

31-01-2001 Operational update

Emergency action of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement for the North Caucasus and the South of Russia (January 2001)

HIGHLIGHTS

The danger of landmines - the new adventures of Cheerdig, an ICRC produced puppet show, was running in Ingushetia during the month of January. It was created to make young children from Chechnya aware of the dangers of landmines and unexploded ordnance in their republic.

The play is about a young boy, Cheerdig by name, who is looking for magic water to cure his beloved grandmother. During his quest, the boy faces many dangers. Baba-Yaga, a traditional bad character in fairy-tales, is trying to send him on mined paths. But with the help of his many friends, a dragon-fly, a hedgehog and a turtle, he manages to escape the deadly traps. In the end he finds magic water and brings it back home to his grandmother.

After performances the ICRC staff explain to children that the dangers which Cheerdig faces during his quest are similar to the ones they might encounter back at home. Some basic rules of behaviour are conveyed to children, which should help them to diminish the risk of becoming victims of landmines or unexploded ordnance.

For the children the show is a welcome break from their dull routines in IDP (internally displaced people) camps where they live in Ingushetia. They vividly react to the performance and actively participate in a discussion of the tale afterwards.

BUDGETARY NEEDS

In its annual appeal for 2001, the ICRC requests nearly 34 mln dollars to finance its activities in the Russian Federation. Of this, about 27 mln dollars are planned to be used for relief operations in the North Caucasus.

THE RED CROSS AND RED CRESCENT MOVEMENT, SPEARHEADED BY THE ICRC, PROVIDED IN JANUARY 2001 FOOD AND NON-FOOD ASSISTANCE IN THE NORTH CAUCASUS AND THE SOUTH OF RUSSIA FOR OVER 168,000 IDPs

OPERATIONAL OVERVIEW

CHECHNYA

The ICRC learned with great relief of the recent release of Mr Kenneth Gluck, a member of Medecins sans Frontieres (Holland), who was kidnapped in Chechnya on 9 January 2001. This incident once again shows that humanitarian activities in the North Caucasus entail great difficulties and dangers. During the detention of Kenneth Gluck most international humanitarian organisations, working in Chechnya, stopped their relief operations in the republic.

Nevertheless, the ICRC decided to pursue its relief activities there which are run by its national staff. This decision was taken because the assistance distributed goes primarily to the most vulnerable people, especially hospital patients and the elderly. The suspension of the ICRC support would have indeed led to very harsh consequences for their daily lives. During this period the ICRC expatriate staff movements in Chechnya were limited to establish contacts with authorities and to visit a place of detention in Chernokozovo.

Food assistance (dry food, hot meals and bread)

The ICRC provided a ration of vegetable oil, sugar, tea and soap to every person benefiting from the bread programme which is run by the Chechen branch of the

FOOD ASSISTANCE

(December 2000)
150 food parcels
182,400 loaves of bread
8,700 l oil
11,500 kg sugar
(January 2001)
244 food parcels
230,000 loaves of bread
22,876 l oil
18,135 kg sugar
18,086 tea (boxes)
300 kg potatoes
100 kg onions

RRC. Today 20,000 people are covered by this programme in Grozny, Shali, Gudermes, Argun, Urus Martan, Achkloi Martan and Kurtchaloy.

Basic foodstuffs were provided to a boarding house for old people in Grozny. Food parcels were distributed to beneficiaries in Argun IDP centres.

Some food parcels were also provided to Grozny Vodocanal staff to support their efforts to restore sewerage and water supply systems of the city.

Shelter and water supply

In January the ICRC continued to provide and install stoves and distribute hygienic kits, kitchen sets and plastic sheeting in schools, social and paramedical institutions and IDP centres, delivering aid to 40 such places. Vodocanal staff in charge of water supply also received some assistance, such as hygienic kits and blankets.

Since December 1 the ICRC, which rehabilitated pumping station No 1 in Grozny, has started distribution of chlorinated water to the population of the city from two water tanks (75 m3 each) with a daily output of around 330 m3. In the reported period 8,620 m3 of water were provided.

