

RUSSIAN FEDERATION: HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE

18 October, 2000

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situation report no. 3
period covered: July - September, 2000*

With the critically low level of funding, adjustments have been made in programme delivery to meet some of the objectives in the planned assistance. Russian Red Cross (RRC) efforts are also being focused on 2001 appeal planning, with Federation support.

The context

The Russia Delegation supports the Russian Red Cross across the 21 republics, 49 oblasts, six kraia, and ten okrugs, that make up the Russian Federation. 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 Society in the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS).

To respond to the existing humanitarian needs in Russia, the Federation and Russian Red Cross (RRC) formulated a Country Assistance Strategy (CAS) intended to provide immediate humanitarian assistance to hundreds of thousands of the most vulnerable Russians. With up to one third of Russia's population living on less than one dollar a day, the need for increasingly well-targeted, effectively monitored emergency humanitarian aid is critical.

The CAS intends to support the RRC's readiness to respond to difficult socio-economic conditions, and to cope with disasters caused by climatic change or other environmental situations. The Federation and RRC recognise the need to ensure that assistance is targeted to the most vulnerable groups, and the emergency relief programme launched in the winter of 1999/2000, and into 2001 targets elderly living

alone, children (particularly those in orphanages and other institutions) imperilled indigenous communities, and disabled persons.

Considerable emphasis is being placed on health education, particularly in the RRC's fight to reverse the alarming increase in communicable diseases. The Federation and RRC have also already started to work on improved quality of assistance, by undertaking new monitoring and evaluation missions to impoverished areas.

The Russian Red Cross participated in the «Almaty Conference» (Almaty, December 1996) and is a signatory to the «Almaty Declaration» establishing the Federation's focus on support to four key areas of activity: Institutional and Resource Development (IDRD) reform, Disaster Preparedness and Prevention (DPP), Population Movement (PM), and the Visiting Nurse Services while continuing emergency response action. Part of the support towards the reform process concentrates on legal advice.

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Latest events

In July, a strong typhoon in the Russian Far East caused severe damage, with regional emergency authorities reporting that nearly 6,000 houses were damaged, 111 bridges destroyed or damaged, and over 60,000 ha of farmland were under water.

The powerful earthquake that struck a remote area of the Far-eastern Russian island of Sakhalin on 5 August left eight wounded and caused widespread material damage, according to the local emergencies ministry office. A total of 1,390 buildings were damaged. Roads were also badly hit, with subsidence creating a four-meter (13-foot) drop in some areas.

On 8 August 12 people were killed and over 100 injured in an explosion in Moscow's subway. An RRC rescue team assisted state emergency organisations. Four days later the Kursk nuclear submarine sank to the bottom of the Barents Sea with the loss of all 118 crew members. On 27 August three people died in a fire at Moscow's Ostankino media tower; most TV channels could not broadcast in Moscow for several days. Two women were killed and a three year old child was among five individuals injured in a bomb explosion at a Ryazan food market in Southern Russia in the beginning of September. Police arrested five people on 4 September in connection with the explosion. Separately, a blast damaged a central clothes shop in St. Petersburg on 4 September after an unidentified man threw a device inside. Nobody was injured in the explosion.

The first six months of 2000 showed a decline in Russia's population by 425,000 people. According to the State Statistics Committee, 145.1 million people currently live in Russia. The drop reflects negative economic conditions, poor state of the health care system, and a falling birth rate. The statistics committee predicts Russia may lose another eight million people by 2016. Alcoholism is one of the leading causes of mortality in the country, according to the Russian health ministry, impacting life expectancy which for Russian men barely exceeds 58, compared with 65 in 1990 (now just about the same as at the end of the 19th century in Tsarist Russia). Russian teachers, among the lowest paid workers in post-Soviet society, marked International Teachers' Day by organising protests to draw attention to unpaid salaries. In March the government announced that it would raise public sector salaries by 20% to bring wages of teachers, doctors and others closer to those of industrial workers.

Red Cross/Red Crescent Action

Health •*Visiting Nurses Service (VNS)*

In July a RRC programme of VNS training centres development started with financial support from the Swedish Red Cross. Six regions were chosen to participate in the programme: training centres will be established in Perm, Vladivostok, and Moscow south-western district; and rooms of medical and social assistance in the Tollyati, Sochi and Saratov rail road committee.

Training seminars for visiting nurses on home care are planned to be held in Novosibirsk, Ulyanovsk, Perm, Vladivostok and Moscow. Preparations are ongoing; groups of participants (16 people in each) are being developed.

