

Programme Update



International Federation
of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

Central Asia

Appeal No. MAA70001

31/08/2008

This report covers the period 01/01/08 to 30/06/08.



The Red Crescent Society of Turkmenistan conducted training on HIV prevention for military peer educators.
Photo: International Federation

In brief

Programme purpose: The Central Asian programmes are aligned with the Global Agenda goals to reduce the number of deaths, injuries, and impact from disasters; to reduce the number of deaths, illnesses and impact from diseases and public health emergencies; to increase local community, civil society and Red Cross Red Crescent capacity to address the most urgent situations of vulnerability; and to reduce intolerance, discrimination and social exclusion and promote respect for diversity and human dignity.

Programmes summary: The International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies' secretariat supported the programmes of the National Societies in disaster management, health and care, organizational development and principles and values. The disaster management programme continued strengthening the coping capacities of the populations living in disaster-prone areas and building the National Societies' capacities to respond to emergencies. In the first half of 2008 there were several operations initiated by the Red Crescent Societies that required additional funds through the International Federation's disaster response mechanisms. The response operations drew attention away from the regular community-based activities of the affected branches, thereby slightly hampering progress.

In health and care the Red Crescent Societies of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan proceeded to the development of their HIV country programmes that are part of the Red Cross Red Crescent Global Alliance on HIV. The programmes that aim at scaling up the HIV services and outreach by Global Alliance members are expected to be rolled out in 2009. Meanwhile, the Red Crescent Societies continue providing harm reduction services, spreading information on HIV among key populations at higher risk, young people and wider populations. The Tuberculosis prevention work targeted vulnerable sick people with psychosocial support and informed the general public about the disease and available treatment.

The evaluation of the governance and management division component of the regional organizational development programme has been carried out and its results fed into the plans of the International Federation's secretariat capacity-building support for the rest of 2008 and beyond.

The promotion of the humanitarian principles and values reached vulnerable communities served by the National Societies and decision-makers and public alike. The planned actions tackling gender-based violence are yet to be elaborated but mapping of actors has been done by the National Societies and a working group has been formed and is working on a questionnaire for the community survey.

Financial situation: Total 2008 budget for Central Asia (MAA70001) was initially 6,184,332 Swiss francs (USD 5,622,120 or EUR 3,829,308). The budget increased slightly as a result of a new drug prevention project started in Turkmenistan. The current appeal budget is therefore 6,278,465 Swiss francs (USD 5,707,695 or EUR 3,887,594), out of which 58 per cent covered. The overall 2008 budget for the programmes run from the International Federation's regional representation in Almaty is 4,791,162 Swiss francs. Other programmes under this appeal are run by the country representation in Tajikistan and reported on in a separate programme update.

[Click here to go directly to the attached financial report.](#)

See also [Tajikistan Programme Update 2008](#).

No. of people we help: 412,815 people benefited directly from secretariat-supported programme interventions during the reporting period.

Project title	Target population	Number of people we help
Disaster management	Members of communities in disaster-prone areas	249,720
	Red Crescent staff and volunteers	665
Health and care	People with TB (inc. multi-drug resistant TB, co-infection)	2,230
	Family members, general population	46,400
	Key groups at risk of HIV	12,400
	Youth and general public	62,580
	Youth, women of childbearing age, general population	24,320
Organizational development	National Society staff, members and volunteers	2,500
	Vulnerable population	2,000
Principles and values	National Society staff and volunteers, state agencies, media, communities served by National Societies, general public	10,000
Total		412,815

Our partners: The donors supporting the programmes multilaterally through the International Federation's annual appeal are the British, Finnish, Norwegian and Swedish Red Cross Societies, the UK's Department for International Development (DFID) and the Capacity Building Fund. The

total number of partnerships between the International Federation's regional representation, the National Societies and community-based, national, government-based, or international organizations, UN and developmental agencies and media make 100.

Context

The winter was unusually cold in the region with temperatures around minus 20 degrees Celsius prevailing for more than a month in some areas. The extreme cold caught governments unprepared, without sufficient energy supplies stockpiled to provide adequate heating and electricity. A shortage of energy, combined with severe weather conditions, left many people living in cold, dark homes for months¹. In rural areas some villages were reportedly stripped of trees as residents burnt whatever they could get their hands on to heat their homes and cook food. Thus, spontaneous heating increased the number of domestic fires in Turkmenistan and the Red Crescent information campaign on fire safety in January was well timed to reduce such risks.

