

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

GEORGIA

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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.

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In Brief

Appeal No. 01.78/2004;

Programme Update no. 2

Period covered: 1 June to 30 September, 2004;

Appeal target: the original appeal budget was **CHF 386,395** (USD 295,000 or EUR 249,000). In June 2004, the appeal budget was revised to **CHF 472,474** to reflect a new plan of action that both build capacity in the Georgian Red Cross as well as confronts urgent needs in the country.

[Click here for contributions list and appeal coverage](#)

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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

In June 2004, the Georgian Red Cross in consultation with the Federation, expanded the 2004 programme to enable the national society to make further progress in strengthening its capacities and helping more people. To reflect changes in the programme, the budget was revised too from the original CHF 386,395 (USD 295,000 or EUR 249,000) to CHF 472,474 (USD 373,793 or EUR 307,600).

Response to the revised budget, however, has been poor. Until the end of September 2004, the appeal coverage stood at 42 per cent. The main donors remained the Canadian Government, Canadian Red Cross and the Federation's Capacity Building Fund. Of the three projects included in the appeal, two under the organisational development programme, received only 70 per cent of what was requested and the third one, under the health and care programme, designed to help the most vulnerable lone pensioners, did not receive any support at all. As a result some of the important activities were either delayed or not implemented.

The Georgian Red Cross has been trying to fill the gap by mobilising local resources. It has been making efforts to re-establish cooperation with in-country humanitarian actors. Meetings were held with USAID, UNHCR, Swiss Development Cooperation (SDC), World Bank (WB), DFID, and EU representatives. Some showed interest towards Red Cross work. This was stimulated by progress in the management of the national society. To mention the most significant achievements during the last three months, a new structure of the Red Cross headquarters was confirmed; positions at the headquarters were advertised and seven people were recruited from 200 applicants. They are young, enthusiastic and committed to help the organisation, they have joined, become better functioning and achieve its mission, which is: 'to assist vulnerable people in coping with the effects of emergencies and socio-economic crisis by mobilizing the power of humanity and ensuring appropriate means and services to protect human life and dignity'.

Consultations with local and international partners have shown that there is an increased interest towards the Red Cross Society; however, nobody has yet made any concrete commitments, which is hampering any further progress.

Towards the end of September, the situation has slightly improved. New contribution arrived from the British Red Cross (CHF 32,004). The Federation's Capacity Building Fund also allocated additional CHF 25,000 increasing the appeal coverage to 57 per cent. This will enable the Red Cross Society of Georgia to achieve set objectives under the branch development project and advance in strengthening governance and management of the national society under the organisational development programme. No progress, however, is envisaged under the elderly support project, unless new contributions arrive.

Table below shows the appeal coverage, as well as expenditure, as of September (inclusive) 2004 per each project:

Programmes/Projects	Appeal budget (CHF)	Appeal coverage (%)	Expenditure (% of the income)
Organisational development programme	259,882	99	71
Georgian Red Cross headquarters capacity building	57,106	46	31
Participatory community development in two targeted Red Cross branches in Eastern Georgia	202,776	114	75
Health and Care	212,592	0	0
Georgian Red Cross social support to vulnerable lone pensioners in Tbilisi	212,592	0	0
Total	472,474	54	71

The outstanding needs are CHF 215,134. The Federation is reiterating its request to partner national societies to help their colleagues at the Georgian Red Cross in assisting people in need during the difficult transitional period, both for the country and the national society.

Organizational Development

Goal: The Georgian Red Cross is a key humanitarian actor working in partnership with local authorities to improve living conditions of people in need.

Objective: The Georgian Red Cross has become a better functioning national society helping people prevent and alleviate suffering.

Strengthening Red Cross governance and management: The project is designed to help the Red Cross continue the change process initiated in 2003. It focuses on strengthening management and governance roles of the national society, which is essential for the effective functioning of an organisation.

The Red Cross has prioritised revising its statutes to provide clearer definitions for its governance and management functions, eliminating discrepancies and inconsistencies between different articles and ensuring the compliance of the Statutes with the country legislation, as well as the Federation's minimum requirements. This is a long and painstaking process as it challenges many aspects of the organisation's identity and work. It has started in 2003 and initial changes were made already last year. The statutes were reviewed in conformity with the Federation's global Guidance for National Society Statutes following an internal, participatory process engaging Federation and International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) technical and legal expertise and assistance.

This year, attention is directed towards a more comprehensive review based on the structure, mission and vision of the national society, as well as its strategic directions and recommendations of a joint Federation and ICRC legal commission in Geneva. Discussions within the organisation have continued involving national society governance and management at all levels, members, staff and volunteers.

The next stage is to bring the document in consistency with a national legislation. A local lawyer will be contracted to advise and help the national society accomplish the task. A new draft of the statutes will then be formulated and submitted to the joint Federation and ICRC commission in Geneva for their final comments and subsequent approval. The final draft will be reviewed and adopted by the national society General Assembly, tentatively, in March-April 2005.

The Red Cross has also developed rules of procedure as well as a Code of Conduct for national society General Assembly and its governing body (presidium). All documents were submitted to the president and secretary general of the Red Cross Society of Georgia for their review. Regulations for staff, including senior management, have been developed too and submitted to the secretary general for his comments. Adjustments were made to the internal regulations on branch establishment too to bring them to compliance with the requirements of the national civil code. This will also contribute to improving governance and management at local levels.

