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#01

Europe Zone

A newsletter of the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies



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Inside the Ukraine Red Cross tent shelter for homeless people in Chernigiv, Northern Ukraine. Local Red Cross chairlady Oksana Rubets says "we decided to put the tent in a park as it's close to where a lot of the homeless live. We find that news of the drop-in centre has spread quickly among their community".

Europe's deep freeze sees massive Red Cross response

Editorial

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Dear friends,

The deadly cold spell that has hit Europe this month reminds us that climate is one of the biggest risk factors in disasters. It also reminds us that those farthest from support services are those that need a strong Red Cross Red Crescent network.

What we have been witnessing in the last weeks seems to pertain to the definition of smaller-scale disaster: slower but more widespread, silent but – with a death toll of so far over 600 across Europe – not less deadly.

What we can call an abnormally cold winter weather also reminds us that those farthest from support services are those that who are in particular need of a strong Red Cross Red Crescent network.

Almost all National Societies in Europe stepped up their services to respond to the cold, and the International Federation played its designated role, raising and channelling support, mobilising funds, highlighting the plight of the thousands caught in winter's steely grip.

Our response mechanism proved both robust and flexible, as we helped National Societies to prepare and issue eleven separate successful requests to our Disaster Relief Emergency Fund.

Over a million Swiss francs has been disbursed to help 45,000 people, and I am delighted to report that National Societies' partners, as well as corporate partners like Coca-Cola, have already contributed to reimbursing this revolving fund.

More than anything, the rapid action of the Red Cross Red Crescent network shows the solidarity we have with each other as part of the same Movement, but just as



importantly, it shows the solidarity we have with those we serve.

To live up to our mission we must care for those who are beyond the reach of traditional support mechanisms. We must show our solidarity with those who live their lives in the shadows, on the streets or in temporary shelters. We must be together with the frail elderly, alone in rural houses or city apartment blocks, who are unable to visit the market, the bakery or the pharmacy.

These actions – the actions of our staff and particularly our volunteers – give us the credibility to go to governments, to speak out in the media, to contribute to debates at highest level. Even when it's too cold for comfort, we must always walk the talk.

Anitta Underlin
Director of Europe Zone

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Responding to emergencies

Focus on 2012 cold snap

European Societies respond to brutal winter

Since the end of January, an extreme cold wave has gripped several countries across the Europe Zone. Wind, heavy snow and Siberia-style temperatures, in some areas as low as -35 C, have so far claimed over 600 lives, caused power outages, traffic chaos and seen the closure of schools and nurseries. National Red Cross Societies have been assisting the most vulnerable people by setting up heated tents to provide make-shift accommodation and dispense hot food and drinks, distributing blankets and warm clothes, and providing direct assistance to local reception centres for elderly and homeless people.

In figures:

Nine DREFs (Disaster Relief Emergency Fund) launched

CHF 1,283,175 allocated

45,500 people supported

1,725¹ volunteers insured

¹ In line with the new insurance procedures, insurance for all volunteers has been provided by DREF funds during the operations for the extreme winter conditions, through the global insurance programme for volunteers (1 CHF per year).



Montenegro Red Cross volunteers delivering basic necessities to isolated families. The situation is still very dramatic in the country, especially in northern municipalities, where numerous villages are cut off. Relief items can be delivered only by helicopter and motor sleds.

So far, over 1.2 million CHF has been allocated from the IFRC Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF) in support to eight National Societies, namely Albania, Belarus, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Macedonia, Montenegro, Romania, Serbia and Ukraine. A DREF allocation was also made in support of the Red Cross organisation in Kosovo.

BELARUS

The severe winter has in particular increased the vulnerability of homeless people. So far, 125 Red Cross staff and 523 volunteers have been engaged in assisting 1,195 homeless people and 3,069 city dwellers. Hot tea is also in high demand at small railway and bus stations, which often have no heating, and is being distributed also in district polyclinics and open markets, often visited by people from rural areas, as well as at bus terminals. In addition, the Red Cross branch in Brest provides hot drinks to the people queuing up at border crossing checkpoints. It is expected that during the two-month operation the Red Cross will support at least 2,000 homeless people.

UKRAINE

Supported by DREF funds, the Ukrainian Red Cross Society is also providing assistance to some 2,000 people identified as the most exposed to the extreme temperatures and weather: homeless, people living below the poverty level, unemployed, single mothers and elderly. Red Cross volunteers and visiting nurses are assisting by distributing hot meals, hot tea and blankets,



Homeless man assisted by the volunteers and staff of the local Red Cross branch in Minsk, Belarus.

