

DREF operation final report



International Federation
of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

Kazakhstan: Mine blast

**DREF operation n° MDRKZ001
GLIDE n° AC-2008-000008-KAZ
7 November, 2008**

The International Federation's Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF) is a source of un-earmarked money created by the Federation in 1985 to ensure that immediate financial support is available for Red Cross Red Crescent response to emergencies. The DREF is a vital part of the International Federation's disaster response system and increases the ability of national societies to respond to disasters.

Summary:

CHF 43,626 (USD 38,437 or EUR 26,233) was allocated from the International Federation's Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF) on 17 January, 2008 to support the Kazakhstan Red Crescent Society in providing psychosocial support to 191 families affected by the coal mine explosion in Karaganda region over six months.

The affected 191 families of miners, their relatives and community members (about 800 people) received psychosocial support through home visits, self-support group meetings and public events organized by the Kazakhstan Red Crescent staff and volunteers specifically trained for that purpose. The psychosocial assistance facilitated their return to normal life after the accident and substantially reduced the trauma. The operation provided an opportunity for the National Society to strengthen its disaster response capacity by acquiring new skills and expanding the range of serviced to affected populations.

The operation used the considerable experience of the Russian Red Cross in counselling people affected by mine explosions.



Kazakhstan Red Crescent staff is visiting the widow of a miner killed by the explosion in the Abay mine in Karaganda region.
Photo: Kazakhstan Red Crescent

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The situation

On 11 January, 2008 a methane gas explosion and consequent fires in the Abay mine of Kazakhstan's Karaganda region killed 30 miners and left 14 injured. At the time of the explosion 191 people were in the mine; 161 were rescued. After hospital treatment the affected miners had to register as disabled because injuries did not allow them to continue working in the mine.

Over the period of the operation several similar accidents occurred in Karaganda region, including one in the neighbouring Tentekskaya mine in June that left five miners dead.

Although all affected families who lost their loved ones or whose relatives were injured received financial support from the local authorities and the mine administration, their needs went beyond material compensation. They, and people around them (relatives, friends, neighbours), as well as the miners who survived, needed psychosocial support as they were unable to overcome the emotional effects of the accident on their own. Children from the affected families made a special target group for psychological assistance.

Red Cross and Red Crescent action

Immediate assistance was provided by the Karaganda branch of the Kazakhstan Red Crescent Society within hours of the explosion through a post set up on the territory of the mine administration. During the days following the accident the Red Crescent staff and volunteers provided first aid and psychological support to people waiting to hear news about their relatives caught in the mine, arranged space and facilities for them to sleep and relax and accompanied the relatives of the deceased and injured miners during funerals in cemeteries and visits to hospitals.

With strong support from the Russian Red Cross, which had gained considerable experience in counselling people affected by mine explosions, the Kazakhstan Red Crescent developed the following directions of the psychosocial support (PSS): home visits to the families that had lost their members, visits to injured miners in hospitals, visits to surviving miners who had to continue with their daily work in the mine, group meetings with members of families in need of psychological support, public events and service club activities for children from affected families.

In the course of the operation the Russian Red Cross staff from the headquarters and Kemerovo regional branch provided technical support and advice to the Kazakhstan Red Crescent regional and district branches in Karaganda region.

Progress towards objectives

Psychosocial support and counseling

Objective 1: To minimize the psychological effects in the aftermath of the mine explosion by providing direct individualized psychosocial assistance to 191 families for two to six months.

Activities carried out:

A new PSS team comprising 13 members was formed from the staff and volunteers of the Kazakhstan Red Crescent branch in Karaganda. In the course of the operation two workshops on PSS were held for members of the team. Both seminars were prepared and conducted by the Russian Red Cross PSS specialists from the headquarters. The main topics of these workshops were stress management and coping mechanisms, community-based psychological support, social support, assistance to children and professional burnout. In addition, the Russian Red Cross psychologists from Kemerovo region (Siberia), who had gained experience in counselling people affected by mine explosions, arranged a master class and practical training on how to work with families of the affected miners. Two staff from the Kazakhstan Red Crescent's headquarters have also been trained so that they can further develop the PSS service.

The team members were equipped with a set of reference materials including a guidance "*Psychological support for communities*", a module "*Psychological follow-up in emergencies*", a CD with the materials of the Russian Red Cross and additional materials like a map of psychological support, check list and debriefing map. Additional copies of the guidance and the manual, based on the psychological support manual of the International Federation's Psychosocial Support Reference Centre, were disseminated among staff of the Kazakhstan Red Crescent and other Central Asian National Societies.