Another important achievement is the adoption of the national society's strategic plan for 2004-2005 by the General Assembly in August 2005. The plan was developed in 2003 based on strategic priorities and objectives of the Red Cross, which are to:

- Develop effective disaster preparedness and response mechanisms;
- Ensure health care and social welfare for the most vulnerable groups of the population;
- Promote the Movement's Fundamental Principles¹, International Humanitarian Law² and humanitarian values, and
- Build a strong organisation with ability to assist people in need.

The plan is in line with the Federation's Strategy 2010³ as well as the strategy of the Movement. The General Assembly also instructed the Secretariat of the Red Cross Society of Georgia to develop a strategic plan for 2006-2009 to enable the national society to realise its strategic objectives in a consistent way. Shortly thereafter, the

¹ 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.

² 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>>

³ Strategy 2010 is the document that guides the Federation's actions from 2000 to 2010. Adopted by the Federation's General Assembly in October 1999, Strategy 2010 was the culmination of a two-year process of consultation with National Societies. Along with an analysis of trends in the external environment, it draws on the lessons learned by the Federation from its performance during the 1990s, as captured in the evaluation report '*Learning from the Nineties*'.

Secretary General established a working group to coordinate the planning process. Specific tasks of the group are to:

- analyse the current two-year strategic plan;
- identify priorities of the national society for 2006-2009 through consultations with the national society governance, management at central and local levels, members and volunteers, as well as Federation Secretariat and ICRC; and
- develop a draft strategic plan.

Work has started. It is also planned to hold a one-day training session on Project Planning Process, the Federation's main planning tool, for new staff members who will participate in the strategic planning process.

To improve accountability to people it works with, including partners and beneficiaries, the Red Cross has directed its attention towards strengthening its financial management capacities. It established a finance unit at the headquarters, in Tbilisi. A finance manager was identified through a tedious selection process. The national society is also planning to employ a part-time accountant. This will be a priority during the coming months. Standard financial management procedures and guidelines will be developed too. By establishing clear systems and mechanisms, the Red Cross strives to reinstate the image of the organisation, wounded by allegations of nepotism, favouritism and misuse of funds over the last few years. The new system will increase transparency of financial management and make it accessible to the public.

The new finance manager and organisational development coordinator of the Red Cross has started preparing materials for the forthcoming training on governance, management and financial issues for regional chairpersons and national society senior management. Training is scheduled for November 2004.

The finance unit also developed a plan of action to map national society financial and material resources. This exercise will help identify gaps and design relevant response strategies to improve the organisation's capacity.

Branch capacity building: The project is designed to help Georgian Red Cross branches strengthen their capacities and reconnect with the communities they spring from to ensure their programmes are responsive to local needs and focused on the areas where the organisation can have the greatest impact. To achieve this, the Red Cross has launched a pilot initiative to encourage its branches to work in a participatory community development (PCD) approach.

PCD is supporting people to reduce the causes of their own predicaments and mobilise community action. Red Cross community networks bring vulnerable groups together with local government, non-governmental organisations and other relevant parties, asking them to identify problems, design projects to address them, and make the most of local resources. By involving communities 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 local resources.

The Red Cross identified two branches, in Kvemo Kartli and Kakheti regions, to pilot the approach based on the analysis of the branch assessment, conducted earlier this year (see programme update no 1 [<click here>](#)) and pre-determined criteria, including:

- Capacity of the branches - foundation, basic infrastructure, committed management, and the number of members and volunteers.
- Branch location to enable effective management and monitoring of the project activities, and
- The level of vulnerability: access to basic health and social welfare services.

The immediate priority for the Red Cross was to identify two communities in the target regions to pilot the new approach. To achieve this, the national society called for a regional assembly both in Kvemo Kartli and Kakheti. The assemblies established criteria for the selection of a village or a town to start the project:

- Proximity of a community to Red Cross branches to better coordinate project implementation.
- The level of vulnerability: access to basic health and social welfare services.

- Community willingness to participate in the Red Cross initiative.

Based on these criteria, two communities were selected: one in Gardabani and another one in Kvareli.

In each of the target communities, the Red Cross established a participatory community development volunteer team of 10 and 11. Team members include local residents, Red Cross staff and volunteers, representatives of local authorities, businesses and other organisations. They will play a key role in mobilising local communities, identifying needs and designing projects in response to local problems.

All team members were trained on participatory community development, as well as, participatory rapid appraisal methodologies. Both approaches aim to increase community involvement in Red Cross work. After the training, the volunteer teams conducted needs assessments in selected communities using the participatory rapid appraisal methodology. Results will be discussed together with local residents; needs will be prioritized and two micro-projects will be designed to address the most acute problems. This will be a priority over the coming months. Meetings with the local communities will be facilitated by volunteer teams.

In the meantime, the Red Cross has started a dialogue with local authorities to encourage their active participation in the Red Cross driven participatory development approach. The Secretary General of the Red Cross Society of Georgia met with government representatives in Gardabani and Kvareli. Authorities pledged to support the national society in its work as best as they can. Authorities in Gardabani promised to provide a renovated office space free of charge.

Health and Care

Goal: Health of vulnerable people of Georgia has improved.

Objective: Georgian Red Cross has strengthened capacity to improve health of vulnerable people.

Red Cross social support to vulnerable lone pensioners in Tbilisi: No progress has been made under this project. It was designed to help 1,500 home-bound lone pensioners with food and non-food items. The Red Cross believes this group is the most vulnerable to food insecurity. They are the worst affected by the socio-economic instability and ongoing changes in the country. Their plight demands international attention. If we do not help them today, it might be too late tomorrow. To read more details on the planned operation [<click here>](#)