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Croatian Red Cross volunteers and staff have been visiting citizens who live in remote areas and delivering them food, clothes, medicines and all other necessities. By 10 February, Croatian Red Cross branches have provided assistance to 2847 citizens, including 297 homeless persons, and distributed 15,323 kg of food.

throughout the regions where the cold wave had the most serious effects.

CROATIA

The situation appears particularly serious in Dalmatia, where the local population is not used to such extreme winter conditions. Local Red Cross branches, have so far assisted 2847 vulnerable people in their local communities, visiting citizens who live in remote areas and delivering food, clothes, medicines and all other necessities. In some cities, the Red Cross has been organizing temporary accommodation and providing meals for some 300 homeless persons. A total of 946 volunteers and staff have been working for days now to meet the needs, and 15,323 kg of food have been distributed.

ALBANIA

So far, in total 67 communes are isolated, and in many of these schools are closed. The National Society has carried out an initial relief distribution, using its existing disaster preparedness stock, to help 300 families identified as the most vulnerable in the isolated areas. Nearly 100,000 people are reported to have been affected and almost 18,000 cannot reach their administrative centres. Assessments have also shown at least 5,000 most vulnerable people are still completely isolated because of the heavy snow and are nearing the end of their food reserves. Their most urgent needs are food, hygienic kits and blankets. The private sector is playing an indispensable part by contributing on the aid support.

MACEDONIA

Extreme cold and snowfall in the past two weeks have also caused many problems in nine regions in Macedonia. On 8 February, more than 80 villages were reported to be totally isolated because of the snow. The Macedonian Red Cross has promptly responded by meeting the basic needs of the vulnerable population through the distribution of hot meals, warm clothing and blankets. Several branches of Red Cross with their rescue teams are providing necessary food and medicines to those trapped in the mountain villages, while the Red Cross branch in Skopje has opened its centre for homeless people on a 24/7 basis. As of today, 20 people are being accommodated at the centre, and an additional 80 people are using the services and premises of the centre every day. With the improvement of the weather conditions in the country, National Society and state authorities will start the distribution of humanitarian assistance for the most seriously affected communities, which will be carried out via army helicopters as well as with field vehicles, horses and donkeys.



The Macedonian Red Cross branches of Gostivar, Veles, Debar, and the City Red Cross of Skopje, with the support of field vehicles, donkeys and horses, have distributed assistance in remote mountain villages, comprising of 110 food parcels, 110 hygiene parcels, 440 blankets and warm clothing.

MONTENEGRO

Some 1,500 families live in the affected municipalities, which are completely cut off from the towns and from the rest of the country. Most of them lack electricity supplies due to severe breakdowns caused by heavy snowfalls and blizzards. The beneficiaries are mostly families composed of elderly people or with children, and people who live below the poverty line. The Montenegro Red Cross Society has already distributed some relief items (hygiene, tea, blankets, jackets, heaters) among the people who were trapped on the roads, as well as to some individuals in urgent need in some of the villages, and will be assisting by providing blankets, rubber boots, food parcels and hygiene items, gas heaters.

LATVIA

A Latvian Red Cross night shelter in Riga has doubled the number of people it supports to 160 people and is now running a 24-hour

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service. Meals, clothing, hot showers and medical support services are provided by six staff members and 15 volunteers. The organization accepts every person who arrives or, if the shelter is overcrowded, ensures they have transport to another night shelter. Branch volunteers are also providing hot tea to the homeless and to outdoor workers, and blankets and clothing to a number of families whose houses have been burned down due to accidents with their heating.

BULGARIA

Heavy snowfalls have caused traffic chaos and blocked several main roads in the country. In the southern regions, snow and rains have also led to the overflow of major rivers, while the collapse of a dam near the village of Bisser forced people to evacuate by boat. The towns of Svilengrad and Harmanli were also hit by the floods, with some 40,000 people affected. Two teams of the Bulgarian Red Cross operate in the flooded areas, distributing mineral water, hot drinks, snacks, non-food to the affected people. A BRC search and rescue team is taking part in the operation along with the Fire Brigade and Civil Protection units.



Bulgarian Red Cross conducting needs assessment in the area affected by the recent floods.

