

PROGRAMME UPDATE



International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies
Fédération Internationale des Sociétés de la Croix-Rouge et du Croissant-Rouge
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الاتحاد الدولي لجمعيات الصليب الأحمر والهلال الأحمر

CENTRAL ASIA

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In Brief

Appeal No. 05AA075

Programme Update no. 2

Period covered: June – November 2005

Appeal coverage: [<Click here to go directly to the Contributions List on the website>](#)

Original Appeal target: CHF 4,224,790 (USD 3,300,775 or EUR 2,728,450) revised to CHF 3,770,246 (USD 2,945,900 or EUR 2,434,905)

Related Emergency or Annual Appeals:

Central Asia Annual Appeal 2004 [<Click here>](#)

Latest reports from Tajikistan: [<Click here>](#)

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Operational developments

By December 2005, the response to the Central Asia appeal covered 115 per cent of the appeal budget.

Some pledges signed in the second half of the year allow for extended programme operating timeframes different from the appeal and consequent carry-over of funds for 2006. These are: British Red Cross funds for tuberculosis (TB) prevention programme in Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Turkmenistan; Japanese Red Cross funds for health activities in Kazakhstan; and Norwegian Red Cross funds for the regional health (TB and HIV/AIDS prevention) and disaster management programmes.

The table below shows income, expenditures and balance at the end of November divided by programmes.

Programme title	Revised appeal budget (CHF)	Total income (CHF)	Revised appeal coverage	Total expenditure (CHF)	Total expenditure (per cent of revised appeal budget)	Balance (CHF)
Health and care	1,706,912	1,895,004	111%	1,002,343	59%	892,661
Disaster management	1,054,606	1,463,609	139%	906,278	86%	557,331
Organizational development	650,174	747,055	115%	497,075	76%	249,980
Humanitarian values	99,996	80,176	80%	50,990	51%	29,186
Coordination and implementation	258,559	132,374	51%	94,293	36%	38,081
Totals	3,770,247	4,318,218	115%	2,550,979	68%	1,767,239

Period January-November 2005

Over the past six months, Red Crescent societies have proceeded to run focused programmes targeting health and disaster risks, fighting stigma and discrimination and developing the societies' capacities to address vulnerabilities more efficiently. No major constraints in programme implementation emerged during this period. However, certain delays of activities resulted in savings of funds in organizational development programme (for details, please see respective section of this Programme update).

In June, the regional planning meeting brought together programme staff of the five Central Asia Red Crescent societies and their leadership. This time the meeting was held jointly with the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and partner national societies present in the region to achieve better coordination of efforts at early stage of programming. In general, it was seen to be successful by all parties.

The regional disaster response team was deployed to Pakistan earthquake affected areas in December. Their participation in the large-scale international emergency operation is welcomed as an excellent opportunity for learning and knowledge sharing.

Health and care

Objective: Central Asian communities' health has improved through increased awareness and skills in health prevention, first aid and social support to target groups.

A regional health meeting and a TB conference took place in Almaty in June. The meeting was attended by the head of health and care department and senior health officer of the Federation Secretariat, and representatives from American and Netherlands Red Cross working in the region. During these meetings, the five Red Crescent societies' health staff presented on-going programmes, achievements, challenges, main areas for future activities

and discussed practical aspects of financial management and communication. Two bilateral projects for Tajikistan – Netherlands Red Cross ECHO¹ funded relief health project and American Red Cross USAID² funded Mother and Child Health Care (MCH) project – were also presented. Secretariat staff gave an overview of the Federation’s Global Health Strategy and introduced the Memorandum of Understanding recently signed by the Federation and the World Health Organization. Additionally, American Red Cross presented the results of a study on use of incentives in TB programme. The presentation of Kazakhstan Red Crescent on stigma reduction and role of RC in TB control followed.

Expected result 1: Central Asian national societies have contributed to the reduction of TB multi-drug resistant (MDR) and chronic TB forms through promotion and support of the implementation of the Directly Observed Treatment Short-course (DOTS) strategy.

In the second half of the year, Central Asia national societies proceeded with planned activities to support the implementation of DOTS strategy in respective countries. These were: visiting patients on post-hospital phase of treatment who are at high risk of treatment interruption; providing social and nutritional support to most vulnerable groups; and implementing health education and public awareness activities.

Target groups included homeless people, alcohol and drug users, people with disabilities, single parents, and former prisoners. The proportion of patients who re-started treatment after interruption increased. RC nurses continued to monitor drug intake, educate patients and their family members; motivate to continue the treatment providing nutritional, social and psychological support.

Red Crescent societies also raised the TB awareness among general population targeting different groups – schoolchildren, students, adults. Information dissemination methods included lectures, training sessions, interactive workshops, games etc. The printed materials, distributed by nurses, visualize the teaching process and provide reference tools for future.

Table 1. The Red Crescent societies’ TB prevention programme in figures.

RC society of	No. of visiting nurses	No. of patients	Social support			No. of distributed printing materials	People covered with TB awareness activities
			Distributed food parcels/ hot meals	Distributed hygienic kits	Distributed vitamins		
Kazakhstan	22	201	1,008	1,313	525	1,150	9,354
Kyrgyzstan	10	591	2,111/ 242	N/A	6,780	40,800	2,792
Turkmenistan	9	847/1,224*	540/ 10,120	615	535	1,800	106
Uzbekistan³	24	1,145	3,074	1,544	189	19,985	3,800
Total	65	2,784	6,733/ 10,362	3,472	8,029	63,735	16,052

* These are patients in the TB hospital, only 158 of them receive treatment according to DOTS strategy.

In **Kazakhstan** official statistics show that incidence of TB in 2004 decreased by 14 per cent in comparison to 2003 thanks to joint efforts of all parties involved in implementation of the National TB control programme. In the second half of 2005, at five programme sites 92 per cent of patients under Kazakhstan RC’s supervision completed the treatment, which is a clear indicator of successful programme implementation.

The pilot project for MDR TB patients continued in Almaty. The project is covered from funds available outside of the annual appeal and aims at creating a model of Red Crescent intervention in support of DOTS-plus strategy.

¹ Humanitarian Aid Department of the European Commission

² United States Agency for International Development

³ Uzbekistan RC visiting nurses do not provide direct observation of drug intake as this is the responsibility of state TB services.

RC nurses visited the programme beneficiaries five times a week to observe treatment. In addition, the patients received food parcels and hygienic kits on monthly basis. Taking into consideration that this group of patients undergo treatment for a very long time, qualified psychological support was provided to them, including individual and group consultations. Over the period, nine patients with MDR TB out of 21 under RC supervision have been successfully treated.

Kyrgyzstan RC involved more TB patients of the second category (these are previously treated smear positive patients) in the programme. Volunteer support group was established from former TB patients who work together with RC nurses visiting those who undergo treatment and providing them peer support. At present, the national society works on development of a video film about TB prevention programme activities.

Though drop-out rate in the TB hospital receiving support from **Turkmenistan RC** decreased significantly, better results can be achieved if sanitary conditions there improve. At present the hospital faces constant difficulties with water supply, and Turkmenistan RC is looking for local funds to assist with solving this problem.

Unfortunately, the number of patients treated under DOTS in this hospital decreased by 5 per cent. Despite this fact, the national society continued to provide nutritional support to all patients under intensive phase taking into consideration their extreme vulnerability and insufficient food supply in the hospital.

Addressing the complex situation with TB treatment monitoring in the country, four additional medical nurses were hired by the Red Crescent society. They distribute medicines to patients who visit DOTS corners in Ashgabad clinics. The nurses also visit those patients who do not attend clinics to get medication and immediately start follow-up of patients discharged from hospitals.