Increasing prices for food and energy across the globe continued to affect the countries of Central Asia. They contributed to a rise in retail prices of basic foods and are keeping inflation high. For instance, the inflation year-on-year rate in Kazakhstan is estimated at around 19 per cent so far in 2008; this is the highest rate in eight years. In Kyrgyzstan, consumer prices rose by 22 per cent year on year in the first quarter of 2008. Apart from deepening the vulnerability and consequently raising demands on humanitarian assistance, rising prices increase operational costs and negatively affect the budgets of Red Crescent programmes. This notably affects especially the health and care programme that has components of social aid (nutrition). The National Societies had to shorten the list of food items and the amount of each component in the social aid package. The change of the official foreign currency exchange rate in Turkmenistan in spring has also had a similar effect on the programme budgets.

The Red Crescent Society of Kyrgyzstan continued providing supplementary food rations to vulnerable children in three regions in the north of the country until March in response to the food insecurity that had resulted from a dramatic increase in prices for basic food products in the country in the second half of 2007. This operation was supported with funds from the International Federation's Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF).

The Red Crescent was also the first non-governmental organization that responded to the series of earthquakes that hit Kyrgyzstan at the end of 2007 and beginning of 2008. The largest one occurred in Osh region on 1 January 2008. The subsequent Red Crescent response operation, also funded by DREF, delivered food assistance to the most vulnerable of affected households to help them recover from the earthquake and reduce the threat of malnutrition during the winter.

The Red Crescent Society of Kazakhstan initiated an operation in response to a mine blast in the Karaganda region on 11 January that had killed 30 people and left 18 people injured. The International Federation's DREF supported the Red Crescent Society in delivering psychosocial assistance to families affected by the mine explosion, with a focus on the longer-term support during the recovery period.

In late February heavy rains and melting snow caused floods in the south-Kazakhstan region. As a result of the floods 1 person died and almost 13,000 people were displaced because their houses had been destroyed or flooded. The response operation of the Kazakhstan Red Crescent Society, funded by DREF, supported the most vulnerable households affected with

¹ An emergency appeal was launched in Tajikistan to assist the vulnerable populations affected by cold wave and energy shortages. [Click here to go directly to the appeal.](#)

food, non-food, household and sanitary items. [Click here for reports on the National Societies' response operations.](#)

Progress towards outcomes

Disaster management

Outcome: Vulnerability of communities in disaster-prone areas reduced from the impact of disasters through disaster risk awareness and capacity-building.

Achievements:

At community level the programme provided training in disaster preparedness – to build in skills and knowledge – and implemented risk reduction projects in areas highly exposed to disasters to strengthen coping mechanisms and to contribute to livelihood development.

The community-based disaster preparedness (CBDP) projects targeted rural communities. For that local disaster committees were established, committee and community members received training on vulnerability and capacity assessment, basic first-aid skills and rules of behaviour in case of a disaster, developed risk maps and response plans for their communities and conducted simulation exercises. Refresher courses for previously established committees have been arranged by the Turkmenistan Red Crescent. Targeted communities received basic equipment, i.e. minimal standard disaster preparedness sets, to support their possible response actions. Around 40,900 community members were involved by the Red Crescent Societies in CBDP projects. The disaster management programme worked with communities in cooperation with other programmes like tracing, health and care and organizational development and target beneficiaries were sensitized about the Red Crescent mission and services. The Kazakhstan Red Crescent has also trained 900 schoolchildren on how to behave in case of a disaster (earthquake) within the framework of the youth preparedness initiative.

Disaster awareness campaigns have been arranged by the National Societies for broader communities. For instance, television and radio broadcasts, round tables with local authorities and relevant government bodies in the regions, contests on disaster preparedness and photo exhibitions built up dedicated to the International Civil Protection Day on 1 March and the World Red Cross Red Crescent Day on 8 May. The actions were used to spread messages on disaster risks, to promote risk reduction and National Societies' activities. It is estimated that around 121,500 have been reached with disaster awareness.

The risk reduction projects implemented in the first half of 2008 aimed at reducing the risks of floods, domestic, steppe and forest fires, gas explosions and water-related diseases for communities in disaster-prone areas. More than 86,400 people benefited from these projects.

Outcome: Capacity of National Societies in disaster preparedness and response strengthened through increased skills and knowledge of Red Crescent staff and volunteers, strengthened financial and technical resources, effective mechanisms for emergency response and recovery assistance.

Achievements:

At institutional level the disaster management programme continued reinforcing the National Societies' response mechanisms, including developing disaster response teams (DRTs), testing the national contingency plans and practicing standard operation procedures.