Related materials:

[Stories](#) / [Emergency funds released to help Red Cross response to Europe's big chill](#)

[15km trek by volunteers for mountain rescue in snow-bound Serbia](#)

[Race against time and freezing temperatures in Europe](#)

[Coming in from the cold - Ukraine Red Cross responds to the big freeze](#)

[Press releases](#) / [Dozens dead and thousands at risk as Red Cross responds to sudden cold snap in Europe](#)

[IFRC releases emergency funds to help 50,000 hit by Europe's big freeze](#)

[Information bulletins](#) / [Europe: Extreme winter conditions](#)

[Bulgaria: Extreme winter conditions & Floods](#)

HUNGARY

Twelve deaths have been reported due to cold. The Hungarian Red Cross is helping the needy in 50 settlements in 13 counties across Hungary, distributing tea, food and clothes and providing social street services and shelter from the severe cold: in the period between 2 and 11 February, the National Society reached over 8,200 people. The Hungarian Red Cross has also launched a new donation line where everyone wishing to contribute to their work can donate.

NETHERLANDS

Local Red Cross branches are taking help to the streets with a truck providing shelter to homeless people. On 10 February, around 1000 people were forced to stay overnight at Schiphol airport, due to cancelled flights. The airport called for the help of the Red Cross in the middle of the night and some 15-20 volunteers went in to assist. Branches across the country are also closely involved in providing first aid in the ice skate tournaments organized across the country.

ROMANIA

On 10 February, more than 310 villages were reported to be totally isolated because of the snow. Fourteen Romanian Red Cross branches have undertaken to respond immediately by meeting the basic needs of over 600 vulnerable people through the distribution of hot meals, warm clothing and blankets. Several branches of Red Cross with their rescue teams are providing necessary help to those cut off. By 13 February, the Romanian Red Cross had delivered, in collaboration with government authorities, approximately 4.5 tons of food via helicopter to the counties Ialomita and Vrancea, while Buzau branch had



Romanian Red Cross volunteers visit isolated families bringing them food and basic necessities.

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Serbia. Youth Red Cross volunteers bringing food and basic necessities to an elderly lady living alone in an isolated rural area.

distributed 1.6 tons of food and drinking water in Scutelnici village, Arcanu commune. On 11 February, the Romanian Red Cross launched an appeal for donations in cash and food items.

SERBIA

Approximately 59,000 people are snowed in and cut off, and at least nine people have lost their lives. It is estimated that some 8,000 people - elderly households or older individuals living alone in remote areas with little or no family support, families with small children on a low level of social security and little to no income - are in need of urgent relief assistance in terms of food, warm clothes and hygiene items. Over the next three months, the National Society will be working on delivering food and non-food items to the affected people, using the part of the DREF allocation for the replenishment of its emergency stocks for the already distributed items.

POLAND

Twenty people were reported to have died in the last week because of the freezing weather, bringing the toll there so far this year to at least 100, the Polish Red Cross regional branch in Toruń, northern Poland, is running a reception centre for homeless people, in cooperation with the local authorities, providing medical care, food and hygienic items to the people accommodated there. A number of Regional Branches also cooperate with local firms to collect food for homeless people.

GERMANY

German Red Cross is active in Hamburg and Berlin, distributing blankets, sleeping bags, jackets and hot drinks to homeless people. In Essen the Red Cross has converted a warehouse into a temporary shelter to supply services to the homeless.

Red Cross organisation in KOSOVO

Heavy snow continued in many areas in **Kosovo** causing quite many villages to be blocked and cut off. Even bigger cities are facing difficulties in functioning. The most affected area is at the moment Dragas municipality, but also Pejë, Istog, Gjakovë, Deqan, Prizren, Podujevë, Novo Bërdë, Kamenica, Skenderaj have been seriously affected. In Dragas, an avalanche caused three fatalities and several missing in the snow. Rescue teams, composed of Kosovo security forces, police, Red Cross volunteers and community members, faced difficulties to reach the area due to the high snow levels. Several roads in the northern part of Kosovo also remain blocked. So far, a total of 1,200 families have requested to be assisted with food parcels, hygiene parcels, blankets, shovels, boots, some stoves, and firewood.

ITALY

The Italian Red Cross continues to deliver its services from north to south to face up against the cold snap of the last weeks, while the National Operations Room of the National Society keeps monitoring all the regions of the country, in close contact with regional operations room on the territory. In Irpinia, southern Italy, some 80 volunteers are currently deployed in support to isolated families; in Emilia Romagna, the worst hit region, another 11 isolated households have been reached; while in the Marche and Abruzzo, local branches are distributing medicines and basic necessities to remote villages. In Rome, the National Society's headquarters is currently accommodating 52 clochard.



Since 2001, the Italian Red Cross Provincial branch in Milan has run a programme to support homeless people in the metropolitan area of Milan during winter months, under the name "La CRI per il clochard" (lit. The Red Cross for the homeless).

