

# Annex 3 - Examples of Red Cross - Red Crescent interventions in promoting community self-help



## El Salvador

**January and February 2001**

Two powerful earthquakes cause widespread devastation.

**Two weeks later**

120 Salvadorean Red Cross volunteers from the affected communities were trained and travelled around the devastated areas.

**Intervention**

Community interventions aimed at raising awareness about psychological issues were conducted, such as getting the community together and letting them cut out newspaper pictures about the earthquake, putting them on cardboard and writing a little story about what a specific picture means to them.

**Result**

- Increased community awareness and cohesiveness
- Increased community involvement in psychological coping
- Community members mobilized to identify resources and strengths
- Community participated in planning ways to transform individual helplessness into group resources and sufficiency.

## Turkey

**August and November 1999** Two devastating earthquakes

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**One year later** Three Red Crescent communities with a Turkish psychologist and social worker in each centre as well as 55 volunteers trained to provide psychological and social support to people in the affected areas.

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**Approach** The training is based on the understanding that the concerned communities themselves can best define activities that will respond to their needs. To encourage community local ownership of the programme, volunteers are therefore trained to involve community members in the assessment of both needs and resources. Activities are then organized through collective decision making.

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**Intervention** One example of the activities conducted in the community centres is the establishment of a support group for women who had become isolated as a result of the earthquakes. First the women without any social contacts met regularly as a group at the Red Crescent community centre. Eventually, they decided to meet privately, as is the custom in Turkey.

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**Result** Through the structure provided by the Red Crescent community centre, the community was able to re-create a traditional support structure.

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