Medical assistance

The ICRC assisted 10 hospitals in Chechnya in January. The main effort was directed at improving the general conditions there by distributing plastic sheeting, stoves, bed linen and blankets. Medical material and medicines for the treatment of 200 surgical cases have been provided.

The ICRC also supports the visiting nurses programme of the Chechen branch of the RRC. 720 bedridden elderly are assisted on a regular basis by 57 nurses.

Furthermore, the ICRC supports three mobile medical teams and a medical post run by the local Red Cross. The mobile units are especially appreciated in the countryside where they provide the population with basic medical help.

NON FOOD ASSISTANCE
(January 2001)
78 kitchen sets
244 hygienic kits
4,400 m2 plastic sheeting
311 stoves
38,065 soap (pieces)

MEDICAL CONSULTATIONS
(January 2001)
1,238 consultations
571 of them for children

RED CROSS SET UP IN CHECHNYA
ICRC
59 national staff
10 vehicles
RRC
130 staff
10 vehicles

INGUSHETIA

Food assistance (dry food, hot meals and bread)

The bulk of the ICRC assistance in the North Caucasus is distributed in Ingushetia. The Republic currently hosts about 142,000 officially registered IDPs from Chechnya and this is a heavy burden to bear for the local population.

Some 25,000 to 28,000 people are accommodated in IDP camps. But the majority live in temporary settlements and in host families, straining their economic conditions.

The ICRC supports IDPs on a regular basis with food (family parcels, wheat flour). The ICRC covers almost all IDPs in Ingushetia on a two-three month cycle basis through 160 points of distribution.

In addition to the aforementioned distributions, the ICRC supports two programmes of the RRC local branch, which distributes on an average 3 loaves of bread to over 28,000 beneficiaries in IDP camps and 6 hot meals to some 2,500 particularly vulnerable beneficiaries from 8 soup kitchens on a weekly basis.

Shelter and hygiene

Besides food, the ICRC distributes hygienic kits, kitchen sets, candles, plastic sheeting and jerrycans to IDPs. In January the ICRC distributed 14,300 blankets in three IDP camps in co-operation with Islamic Relief. The RRC local branch distributed warm clothes and underwear to over 22,000 IDPs. This assistance is especially important in view of the cold season.

Water and sanitation

The ICRC has spared no effort to make drinking water available wherever there are major concentrations of IDPs in Ingushetia. Since the summer period, when the ICRC made it a priority to improve the hygienic situation in camps, it has built 15 shower installations there. Twelve of them,

FOOD ASSISTANCE
(January 2001)
41,561 food parcels
30.8 t wheat flour
337,500 loaves of bread
67,500 hot meals (portions)

NON-FOOD ASSISTANCE
(January 2001)
20,787 hygienic kits
18,575 blankets
166,261 candles
4 stoves

WATER AND SANITATION
(January 2001)
Overall: 8,049 m3
Daily: 259.6 m3
Showers: 12 (138 cabins)
Bladders: 22
Pits: 6
Water trucks: 15

THE ICRC PROVIDES ABOUT 38,000 IDPs WITH FRESH WATER DAILY.

MEDICAL CONSULTATIONS
(January 2001)

containing 138 cabins have been insulated for the winter period.

Medical assistance

Since the beginning of 2000, the ICRC has been providing assistance to all five hospitals in Ingushetia, enabling them to treat 1,830 surgical cases. It is closely monitoring the situation in the hospitals and will deliver medical assistance whenever it is needed.

The ICRC also supports two mobile medical teams and one medical post set up by the RRC in order to provide IDPs with basic health care.

The RRC visiting nurses programme is providing bedridden elders (130 beneficiaries) with basic care (medical, food and non food).