Provision of food parcels, hygienic kits, and vitamins continued in Turkmenistan, as well as health education and public awareness activities.

Uzbekistan RC continued the TB prevention programme on six initial project sites and six additional sites in Samarkand region, where activities were supported by the Global Fund for TB, HIV/AIDS and Malaria. Food parcels, vitamins and hygienic kits were distributed on monthly basis.

The nurses of Uzbekistan RC visited patients twice a month, providing social and psychological support to sick people and their family members. Former patients often fail to get a job because of social stigma towards such people; sometimes their children also face discrimination and intolerant attitude in kindergartens. In such situations, RC staff works with relevant authorities and involved parties to advocate of patients' rights on their behalf, and in majority of cases these efforts succeed.

Information dissemination has been carried through lectures in organisations, interactive discussions and talks in markets and public places. In addition, Uzbekistan RC piloted a new initiative on raising awareness of TB – Red Crescent nurses and volunteers worked in public transport, providing information about TB and disseminating printing materials.

Expected result 2 The vulnerability of communities towards the effects of emergencies has reduced via implementation of community based first aid (CBFA) programmes in the region.

Kazakhstan Red Crescent society conducted training sessions for security agencies' staff and university students in Semipalatinsk. To assess community based first aid programme effectiveness, Red Crescent carried out monitoring among previously trained personnel of fire brigades. The respondents showed good knowledge of FA skills and of the Red Cross Red Crescent Movement.

In December, a competition was organized between students from three colleges to celebrate the International Volunteer Day. This event was highlighted in local press.

The **Red Crescent society of Kyrgyzstan** continued the programme in Bishkek, Karabalta and Talas. First Aid training sessions were organized in schools, universities and summer camps. To celebrate the World First Aid

Day, competitions among schoolchildren and university students took place in Karabalta; these actions were highlighted in newspapers and on national TV.

During the reporting period, the guidelines for FA instructors, posters on road safety and books for children were developed, printed and distributed to target beneficiary groups.

The programme of **Turkmenistan Red Crescent** on preventive health education and first aid skills building has been carried out in all regions of the country. Responding to the request from the population, several new topics (high blood pressure, myocardial infarction and stroke) were added to the curriculum. Additionally, the module for schoolchildren has been extended to ensure that more time is allocated for practical exercises and skills development.

In September several health lessons, seminars and training sessions were organized for targeted groups including one for 80 handicapped sportsmen together with the Ministry of Education, the Youth Union and the Ministry of Internal Affairs.

Road safety component started in Turkmenistan in October: by that time educational modules for children had been developed and translated into national language and posters for presentations had been printed.

Currently, 95 volunteers are involved in programme activities to develop first aid skills and raise awareness on preventive health in six regions bordering Afghanistan. Post tests show 40-45 per cent increase in knowledge of the CBFA programme participants.

Needs assessment held in bordering regions in the first half of 2005 helped to improve coordination with local authorities, to identify partners, to encourage population's involvement and to review educational modules. The assessment also revealed high demand on educational activities among local communities. However, during the agricultural season many people fail to accomplish the whole educational course because of heavy workload. The RC programme staff currently revises the approach and training schedule to make it more convenient for targeted auditorium.

Uzbekistan Red Crescent continued to implement the community-based first aid programme through 16 first aid points, as well as in different organizations, colleges, schools and community administrative units.

In summer, refreshing courses were conducted for instructors-volunteers working on community level. In October, 27 new volunteers participated in a training of trainers (TOT).

Two video films on first aid issues were broadcast on national TV and two new films are being developed. The national society also works on a new module for TOT.

In the second half of 2005, the Red Crescent society conducted road safety educational sessions for pre-school children. The sessions were followed by competitions organized on district, regional and, finally, city level to test the knowledge. The final competition took place in September to celebrate the World First Aid Day. All these events were highlighted by media.

Table 2. Community-based first aid programme activities.

June-November	Number of education sessions	Number of trained population	Number of volunteers among them
Kazakhstan	60	434	N/A
Kyrgyzstan	N/A	718	N/A
Turkmenistan	N/A	4996	N/A
Uzbekistan	717	26,767	1,295
Total	777	32,915	1,295

Expected result 3: Marginalized groups have knowledge and skills on safe behaviour through peer education to prevent HIV/AIDS and sexually transmitted diseases (STD).

The HIV/AIDS prevention programme continued through peer-to-peer education for targeted groups.

In September, representatives from all five Central Asia Red Crescent societies attended an annual ERNA⁴ meeting in Kiev.

In October, training on Harm Reduction was held in Villa Maraini rehabilitation centre (Italy). HIV/AIDS programme coordinators from four national societies except Kazakhstan RC participated in this training. The event became a good opportunity to see different practical aspects of harm reduction activities and to think about intervention models applicable for Central Asia countries. Training materials were presented in Russian and this really contributed to better understanding among participants from the region.

In November, Kyrgyzstan and Turkmenistan RC participated in a working meeting on peer education organized by British Red Cross in Moscow. During this meeting, the participants shared their experiences and discussed challenges and options that national societies face in their educational work.

Table 3. HIV/AIDS prevention programme activities.

RC society of	Number of prepared trainers	Number of training sessions/discussions	Number of covered population	Number of distributed information materials	Number of distributed condoms	Number of public actions/ campaigns
Kazakhstan	195	1,684	15,118	9,931	7,410	39 actions – 3,687 people
Kyrgyzstan	9	343	3,463	17,500	N/A	5 actions
Uzbekistan	340	171	4,290	5,000	6,083	7 actions – 1,680 people
Turkmenistan	22	318	9,306	N/A	N/A	9 actions

Kazakhstan Red Crescent regional branches signed memorandum of understanding with departments of education, regional or city AIDS Centers, military divisions and departments of internal affairs in order to improve integration of activities. In addition, several roundtable discussions were organized with these partner organizations to share experience and lessons learned.

Training of instructors-volunteers continued and 189 new people were involved. All instructors-volunteers have been identified within their target group and after training started to work as peer educators.

Monitoring of the programme, completed in December, showed positive results in terms of establishing safe behavior practices. Namely, 62.6 per cent of intravenous drug users (IDUs) practice safe injections and 55.6 per cent practice safe sexual behavior. Among sex workers (SWs), the per cent of those who practice safe sex at work is higher – 62.6, but only 36.8 per cent of respondents use condoms with permanent partners. Monitoring revealed that only 66 per cent of military personnel practice safe sexual behavior, while for youth this indicator is equal to 73.2 per cent. At the same time, the level of knowledge on HIV/AIDS is high enough among all targeted groups, varying from 80 to 85 per cent.

Several public actions and contests were arranged by the national society in December to celebrate the World AIDS Day.

Two harm reduction centres run by the national society proceeded with its activities. During the reporting period, 25,280 syringes and 2,537 condoms were distributed to IDUs. Partly work is performed by outreach volunteers who contact the clients out of centres (95 people) and 156 IDUs visit centers themselves. About 50 per cent of all beneficiaries are permanent clients.

⁴ ERNA is the European Red Cross/Red Crescent Network on HIV/AIDS.

Kyrgyzstan Red Crescent has been implementing the programme in Bishkek and eight regions working with students, soldiers, truck-drivers, taxi and shuttle-bus drivers, firemen and customs officers. The ways of information dissemination varied from discussions in small-groups to lectures and radio presentations. Informational booklets, leaflets and condoms were distributed to target groups. In summer, RC volunteers worked in youth camps organizing shows, competitions and seminars. During the educational sessions for soldiers, RC staff revealed that they lack information not only on HIV/AIDS but also on STDs prevention. Therefore, health education activities for this target group should be expanded.

