



Bulletin №26
The Ukrainian Red Cross Society (URCS)
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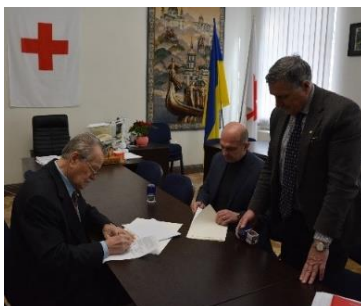
Liliia Bilous was appointed as the Director General of the National Committee (NC) of the URCS at the beginning of 2017 in accordance with the Red Cross Society Board's decision №3, dated 14th December 2016. Vladyslav Shelokov was appointed as the First Deputy of Director General. Valery Serhovskyy continues to hold the position of Deputy Director General of the NC URCS. According to the division of responsibilities between deputies of director general, Vladislav Shelokov manages HR policy, organizational development, information activities, resource mobilization, volunteer management, implementation of international humanitarian law, protection of emblem and activities of youth information centers. Valery Serhovskyy continues to coordinate the international department, liaise with national society partners of Red Cross and Red Crescent, establish contacts with governmental and non-governmental organizations, including the direction of health protection and custody as part of his responsibilities.



In the night of 30th to 31st of January 2017, the city of Avdeevka was shelled with heavy artillery, including MLRS BM-21 "Grad" system. The infrastructure of the city was severely damaged, causing loss of heat and water supply to the residential properties, as well as the reduced supply of food. On the 1st February, the URCS started to collect humanitarian aid amongst residents of large cities to provide the aid to the population of Avdeevka and other localities of Donetsk and Lugansk regions suffering from the lack of food, drinking water, warm clothes, blankets, hygiene kits etc. On the 2nd February, the National Committee of the Society sent 1050 blankets, 700 sets of bedding, warm clothes and equipment for the installation of 3 heating points. Regional branches formed and transferred humanitarian supplies from their own stock, as well as the aid provided by the local people. The URCS conducts ongoing monitoring of residents' needs in the eastern regions by the staff and volunteers present on the field. As the needs of residents of Avdeevka become fully covered, the aid will be directed to other towns that are in the "grey zone". The URCS gradually accumulates stocks in regional warehouses in Donetsk, Luhansk and nearby areas in case of any escalation of the armed conflict.



During the New Year holidays, staff and volunteers of the URCS organized celebrations for those who always wait for the festivities more than anybody, children. Mainly, those were the children that fallen into difficult life conditions, kids with disabilities, the ones who were forced to leave their homes in the East of Ukraine or are being treated in stationary hospitals. With the support of government agencies, educational institutions, volunteers, sponsors and partners of National Societies as well as just caring people, the URCS congratulated over 26 000 children in Ukraine. The volunteers and staff of the URCS organized many festive events - shows, workshops, concerts and competitions. And, of course, the children received surprises - gift baskets, candies, stationeries, games, books, clothing, and sports equipment.



On January, 17th, the URCS signed a cooperation agreement with the Ukrainian Association of the council heads of the small towns and villages. The document was signed by Ivan Usichenko, President of the URCS and Mykola Poiedynok, Vice-President of the Association, director of the executive directorate. The Association consists of village and small town councils, which represent more than 8,500 local communities and more than 80% of rural residents who, through their representatives supported its

creation. The purpose of signing the agreement is to join efforts for developing strategy and implementation of measures to create accessible and good medical and social services for residents of villages and small towns. Cooperation will be conducted through the creation, implementation and improvement of practices of health and social services, which will aid to reduce illnesses and improve quality of life for residents of villages and small towns.



Due to adverse weather conditions in January, the decision was made at the state level to create heating points. Depending on the region, responsibility for the functioning of the points was divided between utility services, local authorities and State Emergency Service of Ukraine (SES). 62 heating points were organized across the regional branches of the URCS. The National Society provides visitors with hot tea and snacks, first aid, warm clothing, medicine and blankets. In some regions, the URCS provided assistance not only to heating points located across its branches but to 132 heating points organized by SES and utility services. More than 100 members of the emergency response teams (ERTs), the URCS volunteers and staff are on duty in heating points across the country. As of mid-January the URCS provided assistance to more than 2,500 individuals in the heating points throughout Ukraine with the cooperation of SES and local authorities.



ERTs of the URCS were on duty during swimming activities for the Epiphany celebration in many cities of Ukraine. Before the holiday, the Red Cross volunteers, particularly in the Bila Tserkva (Kyiv region), worked with employees of SES and physicians to rescue a victim, who fell into the water. During the Epiphany, volunteers were on duty to provide first aid to people who plunged into the icy water, if needed. For instance, in Kyiv the ERT of National Committee of the URCS was on duty at Obolonska waterfront, where they offered hot tea to people and launched a mobile heating point, which benefited 300 people. And in the city of Dnipro volunteers helped a man, who broke his leg in an ice hole. He was quickly brought on a stretcher to the ambulance.



State Emergency Service of Ukraine and the URCS are working on deepening the cooperation and the adjustment of mechanisms for joint response in case of emergencies amongs offices of SES and regional branches of the URCS across the country. On January 23rd, in Kyiv a workshop was held between SES and the URCS, where members of both organizations discussed joint response to emergency situations, fires and hazardous events. In the framework of the cooperation, at the regional level, the meetings will be held between representatives of the URCS and the heads of the SES's departments to agree the joint development plan for the collaboration, including joint training.

Luhansk branch

As of 18th January 2017, 7422 people used the heating point in Stanitsa Luganskaya. Among them, 358 were disabled and 173 were children. First aid was provided to 60 people, covering blood pressure measurement, treatment of wounds and bandaging. This Red Cross heating point in the "buffer zone" was opened on December 5, 2016, and its activities are fully supported by the International Committee of the Red Cross. Everyday, 100-150 people pass through it and in the cold days, in early 2017, the numbers of visitors rose to 400-500 people a day. About 50% of these people were elderly as well as disabled. The rest were mothers with children in need of heating and warm drinks.





Kyiv branch

Responding to the needs of medical institutions in medicine, doctors appealed to the Kyiv city branch of the URCS requesting to find opportunities to attract sponsors and assist with medical supplies. Kyiv city branch of the National Society, in cooperation with the Foundation "Farmvarta" and LLC "Takeda Ukraine", provided free medical supplies worth of 190,102 UAH to the stationary hospitals and for the children's hospitals in the city - in the amount of 124,798 UAH. This will provide greater accessibility to the health care for disadvantaged residents of Kyiv among internally displaced persons, poor and so on.



Kharkiv branch

To help internally displaced persons in purchasing essentials, the German Red Cross in the cooperation with the Kharkiv regional branch of the URCS support 5000 the most vulnerable persons among IDPs with food vouchers (of 600 UAH) and pharmaceutical vouchers (of 300 USD) for 10 months. Most of these 5,000 beneficiaries are single mothers, children and elderly people. This project is a continuation of a similar project implemented in 2015, which provided assistance to 6380 IDPs for 7 months (in total 44,000 food vouchers were given). Federal Foreign Office of Germany is a donor of the Project.