home through a network of visiting nurses/ social workers and psychologists based in the North Ossetian Russian Red Cross branch***
- ***Strengthen the capacity of the local Russian Red Cross branch to provide social, medical and psychological support to the affected population and prevent secondary traumatising, professional burnout among Russian Red Cross staff members and volunteers providing assistance to the affected population via professional mechanisms and training***
- ***Involve the affected population in wider communication, raise their self-esteem and social activities through the Russian Red Cross web-site, dissemination of education and awareness materials, and through cooperation with the media***
- ***Build a hostage crisis capacity in Moscow and in North Caucasus to support relatives and community members around a hostage crisis site***

The psychosocial support programme occupied its own niche in the context of numerous projects in Beslan, most of which ended by 2006. It was a combination of individual and community work, volunteer involvement, training, information-sharing and advocacy. While information-sharing and advocacy were important throughout the programme, the programme went through five distinct phases over three years:

1. September 2004 - April 2005: needs assessment, recruitment, training
2. April - September 2005: individual support at home during the first year of mourning
3. October 2005 - May 2006: revival of social activities and ties through the Russian Red Cross rehabilitation centre
4. June 2006 - December 2007: developing self-support mechanisms in the community
5. November 2006 - December 2007: psychosocial education for the population, dissemination and advocacy

Rooted in local traditions, the programme was designed to meet the complex needs of the traumatized population in Beslan. Aiming to ensure sustainability, special attention was given to ensure that all knowledge and experience stays in the community, and local resources were used whenever possible. The main activities of the programme included home visits, counselling and group sessions, workshops and studio activities, parties and community events, summer camps and the dissemination of information materials. The home care element of the programme, intensive in its first stage, eventually gave way to more social involvement as well as an increasing focus on self-support mechanisms in the community, psychosocial education, dissemination and advocacy. Information-sharing was an essential component in the entire programme.

To ensure the correct implementation of the activities, a large training programme was also set up for the staff and volunteers. The programme was designed to combine theory with practise, and the participants had regular workshops on various topics and used their new skills in their work throughout the programme. This also gave the programme a large capacity building component. Psychosocial support seminars were supplemented by organizational development workshops on collective planning, project writing, fund-raising, volunteer management and psychosocial support training of trainers. Now, as the programme is coming to an end, it will be essential to keep the expertise within the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement.

The selected beneficiaries were given psychosocial support in their own homes by visiting nurses and psychologists. The number of nurses involved in the project since 2005 was reduced from 20 to 5 by the end of 2007 as by that time many families had passed through the rehabilitation period and come back to a normal life. Out of the 578 affected families screened, 200 were selected for home care. At the end of 2007, 28 families were found to be still in need of support. Many of the beneficiaries of the visiting nurse programme, both adults and children, were invited by the nurses to attend the activities of the new Russian Red Cross community centre "We Together!" in downtown Beslan. This combination of services allowed the beneficiaries to gain from all activities of the centre. The community centre was, monthly, attended by some 600 beneficiaries (in studios on a three-month rotation basis) participating in various types of activities including family tea-parties and social events, computer, digital photo and English classes, folk dance, fitness, yoga, and gymnastics. There was easy access to psychologists at the centre, and to a play room equipped for the work with traumatized children. Additionally, more than 70 town events attracted over 7,000 people as participants and volunteers. The visiting nurse approach turned out to be a good choice. In the atmosphere of mistrust towards professional psychologists, individual isolation and division of the society after the tragedy, the home services of trained visiting nurses were appropriate.

Impact

The Beslan programme has demonstrated a niche for the Russian Red Cross in the provision of psychosocial support, both during post-crisis and in addressing the psychosocial consequences of long-term vulnerability. It is a niche that has been recognized by the state and the community. The Russian Red Cross fully accepts the concept and intends to promote the new experience in its programming. However it will need external technical support and back up to make it happen. The National Society works with vulnerable children across the Russian Federation, and the tools and training that have enabled the North Ossetian branch to serve its community in Beslan are in many ways applicable to other contexts and circumstances.

One success factor of the programme became visible when staff members from Beslan were asked to support the Russian Red Cross branch in Kemerovo region after a mine accident in April 2007. Four psychologists and two visiting nurses helped to establish a team of psychosocial support for 100 families of

Significant changes in life pointed out by a focus group:

I stopped using crutches, though I never thought I would walk again.

I returned to my work in the garden, the nurse helped me.

I have found a job and I am surrounded by nice people.

I have a newly born baby, my thoughts are lighter, I have faith in future again.

My family supports me, it is very important, but sorrow remains.

Red Cross workers helped to solve many family difficulties and to overcome depression.

Red Cross nurses found approaches to children who at school are called "rude and aggressive".

My grandson found a new friend in Larissa (a visiting nurse). He played only with her. She knew how to get him to talk with her.

Consultations with nurses helped improve relations with children who lost their parents.

The Red Cross centre is the only place where I can come and pour my heart out.

I became more kind. Before, I used to think that all people are evil. I started coming to meetings at the Red Cross centre, staff were smiling there at me and faces were pleasant.

coal miners who perished in a grave mine explosion. The psychosocial support experience of the Russian Red Cross in Beslan was also used after the mine blasts in Donetsk in Ukraine in November 2007 and in Karaganda in Kazakhstan in January 2008.