Educational activities for sex workers were organized in small groups to build a rapport and to demonstrate the correct way of condom use. In Batken region, meetings with sex workers took place together with a specialist in STD, who answered all specific questions and provided free medical consultation to those in need.

Training sessions for IDUs were organized together with partner non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and stressed the risk of sharing syringes. During the sessions, the participants raised the issues related to lack of disposable syringes, problems with their exchange, protection of HIV-infected people's rights and stigma.

Over six months, programme staff organized several roundtable discussions with local authorities and partner NGOs to improve coordination and cooperation among main players.

The national society started preparation to open a syringe/needles exchange point at the beginning of 2006.

Turkmenistan Red Crescent implemented HIV/AIDS activities in Ashgabad, Abadan and Tukrmenbashi through experienced instructors and trained active volunteers.

The national society is the only non-governmental organization that has access to "closed" institutions – temporary detention facilities and police points. Security personnel were always present at the RC educational sessions and this resulted in limited interaction between educators and participants. Still, verbal assessment of knowledge revealed very basic level of knowledge on HIV/AIDS and STD among this beneficiary group. The national society continues a dialogue with administration of these institutions to make conditions for educational sessions less formal.

Over the reporting period workshops, lectures and campaigns on prevention of HIV/AIDS, sexually transmitted diseases and drug abuse were carried out among youth, military personnel, middle-level medical personnel and working adults. Post-tests showed significant (45 per cent) increase in knowledge.

Educational classes in schools were organized using peer-to-peer approach. Schoolchildren actively participated in games and contests, demonstrating interest and willingness to learn. In three schools, initiative groups were established that comprised most active volunteers. It is interesting to notice that the baseline level of knowledge of HIV related issues among schoolchildren and youth is higher than among adults (about 45 per cent).

The official approval for large-scale school education in HIV/AIDS is still pending, therefore programme staff worked on local level enjoying agreements with school administration and biology teachers. In summer, several activities were carried out in summer camps, including competitions, shows, and question-answer sessions.

Uzbekistan Red Crescent continued the HIV/AIDS prevention programme in two regions of the country – Namangan and Fergana. Main activities remained the same: training for volunteers, peer-to-peer education sessions in schools, colleges, universities, summer camps and community administrative units. In many organizations HIV/AIDS information booths were established.

In September, a presentation of posters on HIV/AIDS and drug abuse prevention took place in Fergana. Later, a karate competition under the slogan "We are against AIDS!" and an action, devoted to the World AIDS Day, were organized. "Safe Route" exhibitions in Namangan and Fergana were attended by more than 600 people.

The work with IDUs and SWs continued through RC outreach volunteers in six harm reduction centres. Over the reporting period, 16,939 syringes (about 70 per cent were returned) were distributed. Special training seminars for 24 outreach workers and 112 IDUs and SWs have been carried to provide information and develop skills on

provision of first aid in case of overdose. The Red Crescent society also agreed with a local clinic that IDUs and SWs in need would undergo free medical check-up and treatment if required.

Expected result 4: An effective social support system is organized to target HIV infected and people living with AIDS.

The activities to achieve this expected result were very limited. Uzbekistan RC finalized a workbook on care for people living with HIV/AIDS and submitted it to the Ministry of Health and the World Health Organization's office for comments. Possibility of pilot use of this workbook in RC college for medical nurses will be also discussed with the authorities.

Disaster management

Objective: Central Asian national societies and communities, living in high disaster risk areas, have increased their capacities to prepare for and respond on disasters.

In the second half of the year, Central Asia Red Crescent societies continued raising disaster awareness among selected communities through community-based disaster preparedness (CBDP) programme. The number of new active RC volunteers from these communities increases. In order to retain volunteers, the national societies took a systematic approach to their encouragement. One of initiatives intended for this purpose was arrangement of exchange visits to other communities where CBDP is implemented. Volunteers welcomed this initiative as most of them have very limited opportunities to travel outside of places of their permanent residence.

To enhance the impact of the Red Crescent mitigation projects focused on vulnerability and disaster risk reduction in project areas, the national societies introduced certain improvements in its activities. They carried out community-based training on project planning process, teaching communities the techniques of project design. This is an important step forward to community development. Such an intervention at the planning phase helps communities to realize objectives and outcome of the projects they want to implement.

One of the weaknesses of the disaster management (DM) programme identified and reported in the Programme Update No.1 was different level of skills and knowledge among RC branch staff. To overcome this it was suggested to take a more systematic approach to staff training in weak branches or arrange exchange visits for their staff within the country or region.

During the reporting period, certain activities were implemented in this respect. Namely, staff of the Kyrgyzstan RC Naryn branch received training in project design. As a result, the branch worked out and implemented a project mitigating the effect of seasonal flooding. In Kazakhstan, Aktobe branch of the national society hired a new DM staff. The staff later passed on the spot training in the Central Kazakhstan DP Centre, concentrating on the programme management, mitigation projects, and rapid response team development. In addition, the new branch staff was provided with a regular coaching from the Red Crescent headquarters' disaster management coordinator.

Expected result 1: By the end of 2005, national society staff and volunteers have improved disaster management skills and their material base.

The table below gives an overview of activities implemented over the reporting period to achieve this expected result. Most of them progressed according to the plan.

Activities	Kazakhstan RC	Kyrgyzstan RC	Turkmenistan RC	Uzbekistan RC
Disaster management workshops/ meetings	53 rayon level workshops and 14 branch meetings focused on DM planning and effective response	1 national and 4 branch workshops	1 national and 28 branch level workshops focused on coordination, risk reduction and response	- 1 national and 11 branch workshops on DM programme issues - 5 workshops for 115 instructors -volunteers who train communities in main DP issues

				- 5 training sessions for sanitary teams
Participation in international training/ meetings/projects	Within the framework of the joint project with UNDP and Ministry of Emergency (MoE) on earthquake risk management, 6 DM staff participated in a regional seminar		DM coordinator participated in a regional seminar in Kazakhstan	
Disaster response teams' (DRTs) training/ field exercises	3 field exercises based on DP centres of NS Branch DM staff and volunteers participated in 17 external field exercises "Anti-terror" by MoE	2 DRTs training in two branches 1 competition of DRTs to select candidates for regional DRTs competition (<i>details in the text below</i>)	23 DRTs training sessions and 7 field exercises 1 competition of DRTs teams to select candidates for regional DRT competition	Regular training for 8 DRTs conducted on monthly basis 2 field exercises for all DRTs focused on evacuation measures and first aid
Exchange visits	2 exchange visits between branches within the country	1 exchange visit of Naryn branch DM staff	1 exchange visit of Dashoguz branch DP staff	2 exchange visits between branches within the country
Disaster awareness activities and printed materials	-World Disasters Report presentation jointly with UNDP in HQ and 7 branches -2 road safety billboards and 12 fire prevention pylons set in Astana - Road safety campaign in Karaganda -50,000 printed materials on DP issues (leaflets, brochures and booklets) - 47 TV reports and 38 articles in local newspapers on RC DP activities	4 information campaigns: - WDR launch in Bishkek - Photo exhibition "Protecting human dignity" jointly with humanitarian values programme - 2 actions "You+Red Crescent" jointly with youth programme 16,000 printed materials on DP (brochures, booklets and posters)	- WDR presentation in Ashgabad - Upgrade of 16 existing banners on road safety - 36,600 DP printed materials (calendars, children books, stickers, booklets, note books)	- Video clip on DRT activities demonstrated on 4 local channels two times per month - Training film on DRT is being shot and will be distributed to all RC branches - Small issue of printed materials (930 copies) for RC branch use (posters, ABC–book for children, DP guidelines for communities, rescuer hand-book)
Warehousing and fleet management	Warehouses and DP vehicle (Toyota-pickup) maintained regularly	Warehouses and DP vehicle (Toyota-pickup) maintained regularly	Warehouses and DP vehicle (Toyota-pickup) maintained regularly	Warehouses and DP vehicle (Toyota-pickup) maintained regularly
Disaster preparedness stocks replenishment	Blankets – 264 Bed linen sets – 245 Mattresses - 205 Detergent sets – 1,222 Pillows – 45	Procured in first half of the year	Blankets-130 Mattresses - 130 Bed linen sets -100 Hygienic sets -30 procured from NS raised funds	Mattresses – 100 Blankets – 200 Bed linen sets – 100 Detergent sets – 1,000 Hygienic sets - 400
Equipment for RRTs	New rapid response team in Karaganda RC branch on 24-hour call (14 members, rescue and radio equipment)		Uniforms for DRT	DRT equipment for 8 teams upgraded: - uniforms - ropes - rollers
Disaster information systems	Regularly maintained	Planned for 2006-07	Regularly maintained and upgraded	Planned for 2006-07

