

1. INTRODUCTION

This Operations Review of the Red Cross Red Crescent Movement response to the Bam earthquake was commissioned by the Federation Secretariat and conducted during February and March 2004 by a team of six: three independent consultants, two Red Cross staff and one staff member from the Iranian Red Crescent (IRCS). The Client for the Review is the Federation Deputy Secretary General.

The Terms of Reference for the Review were jointly agreed between the Secretariat and the IRCS, and can be found in Appendix 1. The objectives as stated in the TOR were:

- Ø To assess the planning, management and coordination of the immediate response and emergency phase from the date of the earthquake, December 26 2003 to February 29 2004;
- Ø To use lessons learned from the emergency phase to make recommendations for the enhancement of IRCS, Federation Secretariat and other national Societies' efficient and effective performance in both disaster response and planning for transition and rehabilitation, in the light of their experience in the Bam operation;
- Ø To gather baseline information for the future final evaluation of the operation and related programmes to which the IRCS has committed itself, to be conducted towards the end of 2004.

The goal was to capture lessons learned from the emergency phase at an early stage before memories of the events faded and before the Federation Emergency Support Units withdrew or were handed over to the IRCS.

This is not an impact study and, at the request of the IRCS, has not included a systematic collection of beneficiary feedback, although opportunities were taken to speak with residents in Bam as a cross-check to information gathered from other sources.

This Review does not, in general, make comparisons with other similar operations (Gujarat, Turkey etc) as these will be addressed by a wider review of Federation emergency operations conducted over the last few years, which is planned for later in 2004, and to which this report will form a source document.

The IRCS is committed to conducting a further full evaluation at the end of the operation¹ in late 2004. The IRCS has commissioned a separate review of its disaster response from the Applied Education Institute (AEI) in Tehran, which is related to the National Society. The AEI exercise will complement this Review and, hopefully, will be shared with the Federation.

The Review Team would like to thank the Iranian Red Crescent and Federation staff, volunteers, and delegates both for the constructive attitude they have taken to the Review and for their practical assistance in carrying out the Review.

2. METHODOLOGY

The methodology for the Review included:

- Ø *Document review* – Documents consulted are listed in Appendix 2.
- Ø *Interviews* with IFRC Secretariat in Geneva, and Federation and IRCS personnel in Tehran, NGOs, UN agencies, and government representatives in Bam, and telephone interviews with Secretariat staff and returned delegates. A schedule of interviewees is included as Appendix 3.

¹ The Revised Appeal of January 8 2003 sets the time frame of the Operation as 6-8 months

- Ø *Email correspondence* with National Society major participants in the operation (by pledges or direct participation) which were invited to respond to a short set of questions on the perceived performance of the Movement in relation to Bam. Three National Societies responded.
- Ø *A Feedback meeting* was held in Tehran at the end of the Review visit with the IRCS and Federation Head of Delegation where participants were invited to help clarify and focus the Reviews' initial findings.

The Review team members and their assigned responsibilities were as follows:

Simon Lawry–White	Independent Consultant	Team Leader/Protocol, FACT, IFRC/IRCS relations, Coordination
Bernard Chomilier	Independent Consultant	Logistics, Relief, Telecommunications, Camp management
Hassan Esfandiar	Iranian Red Crescent	Protocol, Liaison, Review logistics, IRCS perspectives
Michael Pelly	Independent Consultant	Health, ERU Field Hospital, BHCUs
Elena González Romero	Spanish Red Cross	Finance, HR, Media/Communications, Psychosocial support
Thomas Söderman	Swedish Red Cross	Water and Sanitation, Tracing, ICRC

The Review experienced a number of constraints.

- Ø It was organised quickly and had to fit with team members' prior commitments.
- Ø The timing of the Review was organised to avoid the Iranian New Year but, unfortunately, two of the four days set for the field visit to Bam were public holidays and the team was only able to observe only one full working day in Bam.
- Ø Some information requested by the team was not forthcoming.
- Ø Only a few Federation delegates in Bam at the time of the Review were there in the early days of the emergency.

3. BACKGROUND

At 05:26:52am on December 26th 2003, the city of Bam² and its surrounding villages was struck by an earthquake of magnitude 6.5³. The earthquake was said to have killed 42,000 people, although at the end of March the Iranian Office of Statistics revised this figure downwards to 26,271⁴, with 525 people still unaccounted for.

More than 30,000 people were injured, 7,800 of them seriously, and some 75,000 people were made homeless. Approximately 85% of the city was destroyed. Health facilities and administration buildings collapsed, both in the city and surrounding villages. All services were temporarily cut including telephone, electricity and water. Ancient underground irrigation channels (qanats) were badly damaged, threatening the long-term future of agriculture in the region. Schools were destroyed leaving up to 30,000 children without access to schooling. The ancient citadel of Bam (Arg-e-Bam) was almost completely destroyed. The Bam earthquake was one of the deadliest national disasters in modern Iranian history, and certainly the worst for 100 years.

There were three tremors before the main earthquake, at 8pm the previous night, at 12 midnight and 4.30am. The last of these was severe and the population took it to be the main quake. It was an extremely cold night and most people went back to bed after the third tremor. Being a Friday, (the weekend), there

² Bam is located 1,200 km southeast of Tehran in Kerman Province, South East Iran.

³ Also variously reported as magnitude 6.3, 6.6 (US Geological Survey) and 6.7.

⁴ The difference compared with the previous official estimate was claimed to be mainly due to the double counting of bodies during the chaos caused by the disaster