

PROGRAMME UPDATE



International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies
Fédération Internationale des Sociétés de la Croix-Rouge et du Croissant-Rouge
Federación Internacional de Sociedades de la Cruz Roja y de la Media Luna Roja
الاتحاد الدولي لجمعيات الصليب الأحمر والهلال الأحمر

ARMENIA

1 November 2004

The Federation's mission is to improve the lives of vulnerable people by mobilizing the power of humanity. It is the world's largest humanitarian organization and its millions of volunteers are active in over 181 countries.

For more information: <http://www.ifrc.org>

In Brief

Appeal No. 01.76/2004; Programme Update no. 2

Period covered: 1 June to 30 September, 2004;

Appeal target: CHF 780,182 (USD 594,000 or EUR 503,000).

Appeal coverage: 142 %; click below for live update of contributions: [click here](#)

For further information specifically related to this operation please contact:

- **Armenian Red Cross Society:** Gurgen Boshian, secretary general, email: redcross@redcross.am phone: +374 1 538367 fax: + 374 1 583630.
- **Federation delegation in Yerevan:** Gun Raikonen, Federation representative, email: ifrcam03@ifrc.org phone: + 374 1 539443; + 374 1 539217; fax: + 374 1 539217.
- **Federation regional delegation in Ankara:** Carl Naucler, head of regional delegation, Turkey and Southern Caucasus, email: ifrcr06@ifrc.org phone: 90 312 441 42 92; fax: 90 312 441 38 66 or Ervin Blau, regional programme coordinator, email: ifrcr36@ifrc.org phone: 90 312 441 42 92; fax: 90 312 441 38 6.
- **Federation Secretariat in Geneva:** Sylvie Chevalley, regional officer, Europe department, email: sylvie.chevalley@ifrc.org phone: 41 22 730 4276; fax: 41 22 733 03 95.

All International Federation assistance seeks to adhere to the [Code of Conduct](#) and is committed to the [Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Disaster Response](#) in delivering assistance to the most vulnerable. For support to or for further information concerning Federation programmes or operations in this or other countries, or for a full description of the national society profile, please access the Federation's website at <http://www.ifrc.org>

Operational developments

The Red Cross estimates, during June - October 2004, it reached over 44,000 people through its various programmes. Response to the appeal has been good. The appeal coverage is 142 per cent. Main donors are the Norwegian Government, the Norwegian Red Cross, Japanese Red Cross and the Federation's Capacity Building Fund. Most of the projects are fully funded, some, however, did not receive support, including:

- the integrated management of childhood illnesses under the health and care programme;
- first aid and
- population movement under the disaster management.

These projects have continuously been neglected by our partners. As a result some of the important activities were not implemented. The Armenian Red Cross has been trying to fill the gap through bilateral projects, establishing contacts with in-country international organisations, national agencies and businesses, but the funds raised locally have not been sufficient to cover the needs. The table below shows the appeal coverage, as well as expenditure, as of October 2004 per each project:

Programmes/Projects	Appeal budget (CHF)	Appeal coverage (%)	Expenditure (% of the income)	Expenditure planned until the end of 2004 (CHF)	Estimated balance at the end of 2004 (CHF)
Health and Care programme	186,793	107	51	82,780	15,615
HIV/AIDS	40,549	102	60	16,506	0
Tuberculosis (TB)	14,465	208	5	12,854	15,615
Social services for vulnerable people	131,779	97	58	53,420	0
Disaster Management programme	207,668	74	52	55,418	17,363
Disaster preparedness and response	142,361	107	52	55,418	17,363
First Aid	30,265	0	0	0	0
Population Movement	35,042	0	0	0	0
Humanitarian values programme	20,001	224	31	21,448	9,369
Organisational development programme	365,716	178	51	136,972	185,359
Branch development	194,478	177	51	87,950	81,910
Financial management and development	39,020	179	49	11,263	24,685
Youth development	132,218	180	51	37,759	78,764
Total	780,182	142	52	296,618	227,706

Expenditure, to date, stands at CHF 577,360 (52 per cent of the income). An additional CHF 296,618 will be spent by the end of 2004. The remaining balance, an estimated CHF 227,706, will be transferred to support the continuation of activities in 2005.