The Red Crescent Societies conducted workshops for members of its DRTs to improve their skills and knowledge in cooperation with the health and care and tracing programmes. The Kazakhstan Red Crescent has partially equipped the national team and one of the zonal teams

in the south-Kazakhstan region. Besides, working meetings have been arranged for programme staff and volunteers at regional and sub-regional levels by National Societies. These meetings involved participants from local authorities and emergency structures. In addition, the Kazakhstan Red Crescent held a workshop in the flood-affected south-Kazakhstan regional branch to learn from the response operation and to improve response mechanisms and standard operating procedures that are part of the national contingency plan. The testing of the Turkmenistan National Society contingency plan took place in May. The disaster management programme coordinator of the Turkmenistan Red Crescent also attended a logistics training organized by the Regional Logistics Unit of the International Federation secretariat in Abu Dhabi.

In order to improve the project management two trainings on the project planning process (PPP) were conducted for branch staff and volunteers of central, west, south and east zones of the Kazakhstan Red Crescent.

A regional disaster management meeting was held in April for all five National Societies to discuss plans and budgets for 2008-2009, programme financial management, training and long-term capacity-building needs and regional initiatives like the contingency plan re-testing.

Constraints or Challenges:

Rising prices increase the operational costs of the programme and the National Societies have to prioritize the activities and related expenses. Consequently, some activities planned for 2008 have been reduced or postponed and might be further cancelled. Similarly, the falling official currency exchange rate in Turkmenistan immediately reduced the amount of funds available for the programme. Because of this field trips and experience exchange visits to sister National Societies have been postponed or cancelled, and workshops and meetings are accommodating fewer participants.

The response operations of the Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan Red Crescent Societies have slowed down or caused delays to regular programme activities in risk reduction and CBDP in the affected branches. The way the operations developed suggested that the National Societies need to work more on the speed of response; that issue will be further addressed by the International Federation's secretariat.

Health and care

Outcome: Vulnerability to HIV and its impact reduced through preventing further infection, expanding support to people living with HIV (PLHIV) and reducing stigma and discrimination.

Achievements:

The HIV and AIDS prevention activities of the Red Crescent Societies scaled up in all countries targeting key populations at higher risk – military men, labour migrants, sex workers, and injecting drug users (IDUs) – youth and the wider population. Over the period almost 75,000 people have been targeted, among them 86 per cent by peer education. Among those targeted, more than 78 per cent were able to both correctly identify ways of preventing the sexual transmission of HIV and reject major misconceptions about HIV transmission.

In Uzbekistan, the programme moved to rural areas where access to information on HIV and sexually transmitted infections (STIs) is lacking. The Turkmenistan Red Crescent has expanded the HIV prevention activities to two more regions and trained 85 peer instructors (30 per cent increase comparing with the same period in 2007), among them 57 young people, 18 military men and 10 sex workers and IDUs. The HIV trainings were integrated into the TB and community-based first-aid (CBFA) programme components of the National Societies' health and care programmes.

To strengthen its capacities in HIV prevention the Kazakhstan Red Crescent held training and refresher training on HIV, counselling before an HIV test, trainers techniques and social mobilization for peer volunteers from different target groups. The number of newly trained peer volunteers made 215, which is almost 26 per cent higher than for the same period last year. To date, 482 volunteers are involved in the Red Crescent peer HIV education.

The harm reduction services of the Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan Red Crescent Societies – syringe exchange, condoms distribution, information materials dissemination, consultations and referrals for testing – have been provided in trust points. Outreach work has also continued, especially with groups that are most efficiently targeted this way – sex workers and IDUs. The current number (34) of outreach workers in the Uzbekistan Red Crescent (two of them PLHIV) ensured a considerable increase in the number of targeted IDUs and sex workers: the number of permanent clients was 1,106. The total number of people served through the National Societies' harm reduction points is 1,733 and the syringe exchange rate varied between 66-68 per cent.

Information on prevention of HIV, STIs and on other health and social issues was also disseminated through information materials distributed among target beneficiaries.

The National Societies that joined the Red Cross Red Crescent Global Alliance on HIV, namely the Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan Red Crescent Societies, have submitted draft country programmes to the zone office for comments.

Outcome: Vulnerability to TB and its impact reduced through preventing further infection, rendering social support to TB patients, reducing stigma and discrimination and integrating with HIV prevention.

Achievements:

The TB control interventions continued to address the needs of the most vulnerable groups in communities – older people living alone, multi-child families, homeless people, alcohol and drug users, former inmates of penitentiary institutions – by providing direct observation of treatment (DOT) and/ or social and psychological support to people with TB and by educating their families. Social support includes the distribution of food parcels, hygiene kits and vitamins (B group) to stimulate target patients for treatment adherence and to promote personal hygiene. In total, 2,229 people with TB have been assisted over the period. The average treatment success rate in TB patients under DOT was above 90 per cent and less than 5 per cent of the beneficiaries receiving social support interrupted their treatment. The Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan National Societies have also targeted 269 people with multi-drug resistant TB (MDR-TB). Besides, the multidisciplinary teams of the Kazakhstan Red Crescent supported people with HIV/TB co-infection responding to the needs of 289 people with social, psychological and legal assistance. Among these 125 people with co-infection completed their TB treatment; 20 per cent were cured and 4.8 per cent interrupted the treatment.

