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Azerbaijan Annual Report 2013

 International Federation
of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

MAAAZ002
30 April 2014

**This report covers the
period
from 1 January 2013
to 31 December 2013.**

*Azerbaijan Red Crescent Health
Department presenting "Club 25"
at a secondary school in Baku.
Photo: AzRC*



Overview

All programmes and activities of the Azerbaijan Red Crescent Society (AzRC) are aligned with and contribute to the IFRC's Strategy 2020 aiming to improve the lives and to alleviate the suffering of the most vulnerable people.

In view of the achievements of the Azerbaijan Red Crescent on the road of structural and professional development, the IFRC and the Azerbaijan Red Crescent Society have agreed that the local office of the IFRC is closed with effect from 1 January 2014. From that day, the overall coordination of the humanitarian assistance and the capacity-building support to the Azerbaijan Red Crescent Society is done under the supervision of the Head of Country Cluster of the Europe Zone Office in accordance with the approved plans and budgets.

During the reporting period two projects were supported by donors via the IFRC, and several projects were implemented bilaterally. The IFRC funding was allocated for two components, namely non-remunerated blood donor recruitment and tuberculosis prevention and treatment. The other two components were implemented either in integration with similar AzRC projects or on a small scale from the AzRC's own funds.

In the **Health and Care Programme** the Azeri National Society reached people through training sessions, promotion of healthy life style and awareness raising, harm reduction, blood donors' recruitment campaigns, and visits to people living with Multi Drug Resistant Tuberculosis (MDR TB).

It should be underlined that the funding for tuberculosis prevention and treatment and the non-remunerated blood donor recruitment (Club-25 Initiative) components was allocated from October-November 2012. The implementation of the tuberculosis component will be continued financially till the end of October 2014, without a break. The financial implementation of the non-remunerated blood donor recruitment component (Club-25 Initiative) was finalized at the end of January 2013. From February 2013, the AzRC carried out activities from its own funds. Later on, the activities were

resumed for the next period from September 2013 till the end of the year and it is assumed that in 2014, the financial support might be renewed as well.

The non-remunerated blood donor recruitment component is carried out to promote voluntary blood donation initiatives, attract blood donors and support the increase of blood component reserves within the country. The existing funding allowed, both due to donor support and the AzRC's own funds, to carry out a couple of trainings among the newly selected volunteers, update the knowledge of the already involved local branch staff and volunteers in Baku and regions, organize blood donor recruitment campaigns devoted to the 93rd anniversary of the establishment of the National Society, the World Haemophilia and Thalassemia Days and World Blood Donor Day and distribute some 2,000 leaflets. The members of "Clubs 25" established in educational institutions of Baku and Sumgayit cities, Sabirabad, Ismayilli, Qusar, Lankaran and Mingachevir regions actively supported the organization of the mentioned events, carried out sessions on healthy lifestyle and promoted the idea of becoming blood donors, distributed brochures among staff and volunteers, the general public, and local communities.

The main purpose of the AzRC's TB prevention and treatment project is to improve adherence to treatment regimens by the most vulnerable continuation-phase multidrug resistant MDR-TB patients, provide home-based, direct observation of treatment (DOTS+) and underpin this process with psychological, social and educational support for patients and their families. The implementation of the project went according to the developed work plan and budget with relevant updates based on requirements. The nurses went on with their regular six-day-per-week visits to patients and provided the necessary support. Most patients expressed their willingness to continue treatment after clearly recognising the difficulties in their health condition and the treatment process (secondary effects). They appreciated the AzRC nurses for their visits controlling the treatment. Several patients in the stage of a successful completion of the treatment agreed to participate in the establishment of a Civil Union of Former TB patients to organize awareness raising anti-TB campaigns, health promotion activities, share their stories about treatment and further recovery. Even though it had not been budgeted, the AzRC, by its own initiative and from the local branches' own funds, provided patients with food parcels on a quarterly basis.