Most of the activities have been implemented as planned. Some projects, however, received funding later than expected causing delays in implementation. Thus, the humanitarian values programme, the tuberculosis component under the health and care, as well as youth, branch and financial management development projects under the organizational development received money only in May-June 2004. Consequently, the activities that were planned for the first five-six months of the year were rescheduled for July-December 2004. Efforts have then been made to meet objectives in a shorter time by the end of the year, but some, inevitably, were postponed until 2005 (see relevant sections below for more details).

All programmes are directly implemented by the Red Cross through its country-wide network of branches and volunteers. The Federation, through its delegations in Yerevan and Ankara, provided technical support and monitoring of the implementation to ensure the resources are deployed as planned.

Health and Care

Goal: Health and social vulnerability of people of Armenia has decreased.

Objective: Target vulnerable communities have improved their health and social conditions through better service delivery from the Red Cross.

HIV/AIDS: Through a network of trained volunteers, the Armenian Red Cross has been educating the population on HIV/AIDS prevention. Since June 2004, it conducted eight training sessions on the symptoms and cause of the disease, as well as the harm of discrimination and stigmatization of people living with HIV/AIDS for 209 youth leaders and volunteers. The trained youth leaders and volunteers, in their turn, reached over 8,000 people, mainly young students in the target regions. Various training materials, video-films on HIV/AIDS and drug addiction were used during the training sessions. Participants were provided with leaflets, books, calendars, posters and stickers with essential messages, such as 'you cannot get AIDS by... being a friend', 'You cannot get AIDS by... holding hands' and 'You cannot get AIDS by... talking to someone' to counter myths and misconceptions about HIV/AIDS transmission.

In Stepanavan and Shahnazar, Red Cross volunteers also organised an open discussion with young people to attract their attention on the issue of HIV/AIDS. Three TV films on HIV/AIDS prevention and drug-abuse were broadcast by regional TV channels, and some 3,000 posters, stickers, booklets and leaflets were distributed to the public at large. Red Cross youth leaders reached in this way another 300 young people in schools alone.



Red Cross volunteer teams respond to daily emergencies.

Taboos and cultural barriers, particularly in remote regions, often obstructed the work of the Red Cross. School directors and senior members of the communities often forbade national society volunteers to talk about sex. Local sustainability of activities is still an issue.

TB: The project started in July 2004 with the arrival of funding from the Norwegian Red Cross. Its core element is public education through training and distribution of printed materials by Red Cross

volunteers in Lori region in the northern part of the country (one of the three regions with high prevalence of TB in Armenia). During the reported period, attention was directed towards completing all preparations. The immediate priority for the Red Cross was to:

- develop pre- and post-testing questionnaires to measure impact of Red Cross educational efforts;
- prepare educational materials for distribution to target groups; and
- develop a schedule of training sessions for the population, including relatives of TB patients.

Training and distribution will start in October 2004. The national society will also assist local state dispensaries to deliver medicines to patients in remote areas to help them complete the treatment⁴. Consultations were held with local TB dispensaries to agree on logistical aspects of the operation.

Integrated management of childhood illnesses: The Armenian Red Cross, an auxiliary to the government, believes it has and can play a significant role in improving child and maternal health in the country. The project, however, has not received funding. The Federation is urging its partners to help the national society address this issue that affects thousands of people.

⁴ Red Cross involvement is limited to arranging for transportation of the medicines from the state dispensaries to patients in far-flung areas. Complete treatment of TB requires at least six months of daily therapy with three or more antibiotics following the initial treatment period.

Social services for vulnerable people: During June-September 2004, Red Cross regional social service centres, with the help of 300 volunteers, supported **11,802** people. Services included: psycho-social consultations, medical check-ups, measuring of blood pressure and glucose, intramuscular injections, home care and minor house repairs. The centres also distributed food, clothes and medicines. Some beneficiaries were helped with money (four to six US dollars).