Patient self-support groups established by the National Societies last year have been meeting to learn from each others' experience and from former patients, to expand their knowledge of the disease and hygiene practices as well as to discuss problems and to support each other. Such communication increases treatment adherence and helps to reduce stigma towards people and their social isolation. More peer volunteers have also been recruited by the Kyrgyzstan Red Crescent thanks to support group activities.

The level of TB awareness in the general population increased due to information, education and communication (IEC) activities carried out in public places, educational institutions, and summer camps. During these activities information about the causes, main signs and ways of transmission of the disease was disseminated by Red Crescent staff and volunteers and through media sources. HIV prevention messages were also included. Special actions were organized on the World TB Day. Monitoring revealed that around 82-87 per cent of people reached by TB

educational programme know four main symptoms of TB and preventive measures. The increased awareness helps to overcome stigma and ensures timely detection and proper treatment.

In March 2008 a regional meeting on TB was convened to discuss the implementation, lessons learnt and a planned review of TB programme. The recommendations of the TB review, which will be carried out in July-August 2008, will inform further development and improvement of the TB programme in the region.

Outcome: The population's health improved through diseases prevention, health promotion, traumatism reduction and basic first-aid training.

Achievements:

The community-based health and first-aid (CBFA) programmes gave priority to health education on mother and child health, communicable diseases and hygiene promotion. Information about TB is included in the curriculum and helps to increase awareness of the disease among the population. Basic first-aid skills were also taught. Programme activities were centred in rural areas where the population has limited access to professional medical care and key target groups were children and women of childbearing age; the wider population was also informed. The total number of people covered is 23,120, among them 64 per cent women, 26 per cent children and 17 per cent men.

The CBFA activities expanded to additional areas in Kyrgyzstan and Turkmenistan and the Red Crescent Societies received support from local authorities in terms of premises for these activities; first-aid points and training centres were established. Baseline information was collected through a questionnaire developed so that later the impact of the programme can be evaluated.

The activities have been carried out through the well-developed network of trained volunteers who mobilize communities and disseminate information at district level with support from local authorities, health structures and non-governmental organizations. For that they provide house-to-house visits and distribute printed information materials. Trained teachers-volunteers coached schoolchildren on personal hygiene, prevention of the most common communicable diseases and basic first aid in schools. Trained schoolchildren disseminate information to their peers.

Volunteers are recruited by trainers who have passed special training of trainers to develop communication skills, gain knowledge of the most common communicable diseases and prevention measures and learn basic first-aid skills. The general population was also targeted through campaigns, competitions, quizzes, regular broadcasts and media publications on diseases prevention.

The programme promoted behaviour changes in the communities and inspired tolerance through interactive, participatory promotion activities, as well as skills-based training. Youth involvement received special consideration for social mobilization. The programme contributed to decreased stigma and discrimination towards marginalized groups. Such groups were also empowered with knowledge on health issues and recruiting as Red Crescent staff and volunteers.

Outcome: Reproductive health in Turkmenistan improved through education and improved access to health services.

Achievements:

The Turkmenistan Red Crescent held 850 sessions for 1,200 women of childbearing age (28 pregnant among them) and girls to train them on hygiene rules for pregnancy, nutrition aspects for pregnant and breastfeeding women, family planning, diarrhoea, TB and HIV prevention. In addition, 102 pregnant women and women with many children received hygiene kits.

Constraints or Challenges:

The National Societies' knowledge and skills in the areas of behaviour change communication, mother and child healthcare, programme management including monitoring, evaluation and reporting need to be improved and in this respect further technical support is required.

More technical workshops and training sessions on the subjects will improve the quality of the health and care programme.

Among the challenges the National Societies face is limited access to PLHIV in Uzbekistan and to such groups as IDUs, sex workers and military men in Turkmenistan. Also, information on the indicator referring to the infectious diseases' incidence rate in Turkmenistan can not be obtained as there is no reliable data available from the health ministry. This indicator has therefore been eliminated from the plan.

Organizational development

Outcome/Expected result: National Societies established effective interrelation and coordination between governance and management structures, headquarters and branches.

The National Societies are at the stage of the governance and management functions division when they have finalized the revision of the statutes, providing for such division, and proceeded to statutes implementation. Monitoring of implementation in the southern representation office of the Kyrgyzstan Red Crescent has revealed problems with coordination and information sharing between the branch executive director and the governing board. The National Society has requested a consultation with the legal base, governance and management consultant and this mission is scheduled for September 2008. The Turkmenistan Red Crescent held two workshops to explain the new statutory provisions and to develop regulations on membership, volunteering and minimum requirements for the governing board members. These documents will be submitted to the presidium (governing board) for consideration and approval. The Uzbekistan Red Crescent implemented the statutes in all its branches.