Due to the absence of IFRC-driven financial support, the other two components, namely Community-Based First Aid and Harm Reduction were carried out from the National Society's own funds, via ICRC and Austrian Red Cross financed projects and with the active participation of volunteers.

Working in partnership

Operational Partners	Agreement
Ministry of Emergency of Azerbaijan	Memorandum of Understanding signed in 2007
Ministry of Health of Azerbaijan	Memorandum of Understanding signed in 2008
Research Institute on Haemophilia and Thalassemia	Memorandum of Understanding signed in 2003 (prolonged in 2007)
IFRC and Azerbaijan Red Crescent	Coordination and Cooperation Agreement signed in 2012
IFRC and ICRC	Cooperation Agreement signed in December 2011
IFRC/ Eli Lilly and Company Foundation	Cooperation was established since 2011 and continues
IFRC/Italian Red Cross – HR	Cooperation established from last year 2010 and will be continued until the end of 2012
IFRC/DFID/UKAID/British Red Cross	Cooperation established in 2011 and continues
IFRC/Japanese Red Cross	
Turkish Red Crescent Society-bilaterally	Memorandum of Understanding signed in 2012
Austrian Red Cross- bilaterally	Cooperation established at end of 2011 and

	Cooperation Agreement signed in 2012
TAG International	Cooperation started from last year 2010 and still continues
Magen David Adom in Israel FA - (bilaterally)	Cooperation established since 2007 and continues
GFATM/CCM group	There is a long-term cooperation. NS is the member of CCM on TB issues
ANAMA	Memorandum of Understanding signed in 2010
IOM	Memorandum of Understanding signed in 2012
WHO	Cooperation established and continues
UNDP	Cooperation established and continues
USAID	Cooperation established and continues
OXFAM	Cooperation established and continues

Progress towards outcomes

Business line 1: To raise humanitarian standards

Outcome: The AzRC promotes the Movement's fundamental principles and humanitarian values with active involvement of targeted community groups ready to support National Society initiatives and change behaviour for their own sake.

Comments on progress towards outcomes

These activities were implemented based on the support of other partners to the project on dissemination of the Fundamental Principles and International Humanitarian Law, partly as a result of close integration between other programme areas like harm reduction, youth and volunteers, and from the AzRC's own funds and volunteers initiative. During the reporting period more people were reached with various events in terms of the AzRC staff and volunteers and also among the general public. The increase in the number of the population was due to the opportunity to organize more awareness raising campaigns and training sessions on fundamental principles and humanitarian values. The International Federation has been providing informational support to the Azerbaijan Red Crescent, providing data on the movement history, recent updates in the system, adopted documents, sharing experience from the work of other National Societies.

Business Line 2: To grow Red Cross and Red Crescent services for vulnerable people

Outcome: The capacity of the AzRC local branches staff and volunteers as well as community members has been developed and knowledge has been increased towards better preparedness to disasters and emergencies and reducing vulnerability.

Comments on progress towards outcomes

Since 2011, with financial support from DFID/UKAID facilitated by IFRC, the Azerbaijan Red Crescent has been implementing the project "Building Safer Communities" through the capacity-building of the local branches to strengthen the overall structures, develop the necessary skills and increase awareness to further reduce the vulnerability of communities. As a result of the project, the targeted AzRC local branches and communities are gradually increasing their abilities to prepare for, mitigate and respond to natural disasters, emergency situations or day-to-day challenges usually affecting the most vulnerable population. Training sessions on disaster preparedness, simulation exercises, First Aid (FA) skills, and PR events were organized and informational booklets on FA and floods safety rules were also produced.. While demonstrating the well functioning Participatory Community Development approach used by the National Society, the communities actively participated at the events (tree planting, knowledge sharing with community members, digging water canals) by helping in the organization and implementation process. The mid-term evaluation report on the mentioned project and new project for the next two-year period, 2013-2014, was prepared to present DFID/UKAID so as to continue the implementation of the started initiative.