Audiovisual materials:

[Photos](#) / Ukraine / Macedonia / Belarus

[Video](#) / Red Cross of Serbia carries out medical evacuation under the snow

[Serbia: disaster management by Red Cross branch Stari Grad, Belgrade](#)

Past and future events

Red Cross Red Crescent values in action at the Youth Olympic Games

From 13 to 22 January, more than 1,100 athletes from 70 countries gathered in Innsbruck, Austria, to put their excellence in winter sports to the test during the 10 days of the Youth Olympics.

Sport was identified by the IFRC and the International Olympic Committee as being a key tool for promoting respect for diversity and a culture of non-violence and peace among young people and children. The two organizations pledged to support these goals at the International Conference of the Red Cross Red Crescent last year in Geneva.



Austrian Women Ice Hockey team visit the IFRC/AYRC display booth in Congress Innsbruck. Tamara Grascher (seventh from the left) is the captain of the team.

Related materials:

[Story](#) / Youth Olympic Games show the power of sport to build bridges between communities

[Blog](#) / Young athletes promote Olympic values inside and outside the sports arena

Check the [photo album](#) on the Red Cross Red Crescent European Youth network Facebook page!

As official partner of the Culture and Education Programme of Innsbruck 2012, the IFRC, in partnership with the Austrian Red Cross, organized a series of interactive and educational activities around the topics of HIV and AIDS awareness, first aid, promotion of blood donation, healthy lifestyles, and positive images in relation to migrant people. These programmes addressed young athletes as well as children and youth from local schools.

IFRC and Russian Red Cross open Training and Resource Centre for nurses in Belgorod

In December 2011, the opening ceremony of the Red Cross Training & Resource Centre for nurses on Tuberculosis was held in Belgorod city, south-western Russia.

Involved in the TB programme as well as in various HIV and youth activities, the Russian Red Cross (RRC) branch in Belgorod is recognised as one of the most active and advanced branches in the country, which shares its experience and best practices with other regions of Russia and countries of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS).

The Centre was established by the RRC jointly with the Belgorod Regional TB dispensary and the Medical Department of the Belgorod State University, with the technical support of the IFRC Regional Representation in Moscow in the framework of the multi-year programme "Strengthening Cross-Sector Collaboration for More Effective



Turkmenistan Red Crescent representatives visiting the Russian Red Cross Training Centre in Belgorod

Past and future events

National Response to MDR TB Spread". This programme is being implemented by the IFRC and the RRC with the financial support of USAID.

The main objective of the Centre is to set up a horizontal educational platform for local TB facilities and the RRC branches, providing opportunities to share best practices and experience among TB professionals from different regions of the Russian Federation and possibly other NSs using Russian as their preferred language. The Centre will hold two to three certified extensive trainings per year for TB nurses and visiting nurses of the RRC, according to the curriculum approved by the Medical Department of the Belgorod State University.

Based on the strong cooperation links between the RRC and NSS of CIS countries, representatives of the Turkmenistan Red Crescent Society conducted an exchange visit to Belgorod a week after the Centre was opened, to introduce different TB-related activities to the Belgorod branch, such as forming of adherence to treatment for TB and MDR TB patients, psychosocial support to most vulnerable groups of TB patients, TB patients clubs activity, advocacy and cooperation with state authorities and mass media and etc. Such exchange visits provide enriching opportunities for other Russian-speaking National Societies involved in the implementation of TB Control Programmes.

Bulgaria to host 2012 European Youth Cooperation Meeting



European Red Cross Red Crescent youth volunteers attending one of the workshops held during the 19th European Youth Cooperation Meeting, hosted by the Austrian Red Cross in 2010.

From 18 to 22 April 2012, in Sofia, Bulgaria, the Bulgarian Red Cross, in cooperation with the IFRC Europe Zone office and the European Coordination Committee (ECC), will host the **20th European Youth Cooperation Meeting (ECM)**, the biannual meeting of the Red Cross Red Crescent European Youth Network.

The European Cooperation Meeting will provide youth participants with a unique opportunity to discuss the implementation of the new Youth Policy, to focus on the needs of the National Societies regarding Youth Action and Volunteering Development and to identify contribution that the European RCRC Youth network will bring, setting its goals accordingly. Up to three Youth representatives for each National Societies are expected to participate.

More information can be found at this [Fednet link](#). For any questions, please contact **Ana Izvorska** (Organisational Development officer at the Bulgarian Red Cross, Youth Dept) or **Flavio Ronzi** (Organisational Development and Youth Action delegate, IFRC Europe Zone Office).

Intergenerational Solidarity

Special focus on Youth

2012 is the **European Year of Active Ageing and Solidarity between Generations**, which sees the Red Cross Red Crescent as one of the official partners of the European Commission.

Ageing was recognized as a new priority issue for the Red Cross Red Crescent in the Europe Zone during the last European Regional Conference, in Vienna, 2010.