The Kazakhstan Red Crescent has not yet started the implementation of the revised statute; firstly, the feedback from the Joint Statutes Commission² is pending, and secondly, the statute has not been approved by the justice ministry. Meantime, the Kazakhstan Red Crescent held a national meeting on the issue of interrelations between governance and management that will help further develop the governance guidelines.

In April the organizational development programme held an evaluation of the efficiency and effectiveness of the governance and management division component. The evaluation involved the Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan Red Crescent Societies. The results showed that the programme should shift from the division of governance and management to good governance and management. This means that the governance needs not only to facilitate and oversee the work of the National Society at branch and national levels, but also to play a key role in its strategic development. The National Society management would in turn need to develop and invest in long and short-term plans to build financial stability.

To harmonize the National Society capacity-building activities of the Movement components in the region and to develop unified regional strategies, the Central Asian National Societies' leadership forum was held in April. The forum brought together the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), the International Federation secretariat representatives and leaders of the five National Societies, including the Tajikistan Red Crescent. The main discussions were on

² The Joint International Committee of the Red Cross/International Federation Commission for National Society Statutes.

human resource management, finance development, Red Crescent Law and integrated programming.

Outcome: National Societies increased their capacities through the development of human, financial and material resources at headquarters and branch levels.

The Kyrgyzstan Red Crescent is developing a system of human resource management in its planning of an integrated programme that is to form the base of the operational alliance. The human resource management will be covering all stages of professional growth within the organization. The British Red Cross committed to provide the bilateral consultant's support with an evaluation of the human resource systems that is scheduled for July. The evaluation will be followed by a plan of action on further human resource development for the coming two years and the International Federation's regional representation has been consulted on the process. Based on the self-analysis of its human resource management strategy, the Uzbekistan Red Crescent developed guidance including legal recommendations in line with the local legislation. The Turkmenistan Red Crescent introduced a computer registration system for volunteers and members and is now collecting information from all branches according to the specific format.

Following the recommendations of the external financial audit carried out last year, the Kyrgyzstan Red Crescent developed financial guidance for programme managers along with the financial forms to support the expenditures. Furthermore, the Red Crescent Society has started improving further the architecture of a chart of accounts that will enable the National Society to produce financial reports according to international financial standards and donors' reporting requirements.

The Uzbekistan Red Crescent also arranged training on the project planning process (PPP) for staff and volunteers from selected branches. Following the training, the National Society headquarters announced a call for proposals for capacity building mini-projects among branches; the two best projects will be covered by the Uzbekistan Red Crescent organizational development programme. The rest of the branches are to be trained in the second half of 2008.

Seeking to diversify funding, several of the Kazakhstan Red Crescent branches applied for government grants available for the non-governmental sector and meant to support social care activities.

The National Societies are going through change processes and considerable external support focused on capacity-building is essential for them to improve in areas like human resource and financial management and to progress in the Red Crescent Law adoption. The Red Crescent Societies of Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan applied for new funding available within the International Federation's Capacity Building Fund and aimed at Intensified Capacity Building (ICB)³ but were not selected.

Outcome/Expected result: National Societies mobilized capacities of local communities through strengthening the role of primary organizations.

The Central Asian National Societies are now establishing governing bodies at different levels and primary organizations are the source of governing bodies' members. A needs assessment in one of the communities by the Bukhara branch of the Uzbekistan Red Crescent demonstrated a lack of understanding of the role of primary organizations, as the existing vital issues of that particular community were left unaddressed by its primary organization. The lessons have been

³ ICB is a key element of the secretariat's new operating model. It is a way of delivering capacity building support to a group of 20-50 National Societies which need extensive assistance to meet the objectives of the Federation's Global Agenda and require increased support under the Federation secretariat's leadership.

shared with other branches since the role of primary organizations is still not clear for National Society staff.

Outcome/Expected result: Youth has expanded the range and improved the quality of services.

The involvement of young volunteers receives special consideration from the organizational development programme as youth holds great potential for social mobilization and are privileged agents of change given their openness to change, dedication and enthusiasm. Young volunteers take active part in all National Society programme activities.

In cooperation with the disaster management programme the Kazakhstan Red Crescent youth trained 900 students and schoolchildren on safe behaviour skills and first aid. The Kyrgyzstan Red Crescent held training for volunteer instructors on HIV, TB and drug abuse prevention in the Bishkek, Naryn, Karakol and Osh regional youth centres who used their knowledge to raise awareness among peers.