Business Line 3: To strengthen the specific Red Cross Red Crescent contribution to development

Outcome: The AzRC has increased the awareness of the population through health promotion activities and health services, developed youth and volunteers management system at regional centres and branch level, improved the efficiency and quality of a voluntary service to socially vulnerable people by better responding to local needs as well as establishing a strong financial-technical base through the explored diverse financial sources.

Comments on progress towards outcomes

During the reporting period the HIV/AIDS, MDR TB, Community Based Health and blood donor recruitment activities were carried out on a limited scale from the National Society's own resources and by the initiative of local branches due to the absence of donor support. In October 2012 via IFRC Geneva Office/Health Department and with the support of the Swiss Foundation, the sum of CHF 5,000 was allocated to implement the "Club 25" project, which was successfully done in 2013.

The activities, which included training sessions on blood donation and blood donor recruitment campaigns, the establishment of Club-25 units and blood donors' recruitment campaigns were realized in Baku and Sumgait cities as well as Sabirabad, Ismayill, Qusar, Lankaran and Mingachevir regions for 2,760 volunteers and with the participation of students and teachers of the higher and secondary educational institutions. The sessions were held by the 39 AzRC members of the established "Clubs 25" and 56 Baku blood donor recruitment volunteers. As a result of the campaigns 160 people became blood donors. The NS was able to organize round table discussions for members of the clubs: they could share ideas and their future region-based and general initiatives.

The MDR TB project has been promoted by the International Federation as a replacement support of its previous donor, the Eli Lilly and Company Foundation to 20 MDR TB patients visited by four AzRC nurses, and while the issue was under discussion, the AzRC decided to cover a minimum level of activities. The nurses visited their patients once a week instead of six times per week from the NS's own funds in order to keep the trained nurses involved in the project implementation. Starting from November 2012 the project was prolonged for another two-year period with the same number of patients and nurses.

The AzRC's nurses have had a long term experience of working with TB patients including those who have the MDR form of the disease. The nurses were trained by the specialists of the National TB Programme on TB related issues and providing psychological support. Psychological support to patients and their family members has had a positive influence on the treatment process and its positive perception. In order to evaluate the project implementation process, the level of satisfaction in terms of treatment, behaviour and the given support, adherence towards treatment and the challenges, a beneficiary satisfaction survey was carried out among all those who were involved in the project (nurses, patients, their family members, doctors at the dispensaries). The AzRC has established good relations with both governmental and non-governmental local and international agencies like "Hayat Azerbaijan" organization, the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria (GFATM), Green Committee, USAID, WHO and Abt Associates¹ involved in the issue. Being the member of Country Coordinating Mechanisms (CCM) group and the working group created by the Ministry of Health, the AzRC frequently participates in meetings to share information on the implemented activities and find out more about any possible support from the partners. During the recently organized Interagency TB Working Group Meeting the AzRC was included in the list of the TB Europe Coalition (TBEC)². This will enable them to be invited to the advocacy meeting organized by TBEC in Paris, involved in the TB strategy planning development process and find funds through e-mail sharing.

The AzRC has 31 trained First Aid instructors in its local branches near the borders and several other local branches. They were able to teach FA skills to community members and at the educational institutions. Within the Building Safe and Resilient Communities project, Community-based Disaster Risk Reduction

¹ Abt Associates is a mission-driven, global leader in research and program implementation in the fields of health, social and environmental policy, and international development. They are financially supported by USAID.

² TBEC has existed since 2009, and its main area of expertise is TB advocacy in the European region. During that short period of time it has created a stronger network of advocates for the region by establishing links with civil society activists who are engaged in TB advocacy. TBEC is pursuing to increase understanding and awareness among decision-makers of the importance of tuberculosis and the need for concerted and sustained action against it and encourages the European Union (EU) institutions to contribute much more to TB action.

groups were created. These groups were provided with a number of trainings including a training on First Aid skills. Thus, at times of emergencies, along with situation and needs assessment, they will be able to provide FA support to community members. The AzRC has produced brochures, booklets and training modules successfully applied during various events.