In 2011, as part of its tasks in relation to ageing contained in the Vienna Commitments, the Europe Zone Office set up a Working Group on Ageing in order to strengthen the capacity of National Societies in the Europe Zone through the dissemination of quality standards and evidence-based programming.

National Societies from Europe and Central Asia are already implementing interesting and effective activities, projects and programmes that foster intergenerational solidarity, promoting the inclusion of all age groups and people with different backgrounds in all activities and decision-making bodies, and raising awareness of the contribution of older persons in helping and supporting other generations.

Here is a roundup of projects that youth from several National Societies in the Europe Zone have shared with us.

Related materials:

For more information on National Societies' activities on Active ageing, as well as background documents on ageing in Europe and case studies, click on this [FedNet link](#).

Fostering social inclusion among lonely elderly in Bacău

Amid the global economic crisis, **Romania** is focusing on the objective of increasing social inclusion and reducing poverty in the communities and for disadvantaged groups. In Bacău County, central-eastern Romania, there are many elderly who suffer from hunger or lack basic necessities.

Through the programme "Centre for care and home assistance for elderly", the Red Cross branch in Bacău advocates for equal access to health care and social services at home for about 120 elderly in situations of social isolation and poverty. Part of the programme is the initiative "Open a door", which, financed by Bacău Municipality and City Council, aims at improving the quality of life of these elderly people through home care services, by informing them about their rights, and at the same time bringing cases requiring medical care to the attention of local authorities.

Every year on 1 October, on the occasion of the International Day for the Elderly, the Red Cross Youth of Bacău branch, with the support of the Local Council, organises an event dedicated to the elderly of the community.

"By everything we do, we want to offer joy to our 'grandparents', and bring a touch of light and warmth to those who have worked a lifetime to create the goods that we all enjoy now" is the message of the Red Cross Bacău at the end of each action which involves the elderly.



A youth volunteer of the Romanian Red Cross holding the hand of an elderly lady. The Red Cross branch in Bacău advocates for equal access to health care and social services at home for about 120 elderly in situations of social isolation and poverty.

Intergenerational Solidarity

Special focus on Youth



A young volunteer of the Ukrainian Red Cross branch in Zaporizhia during a PC training course with a group of pensioners.

The first portent

Fifteen pensioners from different parts of the province of Zaporizhia come every week to the office of the regional branch of the Ukrainian Red Cross Society (URCS), where young volunteers hold computer courses for them. Computers were donated by one of the local bank institutions.

"Pensioners should not be dealing only with domestic issues. Internet represents a powerful tool to get in touch with topics and places which would otherwise be inaccessible" comments Nina Larina, a pensioner. "My life is coloured with new shades since I discovered the Internet".

There are already 90 people who are already in line to receive computer training. Red Cross volunteers are certain that such opportunity can allow them to keep up to date and find new incentives in life.

Stimule t'oié!

The youth of the **French Red Cross** have launched a new exchange and animation platform for dependent elderly, called Stimule t'oié! The expression is a play on words recalling the Game of the Goose (Jeu de l'oie).



Youth volunteers of the French Red Cross while playing *Stimule t'oié!* with a group of elderly people in a nursing home.

This board game helps participants stimulate their senses and memory: sense of smell and touch, but also miming, asking and singing. It is first of all an opportunity to share a friendly moment around a suitable game, original and easy to animate!

Today, the youth teams of the French Red Cross are organising Stimule t'oié! with dependent elderly people in nursing homes or in shelters for people with disabilities.

The youth team behind the game Stimule t'oié! was awarded at the 2011 General Assembly of the French Red Cross for their initiative. The Youth Declaration of the French Red Cross brings forward young people's will to be agents of change and intergenerational solidarity, particularly by fighting against the isolation of the elderly. Nowadays, many are the youth projects targeting other generations, like "Hello, do you see me?", aimed at enabling older people to communicate with their distant families through audio and video platforms on the Internet.

Related materials:

To see the video on the programme Stimule t'oié!, [click here](#).

Irish Red Cross youth make plans for 2012 Year of Active Ageing

Irish Red Cross Youth will be forming a sub-group of youth members under the age of 18 to develop programme ideas for celebrating the "European Year for Active Ageing and Solidarity between Generations" this year. Youth members will liaise with each other and National Youth Working Group representatives to examine ideas for programmes which can be run both locally and nationally. Areas of interest, which

Intergenerational Solidarity

Special focus on Youth

were raised by young people at the 2011 National Youth Forum were: Therapeutic Hand Care (with over 150 youth members attending a practical workshop on the topic) and developing a course to teach caring skills to young people. Local branches and areas that already have their own initiatives to bridge the age gap will also have an opportunity to share them at a national level.