Medicines, food and hygiene supplies were procured by the Red Cross branches with the support of local and international donors. A part of this support was channelled through the Federation; some items were purchased with the money raised by the Red Cross branches locally. Branches regularly appeal for the community support for elderly people through local television and newspapers. Many respond. For example, the International Relief and Development (IRD) recently donated second-hand clothes for 35,000 people. Distribution has started.

In Ararat, Armavir, Vayots Dzor, Shirak and Sevan centres there are also clubs (separate rooms) for lone elderly people to meet, watch TV and play games.

The table below shows the type of services provided by the centres and the number of people reached during the reported period:

Service provided	People assisted
Food distribution	832
Clothes distribution	2,206
Drugs distribution	540
Financial support	14
Consultations	2,540
Blood pressure measuring	1288
Measuring sugar level in blood	242
Injections	247
Home visits	416
Health services	32
Small home repairs	51
Club visits	170

The centres also offer sessions on health issues, including HIV/AIDS and tuberculosis. Red Cross volunteers organise first aid training too for young people. During September-October 2004, over **3,000** people were trained.

Remaining challenges, that will be addressed by the end of 2004: the Red Cross is planning to develop and print a booklet on the work of the social service centres. A stock of food and medicines will be procured too for elderly people visiting social clubs.

The main challenge the centres face is scarce local financial resources to sustain their work. Of 23 centres only 13 are fully functioning; others work on an ad hoc basis. They can offer only 10 per cent of the services they were originally set to deliver. The branches raise locally maximum 15 per cent of what is needed. Lack of funds has resulted in a high turn-over of trained staff and volunteers and consequently the quality of the services has deteriorated. National Society systems, structures and mechanisms to motivate and retain volunteers need to be improved too.

Disaster Management

Goal: Vulnerability of the population to natural and man-made disasters has decreased.

Objective: The Armenian Red Cross positions itself as a key humanitarian actor in disaster management.

Disaster preparedness and response: The Armenian Red Cross organised a number of simulation exercises and training sessions for its regional rapid response teams⁵ to strengthen their capacity to prepare for and respond to disasters. All teams also participated in a three-day national competition organised by the Red Cross to test the teams' rescue skills. Winners were awarded with certificates and presents. Red Cross disaster management coordinators from central and Yerevan zones together with 13 volunteers of Yerevan regional rapid response team practiced mountain-rescuing.



Armenian Red Cross organises simulation exercises to strengthen the capacity of its rapid response teams to prepare for and respond to disasters

In tandem, the national society has been strengthening community capacity to cope with emergencies by raising awareness on the most common hazards, including earthquake, floods, landslides and fire that annually affect thousands of people. It has prioritized working with schoolchildren because the 1988 earthquake has shown that this group is the most vulnerable to disasters. During June-September 2004, Red Cross volunteers organised five simulation evacuations for **267** teachers and **2,748** schoolchildren

based on the 'evacuations from schools' manual, developed by the Red Cross last year. The Red Cross also printed and distributed in schools 7,500 copies of new posters on risks and threats of floods, gas explosion and landslide. 300 schoolchildren attended an 11-day training session on traffic rules. The training was organised as part of Red Cross drive to reduce human losses resulting from road accidents in the country.

To reach more children, the Red Cross has continued showing a cartoon 'Aghetik in routine life and earthquake' on a national television. Aghetik is a cartoon character, which in Armenian language means 'disaster'. It teaches children through poems how to prepare for, what can happen and what to do during disasters.

The project has progressed as planned. But some work is yet to be done. A national drawing competition 'children against disaster' with participation of 150 pupils from five regions will be organised during the last three months of the year. Best drawings will be included in a Red Cross annual calendar.

The project spent 36 per cent of its income. The remaining challenges that will be addressed by the end of 2004 include:

- hold a meeting of Red Cross regional disaster management coordinators to discuss achievements and constraints.
- conduct 20 school evacuation exercises and training sessions based on a Red Cross booklet from the Aghetik series.
- carry out vulnerability and capacity assessment in Syunik and Tavush regions.

⁵ The Armenian Red Cross has three zonal and 13 regional disaster response centres to coordinate disaster management activities in the central, northern and southern regions. Each centre has a coordinator and a rapid response team of 12 staff and volunteers trained in disaster management. The Red Cross also has two rescue teams in Lori and Spitak regions that respond to small scale disasters.