The AzRC has established some capacity on working with drug users. Namely, there are 196 staff members and volunteers acquainted with the process, trained on methods of how to approach drug users, monitoring and evaluation, methods of dissemination of information and public awareness on the issues of drug abuse. The National Society has developed a module on working with drug users which was applied during sessions among community members, schoolchildren and students. The National Society has expertise in carrying out Public Relations events on Harm Reduction with the active participation of drug users, local branch staff and volunteers and the general public and producing promotion materials. The AzRC has experience in organizing campaigns on integration of socially marginalized groups into the society.

As for the financial and institutional sustainability of the focused components, the AzRC follows the efficiency of provided activities through surveys among staff and beneficiaries, defining the needs of the targeted groups and local communities, analysing reports, collecting feedback from partners. This brings ideas whether there is a necessity to enhance the provided activities, change the methodology of the provided support and increase the capacity of staff and volunteers. The AzRC improved its cooperation with the government, local and regional authorities, other stakeholders and beneficiaries, and will continue to cooperate with them.

Business Line 4: To heighten Red Cross Red Crescent influence and support for our work/Humanitarian Diplomacy

Outcome 1: The Azerbaijan Red Crescent Society provides local communities and targeted groups with the necessary support and training to have relevant skills to cope with health and emergency situations as well as day-to-day problems

Outcome 2: The National Society regularly raises the detected problems/issues of concerns of beneficiaries with the decision-makers.

Outcome 3: The AzRC works on increasing local resource mobilisation, establishing partnership with new donors and diversification of the funding base.

Comments on progress towards outcomes

The International Federation was supporting the National Society in its efforts to expand its opportunities to receive relevant knowledge, establish new partnerships, diversify funds and submit relevant projects/programmes to the interested parties:

- The Azerbaijan Red Crescent was supported in the development of new projects in order to deliver the activities envisaged in its LTPF for the period of 2012-2015.
- Intensive discussions between IFRC and Elli Lilly Company on MDR TB programme have resulted with continuation of project implementation for another two-year period with the same scale of support to patients as it was last year.

Also, in the first half of the year 2013, the Azerbaijan Red Crescent organized several events dedicated to local and international holidays³ in order to further promote RCRC Movement principles, attract the public and young generations` attention to the raised problems by explaining the purpose of each event, establish mutual understanding and close relationships between various community representations within the country and once more to engage in Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement initiatives.

The AzRC leadership continues efforts to reach progress on possible amendments to the Law in regard with new financial income. Negotiations are on-going in this matter as well as having Memoranda of Understanding with above mentioned ministries and state agencies with described roles and responsibilities. At the same time, it should be underlined that the AzRC has established good relationships with governmental structures, and, based on the AzRC Law and decrees of the President of the Azerbaijan Republic, each government structure provides possible support and create conditions on central and regional

³ The Day of establishment of the AzRC (10th of March), World TB Day (24th of March), World Health Day (14th of April), Red Cross / Red Crescent Day (8th of May), International Children's Day (1-t of June), World Blood Donor Day (14th of June), World FA Day (8th of September), World AIDS Day (1-t of December) and International Volunteers Day (5th of December)

level for the AzRC regional centres and local committees to implement their activities and humanitarian mission.

Business line 5: To deepen our tradition of togetherness through joint working and accountability /Coordination and Cooperation

Outcome 1: The AzRC cooperates with Movement partners and a wide range of central and local governmental, non-governmental, national as well as international organizations and applies policies adopted by the International Federation.

Outcome2: The AzRC maintains links with networks or membership organizations working in the field of harm reduction, HIV and AIDS and tuberculosis including the European Red Cross Red Crescent Network on HIV and AIDS and TB (ERNA), the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria, and the Global Alliance on HIV and TB.