Catriona Ryan, member of the National Youth Working Group said, "It was clear at the 2011 National Youth Forum that helping in their community was a definite area young people were interested in. They spoke about visiting elderly people in their community. With the formation of this sub-group we could create training material that the young people can use to raise their awareness of the needs of elderly people."



Irish Red Cross Youth members taking part in a practical Therapeutic Hand Care workshop at the National Youth Forum 2012.



New home care training "Pflegefit" in the Austrian Youth Red Cross

In **Austria**, some 500,000 people need professional home care. Nursing people at home represents a huge challenge for most families, with more than 25,000 young people currently finding themselves as caregivers on a national level, and children and youth often being the ones who have to take care of their chronically sick or disabled relatives. These numbers show that home care does not just affect dependent elderly, but healthy and sick, young and elderly in the same way.

The Austrian Youth Red Cross (AYRC) has addressed this issue and has implemented a training called, "Pflegefit" – a toolkit for health and social care within the family. Pflegefit helps to understand needs of disabled family members, as well as to gain knowledge in dealing with different areas of nursing. Besides, the toolkit gives tips on special assistance in certain circumstances, e.g. after an accident.

Carola, a participant of our last training, explains the importance of care programmes in the AYRC: "After my dad had surgery, I had to take care of him. I missed a lot of classes and was unable to cope with my responsibilities neither in school nor at home. Thanks to the toolkit, I learned how to take better care of him. But, most important, I learned that I also have to take care of myself and that it is ok to ask for help."

For further information please call Markus Bankhofer, Austrian Youth Red Cross, at +43 158900-374, or visit www.jugendrotkreuz.at/pflegefit

"Moi, personne âgée"

An ageing population is now a global phenomenon and like most developed countries, Switzerland's population follows the trend. Bearing this in mind – and aware of the generation gap that separates the young and old – the Geneva branch of the Swiss Red Cross has designed a programme to bring the youth closer to their elders.

"Moi, personne âgée", or "Me, elderly" puts young people in the shoes of their seniors: by providing experiences that mimic the practical difficulties seniors encounter in life such as walking with a cane, low visibility or moving around in a wheelchair. The goal is to enable the young to feel, for a moment, what an elderly person with difficulties experiences daily, leading to increased awareness and respect between generations. Courses with geriatricians to learn about the psychological aspects of diseases linked to aging will integrate with the training and visits to nursing homes are also planned. The programme is currently in its pilot phase and will be launched early next year.



Cynthia Khattar, youth volunteer for the Geneva Red Cross since 2007 and one of the coordinators of the programme, taking Ms. Métadier for a tour in the park.

News from National Societies



Opening ceremony of the Bulgarian Red Cross (BRC) protected home for young people leaving social institutions, on 24 January 2012. The ribbon was cut by the Minister of Education, Youth and Science, Sergei Ignatov, the President of the Bulgarian Red Cross, Hristo Grigorov and Jens-Jorgen Pedersen, Chief Adviser for Central and Eastern Europe of Velux Foundation, Denmark. Guest at the event were Anitta Underlin, Director of the Europe Zone, MPs, ministers, partners from Government and NGO sector, volunteers and employees of the BRC.

Red Cross protected home for young people opens in Bulgaria

Bulgaria has the second highest rate of placement of children in social care institutions in Europe. In September 2010, the joint project proposal of the Bulgarian Red Cross (BRC) and the IFRC, "Social Programme for Providing Services and Support to Children and Young People Leaving Social Care Institutions", was granted a financial support of EUR 1,190,529 from the Danish Velux Foundation. Through this project, the BRC tries to tackle the problem of the high number of child social care institutions in Bulgaria through the establishment of modern family-type care services granting appropriate conditions for the development and welfare of vulnerable children and youth. The first great result of the project was the opening of the Protected Home for youth leaving social care institution, on 24 January 2012, after the first year of project implementation.

"Today we open not only a protected home, but a home of philanthropy where we will be responsible and will take care for twelve young people, leaving social institutions" stated Hristo Grigorov, Chairperson of the Bulgarian Red Cross in his address during the opening.

Anitta Underlin, guest to the ceremony, shared: "I am honoured and delighted to be with you today as we celebrate the opening of this marvellous facility. What we see is not only a building, but the fulfilment of a dream and a firm commitment to a better tomorrow for the young people that will pass through its doors."

