



SOUTHERN CAUCASUS - 2019

IFRC Country Cluster Support Team

PROGRAMME OVERVIEW

Almost 30 years after Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia became independent states, the South Caucasus remains a strategically sensitive region between Europe and Asia, however, it is also a region with significant potential economically, socially and politically. The Red Cross Red Crescent National Societies in the South Caucasus have undergone a significant transformation from the early 1990s. During the former Soviet Union period, the National Societies (then branches in the respective republics) were recipients of significant financial support from the governments, which ceased with the transformation. Market economy brought competition in the social and humanitarian sectors, with emergence of numerous non-governmental organizations, thus pushing the National Societies to adapt to the new environment. As the three countries progress economically and socially, and with a changing overall geo-political landscape, international assistance, including development and humanitarian aid, has significantly reduced. The National Societies, with the support of the IFRC, ICRC and partners, have been steadily building up their programmatic base and responding to the existing and emerging vulnerabilities domestically. The main programme focus in the region is on increasing community resilience through disaster risk reduction education, developing integrated programs for social inclusion of different marginalized groups of people (migrants, people living with TB and HIV, drug users), supporting socially vulnerable people, promoting active and healthy ageing, raising awareness on globally and locally alarming health problems, enhancing volunteer management, and strengthening capacities in resource mobilization and advocacy.

Consultation with the three National Societies in 2016-2017 clearly identified the need for the IFRC to return to the region on a new paradigm: to help build a new momentum in the National Societies' operating capacity.

In the South Caucasus region, all components of the Red Cross Red Crescent Movement are present: IFRC has Country Cluster Support Team in Georgia, as well as Country Officers in all three countries, ICRC has Country Delegations in Azerbaijan, Armenia and Georgia (at the same time, ICRC has maintained and strengthened its presence especially in Armenia and Azerbaijan due to the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict). Partner National Societies are present in Yerevan (Swiss Red Cross, German Red Cross, Austrian Red Cross) and in Tbilisi (Austrian Red Cross, Danish Red Cross - both operating in the country on the base of the Global Integration Agreement with IFRC).

NEEDS ASSESSMENT

The global international financial crisis and economic recession have affected the region through declining foreign remittances and slowing trade. In addition, the ongoing high rates of emigration threaten social stability and undermine sustainable economic growth.

Social needs are prevailing, since a considerable percentage of the population lives below the poverty line and there is high rate of unemployment. Some of the social challenges are being addressed by the authorities but limited resources and capacity prevent countries to meet the needs.

The region is prone to natural disasters having serious consequences on the population, and significant number of people still live in temporary shelters.

The rates of HIV, TB and non-communicable diseases are challenging.

The National Societies need investment in (1) disaster risk reduction, (2) community preparedness and resilience to emergency situations, (3) protecting and promoting health and social rights of older people, (4) improvement of first aid services and (5) strengthening resource mobilization capacity.

STATISTICS

32%

of **Armenia's** population live below the poverty line.

30%

of **Azerbaijan's** territory is vulnerable to devastating earthquakes

16%

of **Georgia's** population is 65 years and over (2017)

AREA OF FOCUS

PROTECTION, GENDER AND INCLUSION

CHF 14,000 REQUIRED

Georgia Red Cross Society (with support of Austrian Red Cross) currently implements the "Safe and active ageing for older people" project. The project started in mid-2018 and will be finalised by the end of 2019. The main goal is to contribute to the protection and promotion of health and social rights of older people in Georgia, through supporting their equal opportunities to participate in decision making processes and improving local and national health and social support systems.

Planned activities:

- Capacity building trainings to develop skills in rights-based approach, entitlements and advocacy
- Regular visiting services to homebound older people by volunteers
- Socialising activities in social centres
- Dissemination of information and advocacy

STRATEGY FOR IMPLEMENTATION

STRENGTHEN NATIONAL SOCIETY CAPACITIES **CHF 140,000 REQUIRED**

IFRC will support the three National Societies to update their operating model, programmatic profile, domestic relevance and long-term sustainability, with particular focus on scaling up domestic resource mobilization.

Armenian Red Cross Society will be supported to introduce an effective volunteer management system for the headquarters and all the branches, with the following main expected outcomes:

- Needs assessment and community mapping conducted
- Process of recruiting and matching volunteers to opportunities improved
- Appropriate infrastructure to support volunteering arranged
- Online database system for volunteer management available
- Trainings for volunteers organized

The funding requirement for this project in Armenia in 2019 is **CHF 32,000**

Azerbaijan Red Crescent Society carried out the Well-Prepared National Society self-assessment process in 2018 defining areas for improvement in disaster management and preparedness capacities. A two-year project has been designed to support Azerbaijan Red Crescent Society to improve their disaster preparedness and response system. The funding requirement for Azerbaijan in 2019 is **CHF 65,000**

Georgia Red Cross Society will be supported to reorganize its physical structure, through refurbishment of a new office building, and to enhance technical capacities for effective service delivery. The estimated total cost of this project is CHF 900,000 and funding requirement for 2019 is **CHF 41,000**

INFLUENCE OTHERS AS LEADING STRATEGIC PARTNERS

CHF 50,000 REQUIRED

Financial dependency on external donors creates long-term challenges for the National Societies, as interest in the region is shifting. Therefore, local resource mobilization including fundraising remains one of the main long-term possibilities for the National Societies to implement sustainable services. In **Georgia** and **Armenia** IFRC has been providing continuous technical support in building capacity in resource mobilization, accountability and transparency, and it is crucial to ensure continuation in 2019. The focus will be on corporate, individual giving and community fundraising programmes.

CONTACTS

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