The regional planning meeting that took place in June focused on 2006-2007 plans and Appeal. Key priorities of the regional DM programme included in the national societies' two year plans are the following:

- Development of effective coordination mechanisms to support the national societies in case of large-scale disasters (risk maps, national DP plans, standard operation procedures at country and regional levels etc.). Though all national societies effectively respond to small or medium scale disasters, the general plan of response coordination in case of a large-scale disaster should be worked out. The main focus will also be on strengthening the staff in charge of response operations in their respective countries. Therefore, more attention is to be paid on development of RC response teams' skills and knowledge through regular training, field practices and competitions.
- Further implementation of community-based disaster preparedness (CBDP) and risk reduction projects and compulsory regular monitoring of these projects. CBDP and mitigation components have been carried out in the region for some years already, and there is a need to look into criteria and factors of their sustainability. For this purpose, regional monitoring and analysis must be conducted.



During the regional competition, RC disaster response teams demonstrated their skills in camp management

In September 2005, a regional competition between the Central Asia NS' rapid response teams was conducted in Kazakhstan. Selected national staff and most active volunteers from all five national societies (Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan RC) participated in the competition. The event was highlighted in a local newspaper.

The aim of this competition was to reveal to what extend national rapid response teams are prepared for response, the skills and knowledge they possess and can apply in time of emergency, and to determine future skills development strategy. All teams demonstrated generally good knowledge and skills in practical exercises on situation assessment, camp

management and first aid. However, the competition showed that there is still a need to strengthen skills in camp management and situation assessment. On completion it was decided to organize a similar competition next year, so as to test other teams' members.

In December, a regional disaster response team consisting of five persons – the health and DM coordinators of Kazakhstan RC and three DM coordinators of Kyrgyzstan RC, Tajikistan RC and Tajikistan country delegation – was deployed to areas of Pakistan most affected by the earthquake. The team has been assisting the French RC basic health care emergency response unit and helicopter relief operations during a one month mission, and is expected to come back in the beginning of January 2006. This is for the first time that Central Asia RDRT has been deployed to support the international large-scale emergency operation. Without doubt this mission will add greatly to experience of involved Red Cross/Red Crescent staff and at the same time will allow the staff to share their skills and knowledge.

The regional delegation continued regular maintenance of HF radio network throughout the region. Over the reporting period, radio equipment in six branches of the Uzbekistan Red Crescent society was upgraded.

Response operations

Western DP centre of Kazakhstan RC organized a small scale localized response operation in Atyrau province, hit by floods in September 2005. The RC branch rendered assistance to 65 families distributing mattresses, blankets, bed linen sets, detergents, and used clothing donated by the Swedish RC.

Uzbekistan RC branches of Horezm, Karakalpakstan, Samarkand and Dzhizak provinces responded to several localized domestic fires, providing 250 affected people with relief items (mattresses, blankets, hygienic sets and detergents).

Expected result 2: By the end of 2005, targeted communities have community based disaster preparedness knowledge and skills to increase participation in mitigation activities.

Community's capacity to cope with local disasters is strengthened by RC community-based disaster preparedness (CBDP) programmes.

During the second half of the year, Kazakhstan RC implemented eleven CBDP projects covering more than 15,000 people. As a result, forty three local disaster committees (LDCs) that unite around 350 people were created. These projects also included compilation of risk maps, DP plans and community training. During the projects' implementation, 12 field exercises for communities were conducted in accordance with developed community DP plans. All CBDP projects were based on vulnerability and capacity assessment and aimed at floods, forest and steppe fires prevention. These projects contributed to reducing the risk of disasters and strengthening community coping mechanisms.



CBDP field exercise in Surhandarya province of Uzbekistan

Kyrgyzstan RC implemented nine CBDP projects covering more than 11,000 community members. The projects were followed by DP components such as community training, field exercises, first aid and risk mapping. Project planning process (PPP) training was part of CBDP training as well. Communities master the techniques of projects development based on their urgent and prioritized needs. Thus, after PPP training in Talas region leaders of one of the communities designed a project aimed at establishing an agricultural corporation in order to develop their village and set a power-saw bench. Local authorities already

agreed on contributing premises to this project.

One of the Kyrgyzstan RC projects aimed at fire prevention at three province schools and an asylum for single elderly. The project included sessions on fire prevention and first aid for 2,831 beneficiaries, conducted by RC branch volunteers. At schools, initiative groups were selected out of schoolchildren and teachers, which will be responsible for further training and fire equipment maintenance. In addition, fire information billboards were set in each school. A competition between schools took place at the end of the training cycle to test new skills. This CBDP project also promoted an idea of mitigation activities in one school and the asylum, aimed at fire preventive treatment of lofts' wooden constructions (*see the table below*).

Uzbekistan RC implemented CBDP projects in fifteen communities, covering more than 44,000 people residing there. Each community created a local disaster committee and conducted 15 field exercises focused on disaster response techniques. Awareness activities included DP information stands and community consultation centres, where RC volunteers provide DP related information to public. All projects were based on vulnerability and capacity assessment, conducted jointly with communities and RC branches.

Turkmenistan RC implemented eight CBDP projects, covering more than 24,000 people living in these communities. Field exercises were conducted for all involved communities with a focus on evacuation techniques. The communities expressed sincere interest in such programmes and participated actively in creation of local disaster committees responsible for community DP activities.

Another major component of the disaster management programme in the region – mitigation activities – continued in the second half of 2005. Over the reporting period, ten mitigation projects were carried out addressing hazards like floods, landslides, earthquakes, forest and domestic fires. The table below presents a summary of implemented mitigation projects.