Conclusion

The programme has in general achieved its objectives. Designed to meet the complex needs of the traumatized population of Beslan, it was rooted in the local community. This community-based approach, the combination of counselling and activities, respect for the local expertise and adjustments to the needs of the population were key factors to its success. It has contributed to the well-being of the inhabitants of Beslan, increased the self-esteem and the feeling of self-worthiness in all involved in the project. People feel free again to celebrate holidays and family events, and the birth-rates are increasing. However, at present the Russian Red Cross continues to work with 28 families still in need of external psychosocial support and plans to finish its activities until the end of the year. Financial support is also still in demand for those who were seriously injured in the siege, and many are asking that the authorities disclose the whole truth about the tragedy, although few believe that it will happen.

The North Ossetian Russian Red Cross branch has gained respect and recognition through the programme as well as new responsibilities in the National Society. Difficulties of the new work, differences between the traditional top-down and the new bottom-up approaches in management, and complicated internal coordination were both challenges and opportunities in organizational development. The programme increased the self-esteem and the feeling of self-worthiness of all involved staff and managers. It implied a range of opportunities for the development of the local branch and of the Russian Red Cross such as new knowledge and experience in psychosocial support; in management, planning and reporting; new quality partnerships; new opportunities in fund-raising; team building and volunteer management. This raised the visibility and strengthened the authority of the Russian Red Cross in North Ossetia.

The programme has also contributed to a greater coordination among the ministries at the federation level, and prepared the ground for developing the concept of psychosocial support in the Russian Red Cross and created a momentum for disseminating the Movement's Fundamental Principles and humanitarian values in an unstable part of Russia. Some main challenges and shortcomings of the programme include the lack of proper monitoring and evaluation tools, organizational issues faced by the local staff, late recruitment of a volunteer manager, difficulties with sustaining the trainers and training processes, and little involvement of men in the programme. An attempt to develop psychosocial support across all of North Caucasus did not materialize. Tense relations in the region hampered the development of cooperation in this field even at the Red Cross level. However, the experience was used in other regions of Russia, Ukraine and Kazakhstan where similar disasters with big human losses occurred.

To read more about the programme, click here and see the final assessment report of the Reference Centre for Psychosocial Support: <http://psp.drk.dk/graphics/2003referencecenter/Regions/Russia/Beslan-report-2008.pdf>

Human touch story

One element of the Red Cross services was provided through a visiting nurse programme. As this was a new type of service, neither beneficiaries nor the nurses themselves knew what to expect, but with time, the programme surprised both sides.

One surprised beneficiary is Julietta Gutieva, who teaches Ossetian and Russian languages and culture. A teacher of School no^o1, she was taken hostage along with her class, which included her youngest daughter. While she and her daughter both survived, seven children of this class were killed during the siege. Now, three years later, she has followed her students to the new school and still teaches the same class.

When offered the visiting nurse services, Julietta did not expect to gain anything from it. "I allowed her in out of politeness," she says. "I anticipated to hear her various advice that I did not need."

The nurse assigned to her, Lyana Gagieva, also lacked confidence in her own skills and in the visiting nurse services. "I always knew I was a good listener," she says, "but it took several months before I saw the results and appreciated the value of [our] services. Now I feel confident that I can help others with my listening skills."

Already at the first visit, Julietta understood that she had been wrong about the visiting nurse. "I was surprised that instead of asking me questions or speaking herself, she inspired me to talk and the first conversation lasted for more than an hour," Julietta says. "She was listening! I did not recognize myself that day as I kept talking to a stranger about things that I did not share with anybody."

How we work

All International Federation assistance seeks to adhere to the [Code of Conduct for the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and Non-Governmental Organizations \(NGO's\) in Disaster Relief](#) and is committed to the [Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Disaster Response \(Sphere\)](#) in delivering assistance to the most vulnerable.

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.

Contact information**For further information specifically related to this operation please contact:**

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International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

M04EA019 - Russia: Hostage Crisis In Beslan, North Ossetia

Final Financial Report

Selected Parameters	
Reporting Timeframe	2004/09-2008/01
Budget Timeframe	2004/09-2007/12
Appeal	M04EA019
Budget	APPEAL

All figures are in Swiss Francs (CHF)