In August a tender was held to identify a producer of visiting nurse instructor kits, which will contain necessary stationary materials, educational overheads and tools for practical training. Procurement started at the end of September. From 25 to 30 September a seminar on instructor training was held for 18 participants from 14 Russian regions. Thirteen people were qualified as instructors.

HIV/AIDS - Youth

The programme is being implemented in six regions: Kaliningrad, Krasnodar, Sochi, Murmansk, Arkhangelsk, and Moscow. The revision of a manual for youth leaders ended and the final version was handed over to the RRC Central Committee for editing.

Moscow youth centre: During the reporting period 14 educational seminars were held on preventing HIV infection and three on drug addiction prevention. More than 550 teenagers participated in the seminars. A poll was conducted among youth to reveal their needs in information on HIV, STDs and drugs related questions. Modifications to the contents of seminars were made in accordance to the results of the poll. Work on developing a library for staff and volunteers on HIV infection and drug addiction continued in the youth centre. A booklet on HIV/AIDS prevention measures was developed for youth and teenagers, and a programme on training volunteers and instructors was prepared. A manual for instructors on conducting seminars on HIV/AIDS prevention for volunteers in public organisations was developed. From 28 to 30 of June, youth centre representatives participated in a conference for public and state organisations dealing with questions of young people's health. On 17 July the youth centre participated in a round table organised by UNICEF called "Youth on the edge of the new millennium".

Kaliningrad youth centre: During the reporting period youth centre representatives conducted educational seminars in six summer camps and 19 teenage clubs. Some 300 young people were trained. Fifteen training seminars were held for instructors before their visits to the field. On World Children's Day the youth centre organised a fund-raising campaign to collect cash and toys for children born to HIV-infected mothers.

Krasnodar youth centre: Youth centre representatives conducted 13 educational seminars for 240 young people during the reporting period. In June, they participated in a round table organised by the regional legislative assembly discussing problems connected with HIV infection. A poll was conducted among high school children on HIV/AIDS related topics. On 16 August the youth centre conducted a campaign called "I Choose Life" with the participation of 300 people. Close contacts were established with the regional AIDS centre and administrative department for youth.

Sochi youth centre: During the reporting period a lot of effort was put into training instructors-volunteers, establishing an information and methodological base and improving professional skills. Twenty four seminars for 30 instructors were held; they started fulfilling their obligations at the beginning of the school year. A round table was organised by the youth centre to discuss HIV/AIDS related topics, prevention measures and public information. The round table allowed the roles of public and state organisations in prevention activities and discussions on future co-operation to be defined. A web page on the Sochi youth centre activities was developed during the reporting period.

Murmansk youth centre: Youth centre volunteers conducted 19 seminars on HIV infection preventive measures for 264 participants. Close contacts were established with the youth committee in the administration, and educational seminars were held in youth clubs around the city. The youth centre premises were repaired and statutes developed.

Arkhangelsk youth centre: A programme on HIV/AIDS prevention was developed with supportive manuals and video films. Twenty seminars for 287 teenagers were held. In connection with the Memorial Day of AIDS Victims, a drawing contest was held among school children.

Blood Donor Recruitment Programme

The programme ended in May, and a final report was submitted to donors and Federation Headquarters during the reporting period. The programme demonstrated the importance and urgency of wide promotion of donor recruitment among young people, and strengthened co-operation between the RRC and state blood services at local and federal levels. The RRC and the Ministry of Health worked out a draft agreement on collaboration in the field of non-remunerated blood donor recruitment. The experience gained during programme implementation in the regions convinced local and federal health authorities to become more involved. Unfortunately only five regions had an opportunity to participate in the programme, and it is extremely important to implement the programme in other Russian regions.

Disaster Preparedness and Response ●

Co-operation with the Ministry for Emergency situations (EMERCOM) continued; computer early warning system was established between the RRC and EMERCOM. An additional project for information exchange is being developed.

From 14 June a duty-roster is functioning with one person being present at a telephone line during the working day. It is planned to make this project work 24 hours a day.

Four severe typhoons caused a lot of damage and created an emergency situation in Primorye during the reporting period (See Latest Events). On 19 September, CHF 25,000, received through the Federation, was converted into roubles and sent to the regional Red Cross committee to render assistance to the victims of the disaster.