NATIONAL SOCIETY	NUMBER OF PROJECTS	DESCRIPTION
Kazakhstan RC	4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safe water access in rural schools of Pavlodar region: reducing the vulnerability of 7,000 schoolchildren to infectious and water-borne diseases in cooperation with the health programme. The project included: hygiene training and awareness campaign in eight settlements and eight rural schools; water filters installation in these schools; construction of DP stands; distribution of 600 copies of DP information materials among in schools and local administration. The project attracted 120 new RC society members; 3,500 RC stamps were also sold at schools. • Fire protection in Semipalatinsk, East Kazakhstan: reducing the risk of forest fires and protecting land from desertification. Local communities and RC volunteers took active part in rehabilitation of forest tract by planting trees. • Fire protection in Kokshetau, Central Kazakhstan: establishing forest shelter belts and cleaning forest tracts from dead and burnt woods. • Water rescue in Central Kazakhstan: establishing water rescue teams of trained RC volunteers, who rescue people, teach and render first aid, and organize awareness campaigns. This is the continuation of the last year project. This year five teams of 105 RC volunteers-rescuers worked in open swimming areas in three regions. The teams trained 395 children in swimming, held four awareness campaigns in children summer camps, distributed 2,200 printed materials on the beaches and rescued three people.
Kyrgyzstan RC	4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fire prevention: treating lofts' wooden constructions in one school and one elderly asylum in Karabalta town of Chu region. • River bank reinforcement in Tasharyk village, Talas province: mitigating seasonal floods of Kenkol river, which damage village crops and households. In total, 230 metres of the river bank were reinforced. Local community actively cleaned the river bank before reinforcement, made gabion nets and provided meals for workers. • Cleaning of landslide channel in Zhany zhol village, Naryn province: reducing the vulnerability of 3,000 people to seasonal flooding caused by landslides. In total, 650 metres of the channel were cleaned. Active community participated in excavation with their own tools (spades, rakes etc.). In addition, training was conducted for the local community on DP and mitigation issues. Local authorities, civil defence service and regional sanitary and epidemiological station supported the project with funds and resources. Local authorities and community assumed full responsibility for future channel maintenance. • Flood protection in Chui village, Chu province: protecting 9,300 people from seasonal flooding by cleaning, widening and deepening Shamsi riverbed. The project was similar to the project in Naryn province (above).
Turkmenistan RC	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Two landslide protective dams in Baharden region: protecting local community of 11,800 people in two villages from seasonal flooding caused by landslides. The project was planned and implemented out by community members. Additionally, the trees were planted to protect the soil from erosion. • Cleaning of drainage channel in Garash-syzlyk, Lebap region: reducing the vulnerability of 10,000 people to water-borne diseases, flooding, salinity and desertification of lands. Local community proposed this project to RC branch, and around 50 kilometres of the channel were cleaned with the help of local authorities and community itself.
Total	10	

Kyrgyzstan RC implemented less mitigation projects this year than it was planned due to unstable political situation in the country, which hampered some activities during March-May 2005. This resulted in some savings on the programme budget. Uzbekistan RC mitigation projects, mainly tree planting to mitigate landslides' impact, took place in the first half of the year with financial support from DIPECHO⁵.

In November 2005, regional monitoring of RC mitigation projects was conducted in Kazakhstan⁶. This process aimed at measuring the impact of projects on targeted communities and Red Crescent branches, assessing financial efficiency of projects and factors of their sustainability. The monitoring team consisted of disaster management and organizational development staff from Tajikistan and Turkmenistan RC societies. The findings of the monitoring were compiled into the report and shared with all five Central Asia national societies.

The report demonstrates strengths and gaps of the mitigation component of the Kazakhstan RC disaster management programme. Strengths include: staff professionalism; close cooperation with local authorities and other organizations; and compliance with the NS statutes and strategic directions in global DM issues. However, there are still some organizational and managerial issues requiring attention. These are: development of a clear system for projects' selection and activity planning; greater independence of RC branches in making decisions on relief assistance; and development of standard forms of agreements, acceptance and delivery reports that incorporate sustainability factor.

The regional strategy of mitigation projects' planning and implementation, as well as projects' selection and sustainability criteria, will be further discussed at the regional DM review meeting planned for February 2006.

Humanitarian values

Objective: The Central Asian Red Crescent Societies have the capacity to influence a reduction in community discrimination and stigmatization.

Expected result 1: Understanding of the Fundamental Principles and a tolerant attitude towards marginal groups among the Red Crescent staff, newly recruited volunteers and partners is developed.

Over the reporting period, the **Kazakhstan RC** society's website has been updated monthly jointly with a web-designer. New design of the website was developed and the work on the English version of the site has started.

Red Crescent society issued 100 copies of newsletter on monthly basis and distributed them among region and district branches.

Kyrgyzstan RC continued with sessions on fundamental principles and humanitarian values among students of the higher educational institutions: Slavic University, Kyrgyzstan International University and Kyrgyzstan State University for Construction and Architecture. The sessions included information about the Red Cross/Red Crescent Movement, its mission, history and principles.

The national society regularly arranged discussions with staff and volunteers on importance of promotion of tolerance towards vulnerable groups of population: people leaving with HIV/AIDS, TB patients, disadvantaged people and others. Anti-stigma element has been included in all presentations of the Kyrgyzstan Red Crescent society.

Red Crescent society published two issues of newsletter in Kyrgyz and Russian languages (3,000 copies) with support from the HIV/AIDS and TB prevention programmes, youth and gender programmes. Newsletters were distributed among all region branches for further dissemination to national society partners and volunteers.

⁵ Disaster Preparedness-ECHO

⁶ Similar monitoring was carried out in Turkmenistan in 2003 and in Tajikistan in 2004.

Additionally, more than 6,000 copies of different information materials – booklets, calendars, postcards, posters, etc. – were issued and distributed in cooperation with the national society information department.

Turkmenistan RC kept regular contacts with mass media to communicate to public Red Crescent messages of tolerance and respect for marginal groups and inform people of the national society activities. Over the year, 58 articles were published in newspapers, 10 programmes were broadcast on TV and 19 on radio channels. In addition, the national society issued 30 information bulletins and posters about RC volunteers.

In October, Turkmenistan Red Crescent held a roundtable meeting for media, youth and general public. The meeting was dedicated to the national society's 80th anniversary that will be celebrated in 2006. Red Crescent used this event to once again highlight the society's programmes.

Uzbekistan Red Crescent society held eight seminars and meetings for staff from regional and district branches and three for youth coordinators to discuss the issues of dissemination of the Movement's fundamental principles and values, as well as their promotion in local mass media.

Meetings with Namangan and Fergana regional chairpersons were conducted in August to introduce principles and basics of tolerance and understanding essential for the work with HIV-positive people and at-risk groups. In Fergana, a seminar on the same issues was also carried out for community (*mahallya*) leaders, commercial sex workers and outreach workers of the HIV/AIDS prevention programme.

During the reporting period, six newsletters were published (500 copies) by Uzbekistan RC. These newsletters covered actions of the national society related to Red Cross/Red Crescent Day, meeting of youth volunteers in Bukhara, summer camp for disabled children arranged by Khiva city youth centre, and also programme activities on prevention of TB, HIV/AIDS, road safety campaign with elements of first aid, etc.

Starting from the beginning of July, the national society's website has been updated on a monthly basis.

The scale of information coverage of the Red Crescent activities on TV and radio has definitely increased. Over the period, the national society arranged roundtable on the national TV channel and a series of weekly radio programmes to tell more about the work of Red Crescent. By December, the number of broadcasts and newspaper articles about Red Crescent society made 174.

Attracting mass media and informing public about the national society work resulted in the improved understanding of the Movement's fundamental principles and values among the national society staff and among volunteers. It also resulted in increase in the number of active volunteers of the national society during the reporting period.

The following 2005 initiatives, dedicated to the national society's 80th anniversary, fell out of activities planned for this year:

- Additional information bulletin was issued
- "The chronicles of the most important events" was prepared for publication
- Multi media disk "The 80th Anniversary of Uzbekistan Red Crescent" was produced
- Additional radio programmes were broadcast

Expected result 2: Communities in Central Asia are equipped with essential knowledge to change attitude and behaviour towards people living with HIV/AIDS and TB as well as women and children affected by violence and gender discrimination.

The contest announced by **Kazakhstan RC** among printing media, radio and TV outlets on the best coverage on stigma related to HIV/AIDS finished in December. Over the year, about 15 publications promoting tolerance towards sick people appeared in media.

