

# OPERATIONS UPDATE



International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies  
Fédération Internationale des Sociétés de la Croix-Rouge et du Croissant-Rouge  
Federación Internacional de Sociedades de la Cruz Roja y de la Media Luna Roja  
الاتحاد الدولي لجمعيات الصليب الأحمر والهلال الأحمر

## BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA: FLOODS

21 May 2004

*The Federation's mission is to improve the lives of vulnerable people by mobilizing the power of humanity. It is the world's largest humanitarian organization and its millions of volunteers are active in over 181 countries.*

### In Brief

**Appeal No:** 11/2004

**Operations Update:** no.1

**Period covered:** 20 April to 20 May, 2004

**Appeal coverage:** 61.9 % (click below for list of contributions)

[http://www.ifrc.org/cgi/pdf\\_appeals.pl?04/1-2-3%20-%20ap1104.pdf](http://www.ifrc.org/cgi/pdf_appeals.pl?04/1-2-3%20-%20ap1104.pdf)

#### Appeal history:

- Launched on 20 April 2004 for CHF 333,000 (USD 261,000 or EUR 217,000) for three months to assist 8,412 beneficiaries.
- Disaster Relief Emergency Funds (DREF) allocated: CHF 50,000.

**Outstanding needs:** CHF 127,000

**Related Appeals:** Emergency Appeal Bosnia & Herzegovina Floods 11/2004 (click below)

[http://www.ifrc.org/cgi/pdf\\_appeals.pl?04/1104.pdf](http://www.ifrc.org/cgi/pdf_appeals.pl?04/1104.pdf)

Annual Appeal Bosnia & Herzegovina 01.73/2004 (click below)

[http://www.ifrc.org/cgi/pdf\\_appeals.pl?annual04/017304.pdf](http://www.ifrc.org/cgi/pdf_appeals.pl?annual04/017304.pdf)

**Operational Summary:** The heavy rains in mid-April 2004 resulted in the rapid rise of the water level of rivers in Bosnia & Herzegovina. The last estimations indicate that the floods, which occurred due to the rise of the rivers' water level, have: affected 300,000 people; flooded 5,000 houses; and caused several hundred families to evacuate their homes. In addition, the floods also severely affected 20,000 hectares of land with crops and flooded water-wells, which resulted in the water being polluted. In order to alleviate the suffering of the most vulnerable flood victims, the Federation, with its emergency appeal, aimed to provide assistance for 8,412 of the poorest and most-affected flood victims. The relief distribution has been a great help, as eighty percent of the population in the affected areas lives on agricultural proceeds and their crops were damaged with the floods.

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*For longer-term programmes, please refer to the Federation's Annual Appeal*

All International Federation assistance seeks to adhere to the [Code of Conduct](#) and is committed to the [Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Disaster Response](#) in delivering assistance to the most vulnerable. For support to or for further information concerning Federation programmes or operations in this or other countries, or for a full description of the national society profile, please access the Federation's website at <http://www.ifrc.org>

## Background

Due to heavy rains between 6<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> April 2004, the water level of the rivers Pliva, Vrbas, Bosna, Sana, Vrbanja, Josavka, Una, Lasva, Zdena, Drina and Sava rose rapidly. As a consequence, the water spilled over the river banks; flooding large areas of the regions Banja Luka, Prijedor, Mrkonjic-Grad and Doboj as well as the Una-Sana, Zenica-Doboj, Srednja Bosna and Posavina cantons.

Forty-eight municipalities were flooded. The most affected municipalities declared a state of emergency at the height of the floods. The respective regions and cantons consequently declared a state of elemental disaster. According to the last estimations, these floods have affected 300,000 people. Around 5,000 houses were flooded and several hundred families had to be evacuated from their homes. The floods damaged 20,000 hectares with crops and washed away several bridges. The traffic was temporarily broken, due to landslides and water that partially flooded the main roads. The water flooded water-wells and broke into the water network system, which has resulted in the water being polluted and unsuitable for drinking. The sewage overflows contaminated wells which inhabitants of the affected areas rely on for their water supply. There is a great concern that land mines laid during the war may have been washed away by the floods and appear in previously land mine-clean areas.

The situation in the municipality of Brod is still difficult. Due to the fact that the majority of the municipality is situated below the level of Sava river and that the level of the river is still high, the withdrawal of water is slow. The water could be taken out only by pumps, therefore pumps with different capacity have been sent to Brod from other municipalities of BiH. Some pumps arrived from Serbia as well. The local authorities paid special attention to the health and water/sanitation issues, as the contamination of wells and water sources presents the greatest threat to the population of the affected area.