Following the training the new PSS team of the National Society, with support of psychologists from the Russian Red Cross Kemerovo branch in the initial phase, carried out a PSS needs assessment. The assessment showed that 44 families or 194 people out of the 191 affected families who had been observed during the first two months after the mine accident required long-term support. The selection criteria used by the team included the severity of stress and the capacity of people to cope with the psychological problems without medical assistance.

The selected 44 families received psychosocial support through various techniques such as individual and family discussions with looking through family photographs and playing with children, joint walks with children and adults. People were assisted in accepting the loss, adapting to the new circumstances and in eliminating feelings of guilt. Thus, the Kazakhstan Red Crescent staff and volunteers made 105 home visits lasting from 2 to 3 hours; these also included memorial dinners, visits to cemeteries and hospitals. The Red Crescent workers also carried out 16 individual and group consultations with family members (38 people) on specific PSS issues like raising children without a partner, arranged 6 consultations with specialists on legal, employment, education, financial issues and referred 1 person to a medical specialist. The Red Cross staff also provided individual social support to eight most vulnerable families – those with many children, older

parents or those who lost the principal breadwinner – by arranging extra visits, consultations with medical specialists and assisting with solving social problems.

While visiting the affected people at home the priority was given to involving people in social and voluntary activities. People are helped to understand that they are not alone in their grief and that they are able to support other people who need their help. For instance, women got involved in knitting warm clothing for orphaned children. The National Society staff and volunteers observed improvements in the emotional condition of the beneficiaries resulting from home visits and consultations. Having accepted the situation and the loss of a family member, the beneficiaries have returned to work and their everyday responsibilities, reconnected with their families, started making plans for the future, improved their health condition and started seeking social involvement.

The Kazakhstan Red Crescent organized four different self-support groups for people affected by the explosion: “*Why live?*” – for parents and relatives of the deceased and affected miners aged 43 and above; “*I have myself*” – for widows, former wives and other close relatives of the deceased miners aged 30 to 40; “*New life*” – for daughters, sisters and brides of the deceased aged 22 to 35; and a group for widows and close relatives of the deceased aged 40 to 55. Psychosocial support was also offered to other community members, including those who rescued the dead and injured people from the mine and those miners who returned to work. The Red Crescent Society facilitated 6 meetings of the self-support groups; during the meetings 129 participants got involved in narrations to express their feelings as well as in literature, arts and science events or communion with nature.

Several public actions and service clubs for adults and children have been organized that covered 392 children and adolescents. The actions were linked with public holidays and important events such as Miners’ Day, opening of the Miners Memorial, the International Woman’s Day, the Red Cross Red Crescent Day, Victory Day and International Children’s Day. Such actions, also supported by local authorities, aimed to reintegrate the affected people into the community and increase their self confidence.

Over the course of the operation the PSS team of the Kazakhstan Red Crescent held two round-table meetings to discuss the problems and constraints in their work and arranged an event to overcome professional burn-out. The information about the operation and the Red Crescent services was spread through television and radio channels or brief notes.

Challenges:

The following challenges have been observed by the Red Crescent while providing the PSS:

- Lack of professional support from relevant government structures because there are no psychological support specialists in Karaganda region. Further development of the National Society PSS programme should imply elaborating basic mechanisms of cooperation with the government structures.
- Out of 13 members of the PSS team only 5 volunteers continued their service through the whole period of the operation; the rest quit volunteering one by one. Among the principal reasons to quit that were mentioned are severe emotional pressure that psychosocial assistants suffer, feeling that they give more than they receive, family circumstances and being too busy and lacking time for volunteering. Lack of adequate incentives for volunteer members of the PSS team also affected their decision; this is a lesson to learn for future.

Impact:

The DREF funds received through the International Federation enabled the Kazakhstan Red Crescent to respond adequately to the needs of the affected population. The operation provided an opportunity for the Red Crescent Society to strengthen its disaster response capacity by acquiring new skills and expanding the range of serviced to affected populations. The new profile of the Red Crescent worker has been elaborated. Responding to mine accidents is an important activity as such accidents have an effect on everyday life; mines continue to be operational and the survivors are often unable to go back to work, while the families of miners who return to work have to live in fear of their lives.

The opinion of the beneficiaries about the support they got from the Red Crescent Society can be illustrated by this quote:

“When this tragedy had happened – my husband had not come back from the mine – I did not know how to live. But I was not left alone with this grief. Thanks to you, who helped us, who sympathized with us in our loss.”

This DREF operation had a positive impact on the visibility of the National Society. It reinforced its profile vis-à-vis the government and community perception of the Red Crescent work.