Comments on progress towards outcomes

On 12 July 2013, a meeting was organized in Baku Office of the International Organization for Migration. The initiator of the meeting was the Azerbaijan Red Crescent Society. The Azerbaijan Red Crescent Society was represented at the meeting by the Secretary General, the head of Migration department of the AzRC and the head of Tracing Service of the AzRC. The main purpose of the meeting was to review jointly the activities that would be implemented during 1 year period within the framework of an official agreement document signed between the Azerbaijan Red Crescent Society and the International Organization for Migration⁴. Also to discuss what prospective activities can be implemented in the next year. It was stressed at the meeting that in general during the years 2012-2013 both organizations participated in the events organized jointly. Also a joint project was prepared and submitted to UNDEF. It was decided that the experts of the IOM would organize trainings on psychological assistance in time of emergencies for community based emergency risk reduction groups formed in Diyalli and Yeniyol villages of Ismayilli village within the framework of "Establishing Safe and Resilience communities" project implemented by the Azerbaijan Red Crescent Society.

In September 2013 a Cooperation Agreement was signed between the Azerbaijan Red Crescent Society and the National Non-Governmental Organizations Forum. The purpose of the Cooperation Agreement is to develop a civil society in Azerbaijan, to cooperate in the humanitarian field and to coordinate the activities of the two organizations.

At the end of September 2013, at the initiative of the Azerbaijan Red Crescent Society a meeting of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement was organized in the Headquarters of the National Society in Baku city. The main purpose of the meeting was to discuss joint activities implemented and future plans in accordance with a Cooperation Agreement signed between the Azerbaijan Red Crescent Society, the International Committee of the Red Cross and the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies in Geneva city, Switzerland. On 4-6 September 2013, Deputy Executive Secretary and the Head of Fundraising Department of the Azerbaijan Red Crescent Society participated at International Fundraising Skillshare 2013 Seminar organized by the British Red Cross Society.

In November 2013, the delegation of the AzRC (President, Secretary General and other representatives of the AzRC) participated in the Statutory Meeting (General Assembly, Council of Delegate and Youth Forum) conducted in Sydney, Australia.

In December 2013, the Azerbaijan Red Crescent Society and the Azerbaijan State Migration Service signed a cooperation agreement with each other.

⁴ In the first half of 2012, the AzRC signed a Cooperation Agreement with the International Organization for Migration, in which both organizations agreed to actively cooperate and coordinate their activities for the best benefit of the targeted groups. The areas of cooperation selected are: disaster risk reduction, emergency and post-emergency assistance, labour migration, counter-trafficking activities, technical assistance, poverty reduction, research studies on matters of mutual interest and concern.

Stakeholder participation and feedback

The AzRC plays an auxiliary role in helping to improve the situation with blood, blood components and blood donation services in the capital city of Baku and the regions, enhance the availability of life saving skills among the population for routine problems and road accidents, support the quick recovery of MDR TB patients so that they might continue a healthy life-style and comparatively decrease the threat of TB. The National Society's activities are also focused to decrease the harm of drug abuse and somehow to integrate drug users into the society, which in its turn reduces the stigma/discrimination towards them. The AzRC carries out its activities in close cooperation with Movement partners (IFRC, ICRC, and Partner National Societies) both at national and international level, UN agencies, a wide range of central and local governmental institutions, various national and international organizations and agencies. During the reporting period, the Azerbaijan Red Crescent continued the regular meetings with its partners to discuss activities that are being implemented as well as new initiatives and areas of possible cooperation. The community members were active participants of the AzRC events.