Mine awareness

Constant increase in the number of landmine and unexploded ordnance victims among the civilian population in Chechnya is of particular concern for the ICRC. A "mine awareness programme" has therefore been started in Ingushetia. Its aim is to inform IDPs on the dangers these weapons represent and to teach them some basic rules of behaviour in order to limit the risk of accidents when they return home. In January the ICRC mine awareness team, using the locally produced teaching material (posters, leaflets), continued to work with teachers, organising 5 presentations and one workshop. Two presentations were given to 100 children in IDP camps. Besides, the puppet show "The danger of landmines - the new adventures of Cheerdig" was launched. Twelve performances were made to 1,800 IDP children. Work is underway on the production of a comic book to be used in the programme and on designing games and quizzes to add to this book.

4,481 consultations
1,934 of them for children

DAGHESTAN

Food assistance (dry food, hot meals and bread)

In December the ICRC resumed distributions of humanitarian assistance in Daghestan after a two months break when its activities there underwent a full reassessment. Following the re-registration of beneficiaries some 25,000 persons have been identified to receive regular food assistance. In January distributions were carried out in the Novolak region, where assistance was provided to over 5,500 IDPs.

As in Ingushetia, the RRC local branch runs a bakery, covering the needs in bread of about 8,000 IDPs, and two soup kitchens, regularly providing about 2,700 especially vulnerable IDPs with hot meals.

Non-food assistance

Furthermore, the ICRC provides IDPs with hygienic kits, kitchen sets, candles, tarpaulins, plastic sheeting and jerrycans helping them to improve their living conditions. The RRC local branch distributed warm clothes and underwear to over 2,000 IDPs.

Medical assistance

The RRC also runs 2 mobile medical units in Daghestan, providing medical services to the IDPs since December 1999. About 13,600 patients, including more than 4,600 children, have already benefited from this assistance. Since January 2000 the ICRC has also provided local medical facilities with necessary material allowing them to treat 615 surgical cases.

The local branch of the RRC is also running the home visiting nurses programme for about 220 beneficiaries, mainly bedridden elderly.

FOOD ASSISTANCE
(January 2001)
2,287 food parcels
57.2 t wheat flour
87,750 loaves of bread
21,250 hot meals (portions)

NON FOOD ASSISTANCE
(January 2001)
2,287 hygienic kits
14,600m3 plastic sheeting

MEDICAL CONSULTATIONS
(January 2001)
1,582 consultations
562 of them for children

NORTH OSSETIA, KABARDINO-BALKARIA AND SOUTHERN RUSSIA

Food assistance (dry food, hot meals and bread)

In the southern regions of Russia (Astrakhan, Volgograd, Krasnodar, Rostov, Saratov, Stavropol, Kalmykia, Adygea) the RRC, with the ICRC support, is

FOOD ASSISTANCE
(January 2001)

distributing food parcels and wheat flour to almost 20,000 Chechen IDPs on a monthly basis.

As in the other republics, the RRC operates a soup kitchen and a bakery in North Ossetia, providing bread to 2,000 beneficiaries and hot meals to 300 beneficiaries.

Non-food assistance

Hygienic kits have been distributed to over 12,000 IDPs in the South of Russia. About 840 IDPs in the North Caucasus received warm clothes and underwear.

Medical assistance

Since January 2000, military hospitals and surgical departments of some other hospitals in Nalchik, Mozdok, Vladikavkaz, Kislovodsk and Pyatigorsk have been assisted by the ICRC with emergency and surgical material to treat over 1,614 surgical cases.

In these regions, the RRC, supported by the ICRC, also runs the home visiting nurses programme for the elderly, some 1,000 beneficiaries.

Psychological and legal counselling

In the South of Russia the RRC, supported by the ICRC and the International Federation, provides IDPs from Chechnya with psycho-social counselling and legal advice.

OTHER ICRC ACTIVITIES

VISITS TO DETAINEES

Since 17 May, the ICRC delegates have visited 30 detention places inside and outside Chechnya where persons detained in connection with the Chechen situation are held.

The detainees visited by the ICRC also have the opportunity to maintain contacts with their relatives through Red Cross messages.