Although the Red Crescent achieved the main objective of the operation by providing PSS to people in need, a short-time operation can not cover all the needs in a region highly prone to mine accidents. The PSS component should become an integral part of the disaster management activities of the Kazakhstan Red Crescent. To achieve this, the National Society will develop a concept of the psychosocial service to be included in future disaster management activities.

How we work

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

The International Federation's activities are aligned with its Global Agenda, which sets out four broad goals to meet the Federation's mission to "improve the lives of vulnerable people by mobilizing the power of humanity".

Global Agenda Goals:

- Reduce the numbers of deaths, injuries and impact from disasters.
- Reduce the number of deaths, illnesses and impact from diseases and public health emergencies.
- Increase local community, civil society and Red Cross Red Crescent capacity to address the most urgent situations of vulnerability.
- Reduce intolerance, discrimination and social exclusion and promote respect for diversity and human dignity.

Contact information

For further information specifically related to this operation please contact:

- **In Kazakhstan Red Crescent Society:** Vadim Kadyrbayev, Vice-President, Almaty, phone: +7 727 291 81 51; fax: +7 727 291 81 72; email: drvadimrc@mail.ru
- **In Central Asia Regional Representation:** Drina Karahasanovic, Regional Representative, Almaty, phone: +7 727 291 41 56; fax: +7 727 291 42 67; email: drina.karahasanovic@ifrc.org
- **In the Europe Zone Office:** Slobodanka Curic, Disaster Management Coordinator, Budapest, phone: +36 1 8884 510; fax: +36 1 336 1516; email: slobodanka.curic@ifrc.org
- **In Geneva:** Pablo Medina, Operations Coordinator, phone: +41 22 730 4381, fax: +41 22 733 0395, email: pablo.medina@ifrc.org

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International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

MDRKZ001 - Kazakhstan - Mine Blast

Final Financial Report

Selected Parameters	
Reporting Timeframe	2008/1-2008/9
Budget Timeframe	2008/1-2008/9
Appeal	MDRKZ001
Budget	APPEAL

All figures are in Swiss Francs (CHF)

I. Consolidated Response to Appeal

	Goal 1: Disaster Management	Goal 2: Health and Care	Goal 3: Capacity Building	Goal 4: Principles and Values	Coordination	TOTAL
A. Budget	43,626					43,626
B. Opening Balance	0					0
Income						
<u>Other Income</u>						
<i>Voluntary Income</i>	43,626					43,626
C5. Other Income	43,626					43,626
C. Total Income = SUM(C1..C5)	43,626					43,626
D. Total Funding = B + C	43,626					43,626
Appeal Coverage	100%					100%

II. Balance of Funds

	Goal 1: Disaster Management	Goal 2: Health and Care	Goal 3: Capacity Building	Goal 4: Principles and Values	Coordination	TOTAL
B. Opening Balance	0					0
C. Income	43,626					43,626
E. Expenditure	-43,626					-43,626
F. Closing Balance = (B + C + E)	0					0

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III. Budget Analysis / Breakdown of Expenditure

Account Groups	Budget	Expenditure					TOTAL	Variance
		Goal 1: Disaster Management	Goal 2: Health and Care	Goal 3: Capacity Building	Goal 4: Principles and Values	Coordination		
A							B	A - B
BUDGET (C)		43,626					43,626	
Supplies								
Food		2,148					2,148	-2,148
Medical & First Aid	425	103					103	322
Teaching Materials		659					659	-659
Utensils & Tools	1,650							1,650
Other Supplies & Services		863					863	-863
Total Supplies	2,075	3,773					3,773	-1,698
Transport & Storage								
Transport & Vehicle Costs	1,200	2,623					2,623	-1,423
Total Transport & Storage	1,200	2,623					2,623	-1,423
Personnel								
National Staff	4,000	4,369					4,369	-369
National Society Staff	12,635	4,625					4,625	8,010
Total Personnel	16,635	8,994					8,994	7,641
Workshops & Training								
Workshops & Training	10,950	15,402					15,402	-4,452
Total Workshops & Training	10,950	15,402					15,402	-4,452
General Expenditure								
Travel		539					539	-539
Information & Public Relation	3,000	4,391					4,391	-1,391
Office Costs		1,301					1,301	-1,301
Communications		987					987	-987
Financial Charges		2,782					2,782	-2,782
Other General Expenses	6,930							6,930
Total General Expenditure	9,930	10,000					10,000	-70
Programme Support								
Program Support	2,836	2,836					2,836	-0
Total Programme Support	2,836	2,836					2,836	-0
TOTAL EXPENDITURE (D)	43,626	43,626					43,626	-0
VARIANCE (C - D)		-0					-0	