The Turkmenistan Red Crescent established a new youth and volunteering centre in Baharly district of Ahal region to mobilize and train new volunteers and disseminate knowledge on healthy lifestyles. Having studied the road safety programme of the European National Societies, the Turkmenistan Red Crescent youth trained 150 volunteers and 1,200 junior school children all over the country.

The Uzbekistan Red Crescent youth held 2 trainings on volunteer mobilization covering 70 volunteers, volunteer leaders and branch youth staff in Andizhan, Bukhara, Fergana, Navoi and Samarkand regions. As a result of training 18 youth clubs were established in these regions. The Tashkent regional youth centre organized a ten-day camp for 20 children with disabilities from disadvantaged families. The camp activities aimed to increase children's physical abilities and build confidence and communication skills that help them to live comfortably in the society and to feel included. The Uzbekistan Red Crescent youth is putting forward a new approach in volunteer management and development, called a "volunteer school". This implies a more selective volunteer recruitment and volunteer training relevant to the needs of the National Society programmes. The idea was tested by the Tashkent city youth centre and showed that a better structured approach allows the National Society to involve and sustain the number of volunteers sufficient to carry out branch core activities – in disaster preparedness, HIV prevention and social care for older people living alone.

The establishment of the regional youth network is being discussed with the National Societies' youth coordinators, but due to frequent staff changes among them any major progress in this direction is becoming an issue.

Constraints or Challenges:

One of the major challenges in statute implementation is the low level of awareness on Red Crescent operational activities and little understanding of the governing board's role among newly elected governing board members. To overcome this, the National Societies will organize extra workshops for branch chair people and involve them into daily Red Crescent activities.

In Kazakhstan, the comments from the Joint Statutes Commission, when they arrive, might have to be incorporated into the statute. This will take time and result in further delay with the statute implementation.

The Kyrgyzstan Red Crescent and Uzbekistan Red Crescent organizational development coordinators resigned. The positions will be filled but new staff will require basic training that will be provided with support from the regional organizational development coordinator.

Youth in Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan faced difficulties in their work with peers in educational institutions. The reasons vary from unwillingness of school leadership to get involved in something aside the education process to restrictions for schoolchildren at ministerial level to be part of any civil society organizations. The National Societies' leaders are trying to overcome the problem and maintain close contacts with key government officials in order to show the work of the societies and engage them in partnerships.

In their attempts to lobby for Red Crescent Laws the National Societies face difficulties resulting from the lack of understanding in national governments and parliaments of the Red Crescent mission and the auxiliary role of the societies towards the authorities. Representatives of the International Federation secretariat will assist in clarifying the role by meeting with government officials and parliamentarians.

Principles and values

Outcome/Expected result: The Fundamental Principles and humanitarian values of the Movement promoted.

Achievements:

The humanitarian principles and values have been promoted among the general public, National Societies' partners from the mass media, government officials, populations served by the National Societies in the region as well as Red Crescent staff and volunteers. The total number of people informed of the Movement's humanitarian values and Red Crescent commitments and activities reached 5,000 in the reported period during trainings, public actions and other events organized at regional, national and branch levels.

The Uzbekistan Red Crescent trained 57 newly hired staff and volunteers to disseminate the Movement's fundamental principles and humanitarian values. The Kazakhstan Red Crescent informed around 800 people about the Movement's components, its values and commitments directly through disaster management and tracing trainings for staff and volunteers in four oblasts of the country and meetings with the population affected by floods in the south of Kazakhstan in February 2008.

The integration of diversity and non-discrimination elements into other programmes in all four National Societies in the region have been promoted and encouraged through sessions during thematic trainings under the core programmes (disaster management, health and care, youth, tracing, street children, social programmes), round tables, joint public actions dedicated to special dates like the World TB Day and the World Red Cross Red Crescent Day. These elements received special focus during the distribution of humanitarian assistance to people affected by disasters. The floods and earthquakes response operations of the Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan Red Crescent Societies are good examples of such integration.

Mass media outlets supported the promotion of the fundamental principles and values and the National Societies' true commitment to follow them in their programming, as well as the culture of non-discrimination and tolerance. Such information appeared in the media 100 times in total at national and branch levels in the four countries, including press-conferences' follow-up, printed media, television and radio programmes. Among them was a press-conference on the Kazakhstan Red Crescent floods response operation in June. The Turkmenistan Red Crescent managed to increase the number of media reports highlighting the humanitarian principles and values by 50 per cent. The National Society has also arranged a library at the headquarters that contain printed and video materials about the Movement and the Turkmenistan Red Crescent in particular. The library is open for staff, volunteers and other interested parties.