These visits are being conducted after President Vladimir Putin gave assurances to the ICRC President Jakob Kellenberger, during talks held in Moscow in March, that the ICRC delegates would be granted access to all persons detained in connection with the Chechen crisis, wherever they are being held.

- 12 140 food parcels
- 23,930 loaves of bread
- 7,155 hot meals (portions)
- NON FOOD ASSISTANCE** (January 2001)
- 12 308 hygienic kits
- 366 blankets
- 123 kitchen sets
- 50 school kits
- CONSULTATIONS** (January 2001)
- 1,372 medical
- 609 psychological
- 613 legal

- NUMBER OF VISITS BY ICRC DELEGATES** (January 2001)
- In Chechnya: 1
- Outside Chechnya: 6
- TOTAL: 7
- TOTAL NUMBER OF VISITS** (Since May 2000)
- In Chechnya: 17
- Outside Chechnya: 49
- TOTAL: 66
- Number of places visited: 30

PROMOTION OF INTERNATIONAL HUMANITARIAN LAW (IHL)

A conference entitled "The topical problems of forming humanitarian and legal consciousness of servicemen in the 21 century" was held in January in Moscow. It was hosted by the Combined Arms Academy of the Ministry of Defence of the Russian Federation and co-sponsored by the ICRC. The conference was opened by Colonel General V.Manilov, Deputy Chief of the General Staff of the Russian Armed Forces, and attended by 220 participants from the Army, the Navy and the Air Forces and also by representatives of other ministries and federal structures. The ICRC representatives included Colonel General (ret.) Jean Abt, member of the Committee, the governing body of the ICRC. A draft document called the "Manual on the application of IHL by the Armed Forces of the Russian Federation" was discussed. As indicated in the introduction, this manual "describes the procedures of how norms of IHL shall be applied by commanding and staff officers at tactical level and by individual servicemen while preparing and conducting combat operations". A field exercise illustrating practical results of the application of humanitarian law in combat situations was presented to the participants.

- IHL PRESENTATION TO ARMED FORCES** (January 2001)
- Border Guards: 3 presentations - 320 soldiers and sergeants
- Ministry of Defence: 5 presentations - 1,196 newly recruited soldiers, sergeants and officers

RED CROSS STAFF IN NORTH CAUCASUS AND IN SOUTH OF RUSSIA

ICRC

13 expatriates permanently based in Nalchik and 308 national employees not including those in Chechnya

RUSSIAN RED CROSS

Regular staff, excluding Chechnya - 129 (plus 25 HQ staff in Moscow), rescue service included. RRC can mobilise hundreds of voluntary workers to support its operation in the region.

INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION

Delegates and local staff in Moscow offer support to the Russian Red Cross outside the North Caucasus

HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE

| What's in a food parcel? | What's in a hygienic kit? | What's in a kitchen set? | What's in a school kit? | What kind of surgical assistance? |
|--|---|---|---|--|
| 1 l vegetable oil 1 kg sugar 3 kg spaghetti 3 kg rice 2 kg canned food 0,5 kg salt 100 g yeast | 2,5 kg washing powder 12 rolls of toilette paper 500 gr of soap 5 tubes of toothpaste 5 toothbrushes 5 disposable razors 80 sanitary towels 1 bath towel | 1 cooking pot (7 l) 1 frying pan 5 bowls 5 plates 5 cups 5 knives 5 forks 5 table spoons | 2 copybooks 2 pens 1 pad drawing paper 1 box colour pencils 1 box water colours | Dressing materials (bandages, cotton, gauze) Medecines Medecines for narcosis Sutures Infusions Accessories for infusions (IV sets, tubes, catheters etc.) Instruments X-ray material |

What is a mobile medical team?

A team usually includes a doctor (general practitioner), a nurse and a driver. In Chechnya, the three teams also include a paediatrician. They give basic medical advice and, if needed, distribute medicines. A fixed dispensary team includes two doctors (general practitioner and paediatrician) and a nurse.

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