The capacity of the protected home is twelve people and during their stay, which is between three months and a year, the young people will have the opportunity to gain professional skills and basic social skills for independent living, they will be supported in their preparation for university exams and will be included in professional training courses, as well as in the trainings and activities of the Bulgarian Red Cross Youth. All young people will receive daily support from a team of professionals - director, psychologist and a social worker.



Eshquvvat Boboqulov, 71-years-old, is a member of local Red Crescent committee in the village of Fayzbakhsh, Tajikistan, where he volunteers in the National Society's water and sanitation programme.

Providing the source of life: Red Crescent facilitates access to clean water for vulnerable communities

Eshquvvat Boboqulov is a very smart and active member of his own community. Despite his age, he uses his 71 years' life experience to improve the life of his neighbours in the village of Fayzbakhsh, southern Tajikistan. He is a member of local Red Crescent committee which - thanks to a mini-project they presented - recently won a grant of the Finnish Red Cross to construct water supply systems and to finally free children and women of the village from the need to fetch water every day.

Though, more than 60% of Central Asia fresh water resources concentrated in Tajikistan, the overall situation with water and sanitation in the country remains poor. All water infrastructures whether for supply and sanitation, irrigation or flood protection, are in poor condition. Limited access to clean water and adequate sanitation exposes people, especially children, to serious infectious illnesses, such as diarrhea and typhoid diseases. The inhabitants of Fayzbakhsh managed to access clean drinking water thanks to the Tajik Red Crescent Primary Organization Development Programme, which the National Society launched two years ago with the support of the Finnish Red Cross. The programme aims to reduce the risk of emergencies and infectious diseases in vulnerable families of Tajikistan through capacity building and promotion of behavioural change.

News from National Societies

Interview:



Eva von Oelreich is President of the Swedish Red Cross. She is also the Vice President of the IFRC with Europe as her main responsibility.

What do you see as the main humanitarian challenges in Europe and Central Asia? What approaches are needed to solve them?

There is volatility all over the world due to the global financial crisis and its repercussions: gaps widen between rich and poor and the socio-economic divide increases inequality. We know that more and more people will be affected by disasters, but we should not forget those related to technological problems, toxic waste, and environmental mismanagement. During the coming decades we are in for change. As a planet, we live beyond our means and,

in parts of Europe, an absurd lifestyle of constantly buying things, over-consuming rather than living, is seen not just as possible, but as an acceptable one. The urban landscape is also changing, and one sees more violence in suburbs of large cities, not least where there is massive youth unemployment. And people standing at the doors of Europe knocking, no green cards to get in. At least 2,000 died in the Mediterranean Sea last year, trying to get into Europe. Increasing gaps, unresolved migration issues, minorities under threat, street children and street violence. And an ageing population. Sweden is said to be the most individualistic and loneliest country on earth. In one part of Stockholm, 59% of households are single.

The most important thing is to act. There is a lot of room for Red Cross and Red Crescent to step in and bridge gaps, identify risks and the most urgent needs and respond to them or call for change, support people who need us, engage them in action. National Societies need to be alert, flexible, adaptable to new situations, innovative to find solutions to support those who need us.

What can you do in your new role to help create a stronger Red Cross and Red Crescent in the Zone?

There is only one way. We all need to make the Red Cross principles and values happen. We need to do our utmost to make a difference for people who need the Red Cross and Red Crescent. I can be a spokesperson in the Governing Board to make our common issues understood. My wish is also that we collaborate differently within Europe – more networking, more interaction to learn from each other, more partnering, sharing experience and learning, including boards with boards.

Migration and older people has been our European and Central Asian focus since the European conference in Vienna. That makes a lot of sense, especially when we include psycho-social support as an element of our work with both migrants and older people and, of course, also in crisis management.

What was your route into the Red Cross? What do you miss about previous professional roles, and what have you learned from your time with the Movement?

I visited my first refugee camp when I was five, holding my father's hand. I guess that's where it all started. Before joining the Red Cross, I had a couple of senior management positions – focusing on planning and finance. International experience and a few languages all came in handy, when I joined the Swedish Red Cross 24 years ago. During my time with the Movement I have learnt a lot – it is a microcosm, which displays all dimensions of human life! Essential for me was to understand at an early stage that it is always possible to change things for the better!

You have just come back from the statutory meetings in Geneva. What is your overall impression of the state of the Movement?

It is powerful to be part of the world's largest humanitarian network. We need to understand the opportunities and responsibilities which come with that. We need to live our values. Our future also depends on how well we work together, how much we are seen as one Movement.

Italian Red Cross starts roll-out of its Strategic Aims for 2020

Following the endorsement of the National Society Strategic Aims toward 2020 and sticking to the commitment to "Do more, do better and reach further", the Italian Red Cross, in partnership with the IFRC Europe Zone Office, trained seventy volunteers and staff members during the workshop that was held in Settimo Torinese, northern Italy, from 3 to 5 February 2012.