Close cooperation with mass media continued. The headquarters information officer took part in shooting films about disasters and national society activities within disaster management programme on TV. The officer

continued to support programme staff of the national society in areas such as tracing service, assistance to refugees, health, disaster management and youth.

During the reporting period, **Kyrgyzstan RC** issued eight press releases on International First Aid Day, Red Crescent society humanitarian assistance to earthquake affected population of Iran and vulnerable Kyrgyzstan communities, poster competition on the World AIDS Day, the International Volunteer Day, RC charity decade (*ten days action*), charity concert “Give a smile to a child”, national society gender programmes etc. Based on these press releases, about 30 different information materials appeared in printing media. In addition, 14 TV and 9 radio reportages (including those at regional level) were broadcast.

For the same period, more than 15 field trips for journalists were organised to different programme sites of the Red Crescent society: TB and HIV/AIDS prevention (Bishkek city), gender programmes (Tokmak city), disaster mitigation (Osh region), giving New Year presents to vulnerable children (throughout the country), self-assistance programmes for lonely elderly people and RC literacy school (Issyk-Kul region).

Besides, the national society presented its volunteer work in a live programme on the national TV channel and participated in a press conference of the information agency “AKIpress” dedicated to the International Volunteer Day.

Four Red Crescent social video spots were broadcast in Kyrgyz and Russian languages over the past six months. The spots appeared on national and local channels and told public of the following: disaster awareness issues, RC charity decade aimed to collect money for vulnerable children, RC charity concert, and a RC “hot line”.

The issues of stigmatisation of HIV-positive and TB-infected people, as well as vulnerable women and children, were highlighted monthly through mass media.

Impact

As a result of a close cooperation of the information department and programme departments, the quality of published information materials of the national society improved. The materials are published in Kyrgyz and Russian languages, are more diverse and easily accessible to all categories of the population; its distribution area has expanded. Programme integration results in more effective national society’s team work on protecting human dignity.

This contributed to greater transparency of the national society activities, which is important in strengthening relationships with communities, local NGOs, government structures, business companies and international community. Transparency helps to attract businesses, individuals and volunteers within the fundraising projects. Besides, national society staff is more frequently invited to meetings of the international players as experts in humanitarian issues and communities’ needs.

Media coverage contributes to the Movement positive image raising, better advocating on behalf of the most vulnerable groups of population, and building tolerance among communities towards marginalised and at-risk groups.

Modules on stigma and discrimination have been developed within the HIV/AIDS prevention programme of **Turkmenistan RC**. The national society’s youth centres in Ashgabat city and in the regions staged performances fighting stigma and promoting tolerant attitude to people living with HIV/AIDS. The shows run in schools and organizations. All information materials published within TB and HIV/AIDS prevention programmes of the national society include anti-stigma and anti-discrimination messages as well.

Uzbekistan RC organized six radio programmes dedicated to the Year of Health (announced by Uzbekistan President) and TB prevention. The programmes were arranged in form of live talks with the national society regional and city branch chairpersons and health department staff. Positive impact and achievements of the Red Crescent TB prevention programme, beneficiary selection criteria, means of social support and issues of stigmatization of TB infected and their families have been discussed on the radio.

To promote tolerant attitude towards HIV positive people and at-risk groups, a poster competition was organized between schoolchildren of Fergana region. The action was highlighted in national and regional media.

From July, all national TV-channels have been demonstrating video spots on HIV/AIDS and drugs abuse prevention, First Aid and Red Crescent disaster management activities. On average, the spots appeared on TV 2-3 times a month.

Red Crescent work on promotion of tolerance towards sick people and at-risk groups among communities has its positive results. A 36 years old drug user in one of the communities the national society has been working with quit and got a job. Once stigmatized and isolated, he received much needed support of neighbour community members that helped him to break off a bad habit and obtain employment because of advocacy from community leaders.

In October, the national society hosted a presentation of the World Disasters Report. Disaster management branch staff, representatives of education, health and emergency ministries and mass media attended the presentation. The key messages of this presentation were: information can save lives and help to alleviate sufferings in case of disaster; and accurate and timely information is an engine of timely and effective response. The event was highlighted on radio, TV, in newspapers and on the Red Crescent website.

A large-scale information and health education campaign run in the wake of and on the World AIDS Day of 1 December. Five reportages devoted to HIV/AIDS related issues were aired on national TV channels, five on the radio and ten articles were published by newspapers. Roundtable discussions and meetings with public that raised awareness of the national society activities on disease prevention and healthy life style promotion, especially among young people, became part of the campaign.

Expected result 3: Community access to key Movement messages is improved as is Red Crescent dissemination and information capacity at branch level.

Communication capacities of the pilot **Kazakhstan RC** branches have improved. Over the past months, Aktobe, Taldykorgan and Taraz newly hired staff prepared press releases, promoted RC branch actions through media and supplied information for the national society newsletter. In addition, regional communication officers produced information stands on branch activities and currently work on photo and video archives.

Information officers support programme staff in their branches on regular basis as well. For instance, Karaganda branch disseminated information about the Red Crescent rescue service (DM project) through media.

In general, over the year, national society communication staff in branches gained more experience in work with mass media and public. Journalists receive regular updates on Red Crescent branch actions and plans and cooperate willingly; they often refer to the national society for information and help to advocate on behalf of socially-vulnerable groups and to promote tolerance.

Within the framework of the project on branch communication capacities building, **Kyrgyzstan RC** hired three staff in Bishkek, Karakol and Osh branches. Later on the national society conducted a workshop on public relations for these branch staff and programme officers from the headquarters. The new staff regularly received information materials, press-releases and guidance on work with mass media from the headquarters.

The number of contacts with media at branch level rose: branches maintain contacts via Internet and create media databases on the spot. Local journalists are kept well informed about branch plans and activities, and media coverage of the Red Crescent programmes increased by 15 per cent in comparison with 2004.

Turkmenistan RC hired a new communication staff in Mary regional branch of the national society. In other branches communication functions are covered by three active volunteers.

The planned activities on building communication capacities in pilot branches of **Uzbekistan RC** have been delayed and later postponed for 2006.

Challenges

Local and national news agencies face quick staff turn-over. This creates troubles for all national societies in the region as each time they need to establish new relationships, attract new journalists and update them about the national societies' mission, objectives and activities.

Organizational development

Objective: Central Asia national societies' capacities to deliver services to vulnerable people are strengthened through an organizational change process and capacity building efforts.

Expected result 1: By the end of 2006, the Central Asian national societies have shifted to a new structure with clear division of governance and management functions, which ensures effective management of programmes and branches.

Regular assistance with a shift to a new structure with governance and management functions division was provided to the national societies in the second half of 2005. The first (informal) meeting of the Central Asia Red Crescent societies' leadership and the consultant within the Movement on governance and management functions division took place during the regional Presidents Meeting in Kyrgyzstan in May 2005. That was a short opportunity for leaderships and the consultant to discuss the most urgent issues and plan for a consultative mission later this year. The Planning meeting held in June in Almaty was where regional national society Vice Presidents/ Secretaries General met with the consultant again and discussed progress in statutes and structure revision, as well as their further needs. They also considered the impact of transition on the national societies' planning within areas such as human resources, programme activities, financial management, etc. As a follow up of this meeting, Tajikistan Red Crescent society's president and the Federation regional programme coordinator participated in the Georgian Red Cross General Assembly, conducted in Tbilisi in October 2005.

Over the reporting period, the consultant visited the Red Crescent societies as follows: October – Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan RC, December – Tajikistan and Uzbekistan RC. Turkmenistan RC required no consultations this year.