I. Consolidated Response to Appeal

	Health & Care	Disaster Management	Humanitarian Values	Organisational Development	Coordination & Implementation	TOTAL
A. Budget		2,590,046				2,590,046
B. Opening Balance		0				0
Income						
<u>Cash contributions</u>						
American Red Cross		53,845				53,845
Andorra Government		30,330				30,330
Australian Government		87,000				87,000
Australian Red Cross		99,758				99,758
Austrian Red Cross		4,677				4,677
Belgian Red Cross (French)		36,725				36,725
Black River Asset Mgt		1,247				1,247
British Red Cross		472,670				472,670
Bulgarian Red Cross		16,682				16,682
Danish Red Cross		32,152				32,152
Finnish Red Cross		52,567				52,567
France - Private Donors		45				45
German Red Cross		75,815				75,815
Great Britain - Private Donors		1,385				1,385
Halliburton		25,500				25,500
Hong Kong - Private Donors		8,837				8,837
Hong Kong Red Cross		21,744				21,744
Icelandic Red Cross		17,406				17,406
Irish Government		310,500				310,500
Irish Red Cross		263,374				263,374
Japanese Government		125,900				125,900
Japanese Red Cross		54,609				54,609
Lithuanian Red Cross		21,460				21,460
Luxembourg - Private Donors		2,515				2,515
Netherlands - Private Donors		1,541				1,541
Netherlands Red Cross		81,397				81,397
New York Office (from United States - Private Donors)		7,442				7,442
New Zealand Red Cross		38,846				38,846
Norwegian Red Cross		108,400				108,400
On Line donations		78,227				78,227
OSCE		11,580				11,580
Polish Red Cross		39,130				39,130
Russia - Private Donors		9,518				9,518
Swedish - Private Donors		17,185				17,185
Swedish Red Cross		169,500				169,500
United States - Private Donors		3,327				3,327
Vodafone		219,700				219,700
C1. Cash contributions		2,602,536				2,602,536
<u>Other Income</u>						
Miscellaneous Income		545				545
C5. Other Income		545				545
C. Total Income = SUM(C1..C5)		2,603,081				2,603,081
D. Total Funding = B + C		2,603,081				2,603,081

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M04EA019 - Russia: Hostage Crisis In Beslan, North Ossetia

Final Financial Report

Selected Parameters	
Reporting Timeframe	2004/09-2008/01
Budget Timeframe	2004/09-2007/12
Appeal	M04EA019
Budget	APPEAL

All figures are in Swiss Francs (CHF)

Appeal Coverage	101%					101%
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II. Balance of Funds

	Health & Care	Disaster Management	Humanitarian Values	Organisational Development	Coordination & Implementation	TOTAL
B. Opening Balance		0				0
C. Income		2,603,081				2,603,081
E. Expenditure		-2,603,081				-2,603,081
F. Closing Balance = (B + C + E)		0				0

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Reporting Timeframe	2004/09-2008/01
Budget Timeframe	2004/09-2007/12
Appeal	M04EA019
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All figures are in Swiss Francs (CHF)

III. Budget Analysis / Breakdown of Expenditure

Account Groups	Budget	Expenditure					TOTAL	Variance
		Health & Care	Disaster Management	Humanitarian Values	Organisational Development	Coordination & Implementation		
A		B					A - B	
BUDGET (C)		2,590,046					2,590,046	
Supplies								
Shelter - Relief	3,818		3,818				3,818	0
Construction Materials	7,624		7,704				7,704	-80
Clothing & textiles	4,257		4,257				4,257	0
Food	3,223		4,296				4,296	-1,072
Water & Sanitation	25		25				25	0
Medical & First Aid	517		529				529	-12
Teaching Materials	13,067		18,626				18,626	-5,559
Utensils & Tools	726		1,013				1,013	-287
Other Supplies & Services	200,804		167,524				167,524	33,280
Total Supplies	234,062		207,793				207,793	26,269
Land, vehicles & equipment								
Vehicles	68,748		68,748				68,748	0
Computers & Telecom	43,344		44,364				44,364	-1,020
Office/Household Furniture & Equipm.	22,094		20,094				20,094	2,000
Medical Equipment	7,823		7,823				7,823	0
Total Land, vehicles & equipment	142,009		141,029				141,029	980
Transport & Storage								
Storage	23		23				23	0
Distribution & Monitoring	545		545				545	0
Transport & Vehicle Costs	34,510		44,658				44,658	-10,148
Total Transport & Storage	35,078		45,226				45,226	-10,148
Personnel								
International Staff Payroll Benefits	5,996		31,795				31,795	-25,799
National Staff	308,569		322,469				322,469	-13,901
National Society Staff	853,893		838,604				838,604	15,289
Consultants	215,240		199,498				199,498	15,742
Total Personnel	1,383,698		1,392,367				1,392,367	-8,669
Workshops & Training								
Workshops & Training	148,869		148,499				148,499	370
Total Workshops & Training	148,869		148,499				148,499	370
General Expenditure								
Travel	42,076		53,951				53,951	-11,875
Information & Public Relation	63,672		57,207				57,207	6,465
Office Costs	64,831		80,421				80,421	-15,589
Communications	35,421		47,447				47,447	-12,026
Professional Fees	26,952		35,651				35,651	-8,698
Financial Charges	-32,839		-33,565				-33,565	726
Other General Expenses	210,218		217,101				217,101	-6,884
Total General Expenditure	410,331		458,213				458,213	-47,882
Programme Support								
Program Support	168,353		169,200				169,200	-847
Total Programme Support	168,353		169,200				169,200	-847
Operational Provisions								
Operational Provisions	67,647		40,755				40,755	26,892
Total Operational Provisions	67,647		40,755				40,755	26,892
TOTAL EXPENDITURE (D)	2,590,046		2,603,081				2,603,081	-13,035
VARIANCE (C - D)			-13,035				-13,035	