The initiative was aimed at establishing a nationwide network of facilitators who will provide systematic support to the Branches in internalizing the National Society Strategic Aims toward 2020 as well as in their related roll-out actions.

Fundamental Principles and underpinned values, IFRC Strategy 2020, Italian Red Cross Strategic Aims, Accountability, Planning and Project Cycle Management were among the main topics addressed during the workshop through five knowledge and skills development based sessions.

Through the multiplier effect that the participants will generate, the initiative will further strengthen the branches ability to deliver relevant services to vulnerable people and to be accountable to their members, the communities they serve, as well as to donors and partners.

Resource mobilisation

Development Programmes 2012, Donor response

Europe & Central Asia

Code	Programme title	Budget	Funding	Coverage
MAA65001	Europe Zone	1,577,112	2,078,035	132%
MAABA002	Bosnia and Herzegovina	392,879	345,828	88%
MAAKV001	Kosovo	642,649	370,148	58%
MAAME001	Montenegro	15,000	348	2%
MAARS001	Serbia	367,151	298,439	81%
MAA67002	CHARP	522,500	104,807	20%
MAABY002	Belarus	1,032,887	1,114,010	108%
MAAMD002	Moldova	72,899	85,018	117%
MAARU002	Russian Federation	1,622,229	1,330,302	82%
MAAAM002	Armenia	245,956	129,693	53%
MAAAZ002	Azerbaijan	159,891	76,455	48%
MAAGE002	Georgia	451,256	124,777	28%
MAAKG001	Kyrgyzstan	0	325,515	N/A
MAAKZ001	Kazakhstan	406,523	318,321	78%
MAATJ002	Tajikistan	1,397,877	548,920	39%
MAATM001	Turkmenistan	627,098	92,622	15%
MAAUZ001	Uzbekistan	198,494	12,394	6%
	Subtotal Europe & Central Asia	9,808,399	7,425,281	76%

Staff changes

Welcome to new staff:

Noemi Nemeth	Human Resources Intern	Budapest, Hungary
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Farewell to colleagues:

Tore Svenning	Special Adviser	Budapest, Hungary
Lourdes Garcia Perez	Resource Mobilisation Coordinator	Budapest, Hungary
Erzsebet Nemethne	Support Services Assistant	Budapest, Hungary
Slobodanka Curic	Disaster Management Coordinator	Budapest, Hungary
Zsolt Rieder	Finance Manager	Budapest, Hungary

EU Funding for Development

Open calls for proposals with RCEU relevance (EU-level only):

Prevention of and Fight against Crime (ISEC) : General Call for Proposals

Trafficking in human beings, sexual exploitation of children, victims of terrorism

Deadline 24 February 2012 + [Details DG HOME website...](#)

Public Health Programme : 2012 Project grants, conference grants, joint actions

Response to chemical events, active and healthy ageing, children overweight/obesity, prevent alcohol-related harm, etc.

Deadline 9 March 2012 + [Details EAHC website...](#)

Fundamental Rights and Citizenship - Action grants 2011-2012

Charter of Fundamental Rights, Rights of the Child, Combating racism, xenophobia and anti-Semitism, Fighting Homophobia, Citizenship

Deadline 13 March 2012 + [Details DG JUSTICE website...](#)

Daphne III - Action grants 2011-2012

Prevention and combating of violence against children young people and women, protect victims and groups at risk

Deadline 29 March 2012 + [Details DG JUSTICE website...](#)

Lifelong Learning Programme (LLP) : Grundtvig: Senior Volunteering Projects

Transnational voluntary service projects for older people, informal learning

Deadline 30 March 2012 + [Details DG EAC website...](#)

Drug Prevention and Information Programme - Action Grants

Transnational projects on drug use, dependence and drug-related harm

Deadline 17 April 2012 + [Details DG JUSTICE website...](#)

ICT Policy Support Programme - 2012 Call for Proposals

Pilot projects and networking; includes ICT for health, ageing well and inclusion

Deadline 15 May 2012 + [Details DG INFSO website...](#)

Europe for Citizens : Action 4 - Active European Remembrance

Preserving sites and archives associated with deportations and commemorating of victims of Nazism and Stalinism.

Deadline 1 June 2012 + [Details EACEA website...](#)

Europe for Citizens : Action 1 - Active Citizens for Europe: Measure 2.2 Support measures

Establish long-lasting partnerships and networks (information, training, platforms).

Deadline 1 June 2012 + [Details EACEA website...](#)



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