Outcome/Expected result: Ability of communities to combat discrimination, intolerance and violence and to promote respect for diversity enhanced.

Achievements:

The Central Asian National Societies effectively continued their work on enhancing the abilities of communities to combat discrimination, intolerance and violence and to promote respect for diversity. In close cooperation with the mass media, universities, schools and private entertainment facilities the Kyrgyzstan Red Crescent conducted several actions at the headquarters and branch levels that aimed at changing behaviour towards street children, as one of the most vulnerable marginalized groups in the country. As a result of those campaigns 15 children under the National Society's supervision received access to state social assistance and to primary and secondary education and 50 more children from the rehabilitation centre for street children got free access to cinema, theatre, swimming pool and skating rink. Moreover, information about the plight of street children and Red Crescent actions were highlighted by the press, which increased public awareness of stigma and social exclusion that street children are facing. The Kazakhstan Red Crescent involved 600 people with TB served by the health and care programme into Red Crescent activities by training them on promoting diversity and non-discrimination. The Uzbekistan National Society increased community awareness of the needs of people with TB through radio programmes in selected cities and regions. It also actively engaged young people in debates and competitions teaching how to oppose any types of discrimination and stigma. The biggest action was organized in March on the eve of the World TB Day and attracted 1,100 students in three regions of the country.

Outcome/Expected result: Understanding of necessity to prevent and fight sexual and gender-based violence within communities increased.

Achievements:

The work toward this expected result started at regional and national levels. All National Societies made the mapping of gender players in their countries and issues covered by each organization. The Kyrgyzstan Red Crescent developed a database of potential partners that includes such organizations as women crisis centres and NGOs on protection of women's rights. During the regional meeting of information/ humanitarian values officers from the five National Societies in April 2008 a working group has been formed to develop a questionnaire for the survey among pilot target communities. The questionnaire will be distributed among the National Societies for adaptation to the country specific situation.

Constraints or Challenges:

Because of underfunding, the planned activities like a regional information meeting, newsletter production, participation of information staff in thematic trainings and events of other programmes have been implemented with support from the disaster management, health and care and organizational development programmes both at regional and National Society level.

The information officer of the Turkmenistan National Society headquarters has changed twice since the beginning of the year so there is still the need to train a new person.

Coordination and Implementation

The International Federation's regional representation for Central Asia extends its support to the National Societies in the region with a focus on capacity-building through regular work in core programme areas. Relevant expertise is also sought from the zone and Geneva secretariat. Over the last six months the disaster management coordinators of the National Societies have been supported by acting staff in the regional representation and by the country representation in Tajikistan. A new regional disaster management officer has been recruited and will take over the responsibilities at the end of July. The regional representation is also trying to recruit a regional disaster management delegate who would focus more on strategic directions of the regional programme, assisting National Societies to initiate or intensify work in areas such as the

International Disaster Response Law, Red Cross Red Crescent Global Alliance on Disaster Risk Reduction and climate change.

Membership services have also been provided in the following areas:

- governance support – assistance to members of different governance and management bodies from Central Asia, i.e. Kyrgyzstan Red Crescent secretary general being a member of the Compliance and Mediation Committee, Kazakhstan Red Crescent vice president being a member of the ICB Expert Panel
- planning, monitoring and evaluation – the International Federation secretariat's country plans for 2009–2010 that capture the support that the National Societies in the region will be receiving through the secretariat structure are being finalized
- representation – strengthening the representation of the Uzbekistan Red Crescent at the International Conference dedicated to the Aral Sea problems and regular representation and advocacy of the most vulnerable and the humanitarian principles and values during meetings on various occasions with Central Asian governments, local authorities, international organizations like USAID, UN bodies such as OCHA
- partnership – assistance to partner National Societies during visits to the region

There exists close collaboration with ICRC in the field of institutional capacity development of the National Societies. All five National Societies in the region and the International Federation secretariat were included in the process of revising the ICRC cooperation activities and drafting a revised Cooperation Framework Agreement.

The regional representation keeps contacts with the bilateral partners present in the region, namely the American, British, Netherlands and Finnish Red Cross Societies and the Red Crescent Society of the United Arab Emirates. The German Red Cross has officially confirmed that a regional delegate will be based in Kyrgyzstan as of beginning of October 2008 and cooperate with all five National Societies in the region concentrating on disaster management and health and care. The American Red Cross that is currently working with the Tajikistan Red Crescent only is interested in expanding the work in the same areas and is looking for funding.