The consultant's report (in English and Russian) on these visits will be submitted by the end of the year and shared with all partners – Red Crescent societies, the Federation delegations, Secretariat technical departments, partner national societies present in the region and donors.

During the second half of the year, **Kazakhstan RC** held discussions on the revision of statutes and structure at all levels of the society. Special workshops have been conducted to familiarize staff with the changes that will be introduced in the structure of Red Crescent.

The draft statutes incorporating recommendations from a local lawyer were discussed by the statutory commission of the national society (NS) at the meeting held in October. The next meeting of the statutory commission is scheduled for December. This time the commission will also examine new regulations so as to bring them in conformity with a new draft version of the statutes.

In the meantime, other related legal regulations, guidelines and instructions are being developed by the NS Executive Council. These documents will be utilized to form new governing bodies, regulate their relationships with management structure and clarify the issues of volunteer management.

A draft structure of **Kyrgyzstan RC** was presented at the third presidium meeting in October. The new structure stipulates abolishment of governing bodies at regional level. Instead, it was proposed to introduce a position of a regional (*oblast*) representative where necessary to carry out managerial functions. Apart from the headquarters, the governance will only be present at district and city levels. Currently, new structure is being promoted among Red Crescent branches.

The statutes of the Red Crescent society have been sent to the Joint Statutes Commission for consideration. The congress meeting, where the governance and management leadership will be elected/ appointed, has been postponed and will be held in February 2006.

Discussions of a new version of the **Turkmenistan RC** statutes had finished by the end of August. In November, a working meeting of the task force was held to discuss the new version that included suggestions and changes proposed by branches. The updated version has been sent back to branches; their feedback is expected in the second half of December.

The final version of the statutes will be presented at the national society presidium meeting where presidium will also decide on the date of the next congress. Since the draft statutes have been only partially agreed within the Red Crescent, it can not be submitted to the Ministry of Justice for consideration yet.

Turkmenistan RC also hired a new person who covers statutes related legal issues of the national society.

Due to circumstances beyond the control of **Uzbekistan RC**, the national society congress meeting has been postponed several times. All activities related to revision of the Red Crescent structure, election of governing bodies and appointment of management at national and regional level has consequently been postponed as well. This resulted in significant balance on the programme. However, the validity of funds provided by Swedish RC for these activities within 2005 Appeal has been extended till next year.

Expected result 2: By the end of 2005, effectiveness of the Central Asian national societies is increased through building capacities of their branches in the areas of financial management and fundraising, human resource management practice, logistics development and practical vulnerability and capacity assessment (VCA) skills.

Special fundraising commissions have been established in regional branches of **Kazakhstan RC**. These commissions are responsible for membership fee collection and recording, as well as for elaboration of fundraising campaigns. The fundraising commissions are supposed to make presentations of current activities analysis and recommendations on strengthening the financial sustainability of branches at a fundraising meeting for branch chairpersons in December.

Experience exchange visits were arranged between Almaty, Aktobe, Astana, Atyrau, Zhambyl, Karaganda, Kyzylorda and South-Kazakhstan branch chairpersons. During the visits, attention was paid mainly to coordination and cooperation with local authorities and participation in NGOs' activities. At the meeting in Zhambyl regional branch, chairpersons initiated the development of guidelines for branches on volunteer attraction, registration, encouragement and retention. These guidelines will be further submitted for consideration to the NS presidium meeting.

In cooperation with the state regional healthcare department, Talas regional branch of **Kyrgyzstan RC** held First Aid training for trainers. These trainers will be involved in training of local communities and will also provide paid FA courses for commercial companies. Additionally, Strategic Plan of Talas branch development for 2006-2007 was developed by branch staff and adopted by the NS presidium.

In November, the national society conducted a seminar on fundraising for 24 people from branch fundraising teams and volunteers.

Some planned activities of the national society have been delayed. Among them is a VCA in Talas branch that will be held by Red Crescent volunteers in January 2006. The branch fundraising plan is being finalized as well.

Turkmenistan RC human resources management strategy for 2005-2007 and a plan of action were approved by the NS presidium in September. The strategy targets three main directions: volunteers, members and staff.

The project on development of Etrek rayon branch of Balkan region has been designed and will be implemented from December 2005. Etrek rayon branch is remote from the region centre but has appropriate conditions for fundraising and organizational development activities. Therefore assistance from the headquarters will trigger further development of branch capacities and raise the Red Crescent image among local communities and government structures.

According to the staff training programme, elaborated by the **Uzbekistan RC** organizational development (OD) department, 42 chairpersons from rayon and regional branches were trained in July. The training course was tailored to the needs of proposed participants and included basic VCA, fundraising and project planning skills.

A pilot project on introduction of a modern accounting program runs in three national society branches. Last year the program was adapted to specific accounting needs of the Red Crescent and successfully put into practice in the headquarters. The software has been already installed in three pilot branches and accountants of these branches were trained in how to use it.

In November, the NS OD department carried out performance evaluation in Andijan, Jizzak and Syrdarya branches. This study showed that record keeping and member registration procedures should be improved. The plan of action on improvement of above-mentioned issues has been developed together with the branch chairpersons.

In December, the national society launched a traditional charity decade (*ten days action*). RC branches started a media campaign, publishing information about the Red Crescent and its activities in order to raise funds.

Within the framework of the national society additional branch development project in Tashkent and Jizzakh branches, supported by the Capacity Building Fund, training sessions have been conducted for staff on different topics.

Expected result 3: By the end of 2005, the youth movement of the Central Asian national societies is actively involved in the activities of their national societies through performing clear role in other programmes (health, DM and humanitarian values) as well as effectively implementing projects to address needs of vulnerable youth.

Kazakhstan RC issued a regulation strengthening the role of the RC Youth Movement in accordance with the national society Youth Policy Concept of 2002. The regulation prescribes the youth coordinator together with their counterparts from branches to develop a draft of the Red Crescent Youth Policy.

During six months, youth centres of the national society held 32 training sessions for newly recruited volunteers. Astana, Kostanay and North-Kazakhstan RC youth centres held charity actions to attract funds for food parcels distributed later among lonely elderly. The campaign was dedicated to the International Day of the Elderly in October. Taldykorgan and Shymkent youth centres raised money through a lottery. This money will be spent on New Year gifts for children from orphanages in these cities.

Within this period, fifteen training sessions on HIV/AIDS prevention were also held for youth in nine branches. Youth centres further continued raising awareness on HIV and STI prevention among school and college students in Astana, Karaganda, Kokshetau and Semipalatinsk cities.

In summer, the national society headquarters arranged a youth camp. The camp accommodated 55 volunteers representing 12 regional youth centres who discussed issues of youth participation in the Red Crescent activities. During the discussion, volunteers also paid attention to healthy life style promotion, HIV/AIDS prevention, youth policy and work on adoption of new statutes, volunteer attraction and retention, disaster management, first aid skills, fundraising and financial sustainability.

During the reporting period, **Kyrgyzstan RC** youth volunteers delivered 288 training sessions on HIV/AIDS prevention covering 4,320 school and college students.

In November, a youth meeting was organized for 26 RC youth staff and volunteers. Following topics formed the meeting agenda: fundraising, results of youth meetings at the Federation General Assembly, report from the Youth Commission and its new membership, Youth Policy and Strategy.

Within the framework of a traditional charity Red Crescent decade, Bishkek youth center held a hip-hop festival. The aim of this festival was to attract funds for New Year gifts for children from TB clinic, street children rehabilitation center, center for children with hearing and vision disorders and orphanages. The collected amount allows for gifts for 1,116 children, while the last year sum was sufficient only for 256.