First Aid: Lack of funding prevented the implementation of planned activities under this project. With their limited resources, however, Red Cross first aid instructors conducted a number of training courses on basic first aid for volunteers and members of the Armenian Red Cross.

Population movement: The project has not received support through the Federation appeal. However, the Armenian Red Cross has been filling the gap through bilateral work with the UNHCR. With limited funding available, the Red Cross offered legal consultations to **18** asylum seekers, persons with temporary asylum status and individually recognised refugees. All were assisted financially and were provided with basic relief items. 120 refugees from Azerbaijan in Syunik region attend Armenian language courses organised by the Red Cross.

Humanitarian Values

Goal: People in Armenia are less vulnerable to discrimination, intolerance and violence.

Objective: The Armenian Red Cross has increased capacity to advocate and act for tolerance and coexistence.

Strengthening the information network of the Armenian Red Cross: In September 2004, the Red Cross organised a seminar for its information volunteers from 13 regional branches to improve information management and discuss the publication of a regional newsletter on Red Cross work. The newsletter was developed, released and distributed through regional branches. A Red Cross annual report 2003 was also finalised. With financial support of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), 500 copies of the report were printed in Armenian and English languages and shared with Red Cross partners.

A number of films about Red Cross work, including the victory of the Armenian Red Cross first aid team in the European First Aid Competition held in June in Austria; Red Cross tracing initiatives; a public campaign for clean Sevan launched by Red Cross youth volunteers; and preparedness efforts of the Red Cross rapid response teams, were shown on a national television.

The project also supported the procurement of a video camera, a recorder, a DV CAM, batteries and lights for the headquarters.

Increasing understanding of humanitarian values: Red Cross branch in Lori region conducted a seminar for its new volunteers on the history of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, its components, emblems, the Fundamental Principles, and International Humanitarian Law⁶. 1,565 table and pocket calendars, as well as booklets on the Movement developed by the International Committee of the Red Cross, were distributed to the general public.

Attracting more volunteers and members: The Red Cross volunteers conducted public education campaigns on the Red Cross/Red Crescent history and the Fundamental Principles⁷ for 7,062 people in 34 educational and 73 non-educational institutions in ten regions.

Organisational Development

Goal: The Armenian Red Cross becomes a well-functioning national society providing sustainable, focused and responsive assistance to vulnerable communities.

⁶ International humanitarian law (IHL) is the body of rules which, in wartime, protects people who are not or are no longer participating in the hostilities. Its central purpose is to limit and prevent human suffering in times of armed conflict. The rules are to be observed not only by governments and their armed forces, but also by armed opposition groups and any other parties to a conflict. The four Geneva Conventions of 1949 and their two Additional Protocols of 1977 are the principal instruments of humanitarian law. To read more about IHL: <<http://www.icrc.org/ihl>>

⁷ Proclaimed in Vienna in 1965, the seven Fundamental Principles bond together the National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, the International Committee of the Red Cross and the International Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies. They guarantee the continuity of the Red Cross Red Crescent Movement and its humanitarian work.

Objective: The Armenian Red Cross continues organisational changes to improve its services to vulnerable people.

Branch development: The project started in 2003 and is piloting a participatory community development (PCD) approach. PCD is supporting people to reduce the causes of their own predicaments by mobilising community action. The grassroots networks of Red Cross national societies are bringing vulnerable groups together with local government, non-governmental organisations and other relevant parties, asking them to assess priority problems, design projects to address them, and make the most of local resources. By involving beneficiaries in decisions directly affecting their lives, the Red Cross believes beneficiaries will not be just passive recipients of aid but active partners of the national society. Increased participation of communities in designing and implementation of projects, will, at the same time contribute to strengthening the sustainability of Red Cross operations and reduce the organisation's dependency on international funding by mobilising locally available resources.

Training of Red Cross staff and volunteers, selection of target communities, identification of needs and designing of community projects based on the assessment findings were accomplished in 2003. This year, the efforts concentrated on building on this progress. The project was piloted in 13 communities. People in these communities chose to: set up training centres for youth, football pitches, a gym for the disabled people; repair an irrigation system; renovate kindergartens; install a heating system in a local school; plant trees in a local park and furnish an art centre.