Key Risks or Positive Factors

Key risks	Priority High Medium Low	Recommended Action
Socio-economic and political instability within the country as well as increased vulnerability and worsened welfare of the population due to renewal of conflict situation within and outside of the country, front-line zones (inflow of migrants, IDPs, refugees)	M	The AzRC should follow the existing situation, strengthen its material technical base, replenish stocks as well as work in close cooperation with its partners within and outside of the Movement at national and regional level
The government might reduce its support to the National Society initiatives	L	The AzRC should continue efforts and negotiations towards presenting its initiatives and further perspectives as well as necessity/actuality of taken actions towards reducing problems within the country
Problems in cooperating with governmental and non-governmental structures on local/branch level	L	The relationships with governmental and non-governmental structures need to be strengthened
Insufficient implementation of activities due to significant decrease or absence of donor support	M	The AzRC should increase its efforts towards revealing local sources of funding along with maintaining relationships with outside partners
Large-scale natural and technological disasters occurring in the country are the serious challenge to be able to provide necessary support to affected families	M	The AzRC should expand population awareness activities to increase their knowledge and skills to better prepare and cope with disasters
Insufficient interest and/or commitment of local communities and volunteers towards AzRC initiatives and their work with marginalized groups	M	It is important to build up enhanced relationships with volunteers and local vulnerable communities
The risk of volunteer and staff fatigue, as well as high turnover due to limited resources to follow-up and stimulate those who get	M	It is important to encourage local branches to be better engaged with the local communities and actively involved in resource mobilisation initiatives by

involved in the work of the NS jeopardised the continuity of its efforts		establishing and strengthening partnership with local authorities, corporate sectors and stakeholders.
Communities are relatively reluctant to change the status from an aid recipient to an active partner of the NS and participate in its initiatives	L	It is important to explain that the provided support is tentative and sooner or later they need to take own actions towards their welfare. Also the NS should better and more clearly advertise its initiatives and their importance towards the communities.

Positive factors:

- Strong working relationships with the government authorities and non-governmental institutions.
- Along with existing support through the International Federation, the National Society increases its bilateral cooperation with donors within and outside the Movement, which allows for a continuing implementation of the planned activities.
- The AzRC follows its recently developed Strategic Plan for the period 2011-2015, which is mainly focused on the improvement of the financial-technical base and fundraising initiatives.
- The AzRC has a strong legal base (the Red Crescent Law, and Statutes, which meet minimum requirements, and a number of decrees that have been taken by the Government of Azerbaijan towards the creation of relevant conditions for implementation activities at local level).
- The AzRC possesses qualified and well trained staff and volunteers as well as local representations.
- There is a commitment from the targeted groups and beneficiaries to participate in the organized events by making their own inputs and providing support and openly discussing the problems and sharing opinions.

Lessons learned and looking ahead

The analysis of the achievements during the reporting period demonstrates that the Azerbaijan Red Crescent was able to ensure sustainability of the activities and projects, which were either supported via the International Federation or bilaterally, or funded from the resources of the National Society. At the same time, the development programmes require special attention from a resource mobilization point of view in order to obtain funding and to meet funding targets. The lack of implemented activities in most of the development programmes can be explained by low appeal coverage, and therefore it is important to put in a special effort and to increase programme deliveries as per agreed plans and budgets. During meetings with government structures, they highly appreciated NS initiatives towards the vulnerable groups. At the same time it was mentioned that the interruptions in the financial support for some specific projects, like the MDR TB project, became the reason for patients' complaints as they fear that in a month or two they might not be visited by nurses and their care will be reduced. The allocated transport budget within the same project is not enough for the nurses, thus they spent more than it had been budgeted for reaching the patients' homes. Due to limited local media capacities at the regional level, the Azerbaijan Red Crescent mainly uses its own information / communication capacity (website, Red Crescent magazine, web links to Facebook, YouTube, twitter) to highlight the events that are carried out.

Financial situation

Click here to go directly to the financial report.

<http://www.ifrc.org/Docs/LTPF%20Process/LTPF/2013/MAAAZ00213arf.pdf>

How we work

All IFRC 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 the [Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Disaster Response \(Sphere\)](#) in delivering assistance to the most vulnerable.

The IFRC's vision is to inspire, encourage, facilitate and promote at all times all forms of humanitarian activities by National Societies, with a view to preventing and alleviating human suffering, and thereby contributing to the maintenance and promotion of human dignity and peace in the world.

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Saving lives, changing minds.



The IFRC's work is guided by Strategy 2020 which puts forward three strategic aims:

1. Save lives, protect livelihoods, and strengthen recovery from disaster and crises.
2. Enable healthy and safe living.
3. Promote social inclusion and a culture of nonviolence and peace.

Find out more on www.ifrc.org

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