The operational alliance in Kyrgyzstan is developing and the National Society is in the driving seat. The British Red Cross is providing extensive support along the process together with the International Federation's secretariat. So far the Kyrgyzstan Red Crescent has worked out, together with the structure at all levels, an idea of a National Society integrated programme. The programme will aim to support communities through local committees that will be used to identify main vulnerabilities in their respective communities and work on addressing those within the main National Society strategic directions. This model of work where local committees become an entry point to communities is replicated from the community-based disaster preparedness programme. The Red Crescent Society has also defined what kind of assistance they need to progress with the integrated programme and expect their partners to provide such support in the initial phase. The revised operational alliance model will be presented to partners during a partnership meeting that is planned for autumn this year and the support will be requested. The alliance is expected to be in full swing by the end of 2009 or beginning of 2010.

Recognizing the human vulnerabilities arising from migration in the country and in order to put into practice the Istanbul Commitments made by the VII Red Cross Red Crescent European Regional Conference in 2007 in terms of addressing the needs of people affected by migration the National Societies of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan are willing to become a part of the Central Asian Red Crescent Labour Migration Network to serve irregular migrants. The regional representation has supported the development of the project proposal and is currently seeking funding through the European Union thematic programme for the network to become a reality in 2009.

Working in partnership

The regional representation maintains good working relationships with the governments, the diplomatic community, the United Nations, international organizations and humanitarian actors in the region. The Central Asian Red Crescent Societies cooperate with local authorities and governmental ministries in their respective countries.

In the area of TB control, the National Societies work closely with Project HOPE and national TB institutions. AIDS centres and PLHIV organizations are the main partners in HIV prevention. Bilateral support of the health and care components is available from the British, German, Netherlands and Spanish Red Cross Societies (support differs between the Red Crescent Societies). The Central Asian National Societies are members of the Country Coordination Mechanisms of the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria (GFATM). The Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan Red Crescent Societies received grants from GFATM for their TB prevention programmes and the Kyrgyzstan Red Crescent enjoys the support of GFATM in HIV prevention.

The Kyrgyzstan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan Red Crescent Societies have bilateral partnerships with the Netherlands Red Cross in disaster preparedness and mitigation. At country level each Red Crescent Society has partners in the disaster management sector among United Nations agencies, USAID, the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation and local NGOs.

The key partners of the principles and values programme are the media. The ICRC is cooperating with the National Societies in the fields of institutional capacity development, the International Humanitarian Law and the fundamental principles dissemination, tracing and building capacities for assistance to conflict-affected populations.

Contributing to longer-term impact

Responsive work of the Central Asian National Societies and the regional representation within core programming areas fits into and contributes to the International Federation's Global Agenda.

The regional representation and the Red Crescent Societies have carried out routine monitoring of programmes through regular field visits, observations, interviews, meetings with local authorities and community leaders, internal meetings with branch staff and progress reports. The results of monitoring are analysed, discussed at working meetings at country and regional levels and follow-up actions are undertaken to improve the effectiveness of interventions. Best practices are promoted among colleagues and exchange visits between branches and National Societies are arranged to allow learning from experience. The results of the evaluation of the governance and management component of the organizational development programme will inform future steps in this direction. The report has been shared with ICRC and partner National Societies in the region.

Promoting and respecting the fundamental principles and humanitarian values are indispensable if the Red Cross Red Crescent is to be perceived as an impartial, neutral and independent actor, and furthermore to facilitate the Red Cross Red Crescent to carry out its mandate. Specific focus is made on neutrality and voluntary service while implementing activities. The Central Asian National Societies do not take sides with diverging population groups and follow the principle of diversity in the composition of staff involved.

The SPHERE standards guide the Red Crescent disaster response and the fundamental principles and the value of respect for dignity and equality are at all times promoted in disaster management awareness materials, during training and work with the communities. In disaster

response, the distribution of assistance is made on the basis of impartiality. Actions are solely guided by needs, proportional to the degree of suffering and prioritized on the basis of urgency and vulnerability. The disaster management programme also spotlights disaster awareness of women and children in communities as these groups of the population have limited access to such information.

Looking ahead

A survey on gender-based violence in communities in Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan, that is part of the humanitarian values programme, will be conducted in the second half of the year. However, the scope of the survey will be limited because of lack of funds on the programme.

The evaluation of the governance and management component of the organizational development programme showed that focus should shift towards good governance and good management rather than the division between them, as the overall aim of the change process is greater accountability, transparency and effectiveness of the National Society activities. Consequently, the National Societies will involve newly elected governing board members into daily activities at all levels and meanwhile will strengthen their capacities in planning (both strategic and operational), finance management and resource mobilization through branch leaders and during preparations for statutory meetings.

The Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan Red Crescent Societies will be finalizing their country programmes under the Red Cross Red Crescent Global Alliance on HIV. Also, the TB component of the health and care programme will be adjusted based on the findings and recommendations of the review planned for July-August.

How we work	
<p>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".</p>	<p>Global Agenda Goals:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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.
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