A new action called “Unwrap a Wish of a Child” was tested during the decade. The idea of this action was borrowed by the head of the national society OD department from Fundraising Skillshare event, organized by Netherlands Red Cross and the Federation this year. To raise money, the drawings made by orphans and depicting their dreams were exhibited in public places (markets, stadiums etc.), where people could buy them for about 1.2 US Dollar each. However, the action did not receive much support from the community.



More than 1,000 vulnerable children received New Year presents from Kyrgyzstan RC this year

Different actions were organized by Kyrgyzstan RC youth around the country to celebrate its volunteer network on 5 December, the International Volunteer Day. For instance in Naryn volunteers conducted an anti-drug campaign at schools; in Batken a TV show and a radio contest were arranged; a discothèque, a drawing contest and a theatre show run in Jalalabat, etc. The national society efforts received support from the Youth Policy Department of the Ministry of Education, UN Volunteers, Peace Corps, JICA⁷, Habitat for Humanity⁸, HelpAge International⁹ and other local and international public organizations.

Turkmenistan RC youth centre in Abadan developed a project for unmanageable and disadvantaged children. Based on results of the study, carried out among unmanageable teenagers under the age of fourteen, youth centre volunteers decided to establish a support/resource centre. This centre will help such

children to socialize, feel included and improve their skills through organized leisure activities, library stock, language and computer lessons, sessions on HIV and sexually transmitted infections (STI) prevention, leadership training etc. Basic furniture and equipment for the centre have been already purchased.

Ashgabat and Abadan Red Crescent branches arranged a series of workshops for school teachers and police officers on approach and special techniques in work with juvenile offenders and drug addicts. This work is carried out in accordance with the agreement on cooperation between the branches and local juvenile delinquency departments.

The national society Youth Executive Council met in October to discuss current activities and approve a plan of action for 2006. To prevent high volunteer turn-over it was decided to hold two additional workshops for new volunteers.

In August, **Uzbekistan RC** held a contest that pursued formation of youth centres and improvement of their effectiveness in vulnerability reduction. The contest attracted ten project proposals from regional branches. Two of them – from Margilan city and Vabkent district branches – were selected and served as a ground for further youth activities.

During the second half of the year, the national society youth movement established three youth centres – in Vabkent district, Margilan and Zaravshan cities. In total, 28 youth clubs were organized within these centres: 8 in Syrdarya region and 20 in Namangan region. Training sessions on first aid, disaster management, International Humanitarian Law, HIV/AIDS and drug abuse prevention are held among youth in the clubs.

The fifth international youth camp was arranged by the national society in September. The best 60 volunteers from NS branches and two volunteers from Tajikistan RC participated in it. The programme of the camp included

⁷ Website <http://www.jica.go.jp>

⁸ Website <http://www.habitatjam.com>

⁹ HelpAge International is a global network of not-for-profit organisations with a mission to work with, and for, disadvantaged older people worldwide, website <http://www.helpage.org/Aboutus>

roundtable on issues of HIV spread, different competitions and a contest for best project targeting youth vulnerabilities.

In November, Uzbekistan RC held a two-day seminar for 25 volunteer leaders from branches. The participants examined the questions of youth leadership, volunteer retention and activity planning.

Coordination, cooperation and strategic partnerships

Objective: Central Asia national societies improve their capacities to serve the most vulnerable through Federation coordination of partnerships within and outside the region, human resource development and technical support.

Expected result 1: By the end of 2005, dialogue and cooperation between partners within the region and beyond are improved.

In June, the planning meeting jointly called by the regional delegations of the Federation and the ICRC took place in Almaty. The meeting aimed to adjust the plans of the national societies for the coming two years and to assist in coordinating the support to the societies in accomplishing their plans. Programme staff of the five regional Red Crescent societies and their leadership participated in the meeting. All partner national societies (PNS) present in the region were invited as observers.

In general the meeting was seen to be successful by all parties. Most notably synergies were found by focusing all players by theme (health, disaster preparedness etc.). However, the PNS role was not clear and needs to be properly developed before the next meeting, which the regional delegations of the Federation and the ICRC would like to convene in 2006.

Progress on Cooperation Agreement Strategy (CAS) process in Tajikistan continues. The head of Tajikistan delegation attended an awareness raising workshop where the latest thinking in CAS was explored, and the Federation is now fully prepared to drive the process. The dialog is ongoing with field delegates and the headquarters of the partner national societies working in the region. During January, a CAS workshop will be held for concerned parties in Tajikistan. A wider event is scheduled for March and will possibly be attached to the first presidents meeting of 2006. The ICRC is supportive and included in the process.

The country service agreement between the Federation and American RC has finally been signed during the period. There was a period of approximately six months without any legal framework for the Federation support to American RC which is unacceptable and must be avoided in future. The projects supported by American RC bilaterally in Tajikistan and Uzbekistan reduced in size by 50 per cent at short notice in July due to funding cuts.

Efforts continue with open dialogue between the Federation delegation and major bilateral contributor to the Red Crescent societies' disaster management and OD programmes – the Netherlands RC – to ensure the activities complement each other.

Expected result 2: Human resource development is improved by providing knowledge sharing opportunities within and outside the region.

During the planning meeting, a proposal was presented to secretary generals/vice-presidents that transparent budget architecture – especially Human Resources costs - made by each operating national society should be the foundation for all inputs. The proposal was shared with all national societies' partners present at the meeting. Though this initiative was not greeted with enthusiasm, the work continues on coordinating and harmonising different salary support and per diem rates from the international partners.

In December, the regional disaster response team was deployed to Asia Pacific region (for more details on this mission see Disaster management section of this report). This has been an excellent opportunity for learning and knowledge sharing. An evaluation of how the process worked will be undertaken by the parties at the disaster management meeting in January, however all feedback so far was excellent.

Expected result 3: Coordinated support is provided in developing strategic directions in four core areas identified in the Federation's Strategy 2010.

The regional delegation technical staff continued to facilitate information transfer to national societies. The regional delegation's support of health activities during the period have been reactivated as the health delegate position was filled in June. Designing a coherent and practical humanitarian values programme continues to challenge the regional delegation and the national societies.

International representation and advocacy

Objective: By the end of 2005, the image, profile, visibility and advocacy capacity of Central Asian national societies has improved - through the support of the delegation in advocating at national, regional and international levels - among different actors on the activities of the Movement. In each country the national societies will be accepted by their governments as a reliable interlocutor on humanitarian issues.

Expected result 1: The profile of the five Central Asia national societies continues to increase through more focused work by the regional delegation with government authorities, national and international organisations and the media.

It is difficult to determine if the profile is increasing without expensive and quite scientific image surveys. The regional delegation will decide with the Red Crescent societies during 2006 what kind of evaluations or surveys need to be carried out. The decision will be reported to partners as the national societies look for support in this work.

Expected result 2: The discussion on the Red Crescent Law continues in all five Central Asian Republics through regular dialogue with the respective governments.

On request from the government of Kyrgyzstan, the national society presented different samples of the Red Cross/Red Crescent Law for their consideration. Discussions continue in Kazakhstan and Tajikistan.

Expected result 3: The Federation continues lobbying on the Status Agreement between the Government of Turkmenistan and the International Federation in 2005.

The letter by the President of the Federation on behalf of the Federation to the head of state in Turkmenistan asking for a speedy resolution to this matter has yet to be sent. There is some progress however: the head of regional delegation was received by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Ashgabad in December. The assurances to keep the matter high in their priority list were voiced by the Ministry. This will be followed by another meeting in January 2006.

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