Red Cross volunteer from a social centre offers first aid to an elderly woman who cannot afford to see a professional doctor

Project funds were mainly spent on purchasing necessary materials, while the communities contributed with labour. The Red Cross had been also encouraging other stakeholders – local authorities, non-governmental organisations and local businesses – to support. Some responded with cash, others with construction materials, human resources or expertise. The project ended in August 2004. With joint efforts (financial support of the Federation and the local government as well as volunteer labour from within the communities), people have turned deprived locales

without running water or heating into something they are proud of. Although the Red Cross has failed to mobilize the maximum of human and material resources available in the communities, the start has been encouraging.

Arrival of a new contribution from the Norwegian Red Cross in June 2004 enabled the Armenian Red Cross to expand the PCD to another 13 communities. The immediate priority was to form participatory community development teams in each new target village and town. The teams include local residents and representatives of Red Cross branches, government authorities, NGOs and entrepreneurs, who will assist the national society in carrying out the work within the project, including encouraging communities to participate, carrying out needs assessment and developing micro-projects to respond to identified needs.

Refresher training was organised on participatory rapid appraisal methodology for Red Cross branch staff in Ararat, Armavir, Gegharkunik, Kotayq and Vayots Dzor. This was followed by needs assessment in the

targeted communities. The next stage is to review assessment results, prioritise needs, and design and implement projects together with the local communities mobilising local resources. This will be a priority over the coming months. Some activities, however, inevitably will be moved to 2005.

By the end of this year, the Red Cross is planning to start developing its three year strategic plan in a participatory manner.

Financial management development: In July 2004, the Red Cross organised a seminar on the latest changes to the national legislation on taxation and accounting for regional branch chairpersons and department heads at the headquarters (39 people in total). Experts from the Government were invited to talk about the changes, including new reporting requirements.

The project also supported printing of a financial manual for the Red Cross. The manual incorporated legislative requirements and accounting procedures. Additionally, CDs and manuals on the national tax code of Armenia, as well as social fund were procured and will be distributed to regional branches shortly.

The Red Cross also bought a new computer for its finance department at the headquarters, which was loaded with a new accounting programme and connected to the national society's accounting network, accessed by all finance staff in the organization. Work is ongoing to ensure all branches have an internet connection by the end of October 2004 to expedite receipt of reports from the regions.

The project spent 48 per cent of the income. The remaining money will enable the Red Cross to:

- renew the subscription to a financial newspaper 'IRTEC', and
- organise computer courses for its finance staff in the regions and English language courses for the staff at the headquarters.

Youth development: Red Cross trained 52 volunteers to work as peer educators with schoolchildren on health, ecological and social issues. Following the training, volunteers held discussions with 600 children of 12 to 14 years in 34 summer camps across the country. Topics of the discussions varied from how to cope with challenging situations, such as disputes with friends or parents, the danger of smoking and drug addiction, to benefits of a healthy lifestyle and safe sex. These are the issues that are normally not covered by the school curriculum, nor are they discussed in families because of cultural barriers and taboos.

The Red Cross encourages young people to spend more time with elderly people to bridge the gap between the two generations. The project supports Red Cross young volunteers' work with 450 elderly refugees. Fifty-four volunteers from six regional and community branches have visited elderly people twice a week to talk to them, help clean houses, carry out minor repair works and do shopping – buy hygiene items, medicine, clothes and food including oil, sweets, sugar, rice, tea, canned milk and meat. Volunteers also organised concerts for the elderly and visits to historical sites.

For the sixth consecutive year, Red Cross volunteers organised a ten-day youth camp to clean the coastal area of the lake Sevan and attract public attention to the ecological problems of the country. Some sixty volunteers from all over Armenia, as well as Syria, Norway, Spain, Germany and Russia, took part. A number of workshops and discussions were also held on the problems of youth with representatives of youth agencies. The camp closing ceremony was attended by over 50 guests from partner organisations, youth NGOs and mass media. 16 TV and radio channels as well as most of the leading national newspapers covered this initiative of the Red Cross.