In the summer months, RRC water rescue teams worked at four public beaches. Training seminars were held for rescuers to obtain first aid skills. A CD ROM on their activities was prepared. In September a meeting with representatives of the Bulgarian Red Cross was held to discuss co-operation in 2001.

Population Movement Programme ●

Since August, 12 RRC regional reception points for forced migrants are functioning: the reception point in Rostov was closed, and five new ones opened in Belgorod, Kursk, Kaliningrad, Veliki Novgorod, and Novosibirsk. Some 11,208 vulnerable people, including 8,215 migrants, were assisted during the reporting period with 5,286 family food parcels (FFPs), 3,392 hygiene kits, 3,406 bed linen sets, 2,990 medical kits; some 1,406 persons applied for legal and 976 for psycho-social support. All procurements are conducted locally for regional reception points. Each family food parcel contains: 2 kg grain, 1 kg sugar, 400-500 g macaroni or 1 kg of flour, 1 tin of beef, and 1 tin of condensed sweet milk. Hygiene kits contain: 1 tooth brush, 1 tube of tooth paste, 1 bar of soap, 1 bar of household soap, 1 bottle of shampoo, and a roll of toilet paper. Bed linen sets consist of a sheet, a pillowcase, and a towel.

Twelve lawyers and 12 psychologists work in regional reception points as of the beginning of August. Twice a month they conduct local field trips to places determined by local authorities to assist those vulnerable, who can not come to reception points. The first visit aims to render relief assistance and

find out any needs in legal or psycho-social support. The second visit is a follow up visit to render legal and/or psycho-social assistance.

The RRC Central Committee reception point in Moscow for forced migrants assisted 1,324 people, including 957 migrants with 120 FFPs, 1,029 hygiene kits, 966 medical kits, 588 food coupons, 392 sets of second hand clothes; and gave 124 legal consultations. Some 424 persons, including 229 migrants, were assisted in the RRC room of medical and social assistance in Pskov during the month; 24 psychological consultations were held.

Two legal support projects were launched in the beginning of September. Emergency legal support points for forced migrants opened at Chita, Orenburg, and Kuibyshev rail way stations, and provided 121 legal consultations, including 89 to forced migrants during the month. Legal consultation reception points started operating in Nizhni Novgorod, Pskov, Ivanovo, St.Petersburg, and Stavropol; 193 consultations were held there, including 143 for migrants.

Two centres of medical and social assistance in Moscow conducted 261 legal and psychological consultations, including 117 with forced migrants. The centre of social and psychological rehabilitation provided 141 psychological consultations to migrants in September.

Summer camps for child-migrants were conducted during three months of summer for 678 children, including 396 migrants. Two training seminars were conducted for accountants and chairpersons of participating regional committees to discuss launching arrangements and implementation procedures. Forty nine people were trained during the reporting period.

Institutional / Resource Development and Capacity Building ●

On 28-29 August the International Conference on Humanitarian Operations in the Northern and Far East Territories was conducted by the RRC and Federation in Petropavlovsk-Kamchatsky. Governmental leaders and representatives of 18 Russian territories, chairpeople from the RRC Central and regional committees, representatives of the International Federation, national societies from Canada, Great Britain, USA, Iceland and Netherlands, government structures and NGOs participated. The aim of the conference was to find strategic partners for implementing RRC humanitarian programmes in the Far East and Northern territories. A Declaration was signed by the participants, which summed up the results of discussions.

On 10-14 August, two seminars on institutional development were conducted in St. Petersburg and Tver by the RRC Central Committee representatives.

From 29 August to 1 September the director of the RRC's institutional development department conducted a field trip to the Red Cross international boarding school in Ivanovo to oversee its preparedness for the beginning of the school year. On 10 September a consignment of toys collected by RRC employees was sent to the boarding school.

During the reporting period the 17th agreement among the RRC Central Committee, Kamchatka RRC branch and Kamchatka administration was signed, dealing with co-operation in assistance to victims of emergency situations.

Two meetings of the RRC Commission on changes to the RRC Statutes were held in September. A draft of a revised Statutes should be ready by November 2001. A detailed analysis of the implementation of strategic work plan was held and will be presented on 12 October to the RRC Central Committee Presidium.

On 11 September a new training centre for young rescuers was opened in Zhukovsky town near Moscow. From 14 to 17 September a seminar for seven twinning programme co-ordinators from the RRC's North-western region was conducted in Pskov with the participation of the Swedish Red Cross

representatives and the Delegation's programme co-ordinator. A memorandum of understanding was signed.

Information/Media •

Two films on RRC and Federation activities were produced: "Across Siberia" and "Red Cross TB programme in Russia". TB and HIV/AIDS leaflets and posters were reprinted for the second phase of the programme and on WHO's request; a poster for the American Bulk Food programme was produced; and a leaflet on hygiene to be include in the Canadian Red Cross funded hygiene parcels was developed and produced.

In July, the reporting officer conducted a field trip to the Oryol summer camp for child-migrants, which is running under the Population Movement programme, took pictures of beneficiaries and produced a story for the Federation's web page.

On 28-30 August the Kamchatka Conference was held in Petropavlovsk-Kamchatski for National Societies, NGOs and governmental bodies participating in the RRC and Federation programmes in Russia. Two information packages for the participants and media were developed by the delegation, two booklets were printed, a press-conference for 12 media representatives in the field was conducted. Apart from an extensive coverage in the local media, one nation-wide TV and radio channel (RTR), a Russian newspaper "Trud", and a countrywide radio station covered the Kamchatka Conference. The Russian Red Cross magazine published an article about it; a TASS correspondent interviewed the RRC's Director General regarding the conference and humanitarian problems in the Far East and Northern territories and described the event in the "Government Bulletin".

On 20 September a new relief appeal for Severe Poverty in the Northern Territories was launched with a press conference in the RRC Headquarters. Several local and international media representatives participated. The information delegate, relief co-ordinator and RRC First Deputy were interviewed by Radio France (Moscow). Press kits, including the new appeal and two Delegation films were sent out to Embassies and major NGOs in Moscow as well as to Geneva for further distribution among PNS. Planning for media visits to the field sometime in October was held. A story about Taimyr indigenous peoples in connection with the new appeal was prepared for the Federation's web page.

Publications about the emblem were translated into Russian for further placement on the Movement web page. Presentations at internal seminars on monitoring were performed by the Information department.

Outstanding needs

The programmes require substantial donor support without which the Delegation will not be able to fulfil its commitment to the RRC's ongoing reform process and programmes in general.

Contributions

See Annex 1 for details.

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This and other reports on Federation operations are available on the Federation's website: <http://www.ifrc.org>

Russian Federation						ANNEX 1
APPEAL No. 01.32/2000		PLEDGES RECEIVED				10/19/00
DONOR	CATEGORY	QUANTITY	UNIT	VALUE CHF	DATE	COMMENT
CASH						
REQUESTED IN APPEAL CHF ----->				9,454,000		TOTAL COVERAGE 24.1%
Balance carried forward from 1999				632,459		
AMERICAN - GOVT PRM		420,970	USD	752,808	18.05.00	POPULATION MOVEMENTS
BRITISH - RC		15,000	GBP	38,550	11.07.00	
BRITISH - PRIVATE/RC		15,000	GBP	37,800	08.09.00	SUPPORT TO DELEGATION
CANADIAN - RC		25,000	USD	42,213	25.07.00	INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE
ICELANDIC - RC		4,000	USD	6,850	25.09.00	KAMCHATKA CONFERENCE
SWEDISH - GOVT/RC		650,000	SEK	122,395	30.05.00	RESOURCE DEV.
SWEDISH - GOVT/RC		475,000	SEK	89,443	30.05.00	POPULATION MOUVEMENT PROG.
SWEDISH - GOVT/RC		625,000	SEK	117,688	30.05.00	HEALTH: VN ACTIVITIES & TRAINING
SWEDISH - RC		750,000	SEK	141,225	29.05.00	ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT
WORLD HEALTH ORGANISATION		133,000	USD	224,571	25.08.00	ORYOL TB PROGRAMME
SUB/TOTAL RECEIVED IN CASH				2,206,002	CHF	23.3%
KIND AND SERVICES (INCLUDING PERSONNEL)						
DONOR	CATEGORY	QUANTITY	UNIT	VALUE CHF	DATE	COMMENT
Netherlands	Delegate(s)			69,814		
SUB/TOTAL RECEIVED IN KIND/SERVICES				69,814	CHF	0.7%
ADDITIONAL TO APPEAL BUDGET						
DONOR	CATEGORY	QUANTITY	UNIT	VALUE CHF	DATE	COMMENT
SUB/TOTAL RECEIVED				0	CHF	
THE FOLLOWING PROJECTS ARE LINKED TO THIS APPEAL:						
P67509, PRU001, PRU005, PRU006, PR007, PRU020, PRU160, PRU161, PRU513, PRU514, PRU524, PRU530						