## Operational developments

Red Cross Society of Bosnia and Herzegovina undertook immediate action to save lives and property. Around 360 Red Cross volunteers helped with the evacuation and distribution of food and water to the affected population. The RCSBiH mobilised all available human and material resources. Local Red Cross branches released and distributed the limited emergency stocks of basic relief items to the most vulnerable.

The Red Cross has so far distributed:

- 500 jerry cans to Srbac, 50 to Laktasi and 150 to Gradiska
- 30 food parcels, 20 kg of detergent, 200 m2 of plastic sheeting to Modrica
- 20 food parcels, 10 kg of detergent, 200 m2 of plastic sheeting to Vukosavlje
- 10 food parcels, 10 kg of detergent, 200 m2 of plastic sheeting to Srpski/Bosanski Brod
- 100 food parcels, 100 hygiene parcels, 200 blankets and water-purification pills to Srednja Bosna Canton
- 50 food parcels, 20 hygiene parcels and 100 blankets to Una-Sana Canton
- 50 food parcels, 50 hygiene parcels, 20 bales of second-hand clothes and shoes to Zenica-Doboj Canton
- 100 food parcels, 100 blankets and 30 bales of second-hand clothes and shoes to Tuzla Canton



**Local Red Cross branches distributed the limited emergency stocks to the most vulnerable**

- 50 food parcels and 30 hygiene parcels to Hercegovina-Neretva Canton
- 1,800 blankets are expected to come from the RC branches situated in the south of the country.

The Red Cross, in co-operation with Civil Protection and the authorities, was involved in all field activities, and was responsible for the organization and realization of care for the affected population. Disaster Preparedness (DP) coordinators in the affected regions and cantons were coordinating work with Civil Protection at the municipal level.

Entity Red Cross Secretary Generals, DP co-ordinators and RCSBiH Regional Disaster Response Team (RDRT) members carried out field assessments, together with Civil Protection. Based on the findings in the field, the beneficiaries have been selected according to the following criteria:

- elderly people, aged 60 and above, living alone
- families with children under eight years of age
- female-headed households
- disabled
- people left homeless
- returnees and IDPs

RCSBiH Plan of action has been finalised on 22 April 2004.

Distribution of 1.000 food parcels (donation of Republika Srpska Government) and 24.389 litres of juices, 42.444 litres of mineral water and milk (donation of Slovenia Government) is in process.

## Red Cross and Red Crescent

### Emergency relief (food and basic non-food items)

**Goal:** Alleviate the suffering of the most vulnerable flood victims.

**Objective:** Provide assistance for 8,412 of the poorest and most-affected flood victims, consisting of food and hygiene parcels, jerry cans and disinfectants.

### Achievements

The branches of the Red Cross Society of BiH identified 8.412 beneficiaries in Regions and Cantons according to defined selection criteria. The amounts of CHF 50.000 (DREF) and CHF 77.975 of Belgium Red Cross were spent on procurement and distribution of disinfectants, food and hygiene parcels. Purchasing and pre-positioning of 8.412 individual hygiene parcels, 1.800 individual food parcels and 2.200 litres of disinfectants in two warehouses started on 8 May 2004 and was completed on 14 May 2004. Pre-positioning of the relief items was made in accordance with the Plan of Distribution as shown below:

Destination	Number of hygiene parcels	Number of food parcels	Disinfectants
Novi Travnik warehouse	4.500	900	1.100
Gradiska warehouse	3.912	900	1.100
<b>TOTAL</b>	8.412	1.800	2.200

The distribution of individual food parcels, hygiene parcels and disinfectants to selected beneficiaries started on 17 May 2004 and will be completed till 23 May 2004, in accordance with the Plan of Distribution as below:

Region/Canton/Municipality	Food parcels	Hygiene parcels	Disinfectants (lit.)
<b>SREDNJE-BOSANSKI CANTON</b>			
Gornji Vakuf	50	200	50
Bugojno	50	350	75
Donji Vakuf	50	250	50
Jajce	25	200	50
Travnik	50	300	50
<b>UNA-SANA CANTON</b>			
Bihac	50	350	50
Kljuc	50	350	50
Bosanska Krupa	50	150	50
Buzim	50	200	50
Sanski Most	50	350	50
Velika Kladusa	25	150	50
<b>POSAVSKI CANTON</b>			
Orasje	50	250	50
Domaljevac-Samac	25	200	50
Odzak	50	250	75
<b>TUZLA CANTON</b>			
Tuzla	50	100	50
Srebrenik	25	100	50
Zivinice	50	200	50
Lukavac	25	50	50
<b>ZENICA-DOBOJ CANTON</b>			
Doboj jug			
Usora	50	150	50
Maglaj	50	150	50
	25	200	50
<b>MRKONJIC GRAD REGION</b>			
Sipovo			
Jezero	200	200	60
	160	160	40
<b>PRIJEDOR REGION</b>			
Prijevor		700	150
Kostajnica		40	
Novi Grad		40	
K. Dubica		40	
<b>BANJA LUKA REGION</b>			
Banja Luka		80	30
Celinac		60	40
Kotor Varos		60	20
Laktasi		200	50
Gradiska		72	30
Srbac		400	100
<b>DOBOJ REGION</b>			
Derventa		220	60
Srpski Brod		960	300
Modrica	340	400	120
Vukosavlje	200	200	60

BIJELJINA REGION			
Bijeljina		40	20
Samac		40	20
<b>TOTAL</b>	1.800	8.412	2.200

A target group of 1,000 beneficiaries for the second and third distribution is to be identified in the course of the first distribution. The National Society should purchase additional 8,612 food parcels for two more distributions and 3,900 jerry cans, depending on the available funds. For the moment, additional funds have been pledged by the Swedish Red Cross (CHF 67,600), Austrian Red Cross (CHF 31,190) Japanese Red Cross (CHF 10,594) and Norwegian Red Cross (CHF 18,900).

#### **Impact:**

Bosnia and Herzegovina is still recovering from years of war during which the economy was totally ruined. Eighty percent of the population in the affected areas lives on agricultural proceeds. Having in mind that the loss of the crops will affect food availability and prices of food at the market in the medium and long-term, we could say that this relief distribution will be of great help to the poorest and most affected, whose property and crops were damaged by the floods.

**Constraints:** RCSBiH has sufficient human resources, but the availability of emergency stock is very limited due to lack of financial reserves.

**Objective:** Promotion of activities of the Red Cross and strengthening of the RCSBiH image.

#### **Achievements**

During the first week of the disaster, daily reports on the current situation, compiled from the information received from the field, were submitted to the National Society, the International Federation and other relevant institutions and organizations.

Republika Srpska Red Cross organized a press conference on the floods on 17 May 2004 in Gradiska. The media were informed on activities of direct relief distribution to beneficiaries, the Red Cross Disaster Management programme and the co-operation with relevant governmental and non-governmental organizations. RCSBiH Presidency organized a press conference on the floods on 20 May 2004 in Sarajevo, where disaster response activities of the Red Cross in the field were presented and contributions of donors were valued.



The emblem of the National Society and donors was used on food and hygiene parcels, which maximized the visibility of the Red Cross in the field.

An RCSBiH-appointed monitoring team is responsible for verifying the validity of beneficiary lists through random checks. Regular monitoring will show if the activities are implemented according to the plan of action. The first evaluation will be done four weeks after the first distribution.

#### **Impact:**

Distribution of parcels with the National Society emblem and visits to beneficiaries by Red Cross volunteers will make the presence of the Red Cross in the field visible and will strengthen the image of the RCSBiH. Monitoring and evaluation will show what should be improved and developed in the Disaster Management programme in order to make RCSBiH much more efficient in similar situations in the future.

**The visibility of Red Cross assistance was maximised by the use of emblem on the parcels**

### **Federation Coordination**

The International Federation has undertaken a major role in coordination of the international support to the National Society for the people affected by floods.

As a member of the tendering commission, the Federation also participated in the opening of tenders for hygiene parcels on 7 May 2004 in Sarajevo and supported two RCSBiH DP coordinators in choosing the best supplier and procurement of the relief items.

### **Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement -- Principles and initiatives**

This operation improved the cooperation between Red Cross branches and authorities on the municipal level and cooperation between the Entities' Red Cross branches. It will also define roles and responsibilities of the different actors (communities, local authorities, national and international organizations) in case of disaster. The capacity of the RCSBiH in disaster management will be strengthened.

### **National Society Capacity Building**

RCSBiH Disaster Management Team organized a meeting on 16 April 2004 in Sarajevo. RCSBiH HQ, the International Committee of Red Cross (ICRC) and International Federation participated in the meeting. The purpose of the meeting was to analyse and discuss the National Society's response to the disaster and, based on the outcome, to identify necessary steps in the development of Disaster Management strategies on national level. It was concluded that RCSBiH has a lot of human resources while lacking the material resources, which has rather negative implications for disaster response. The next evaluation meeting will take place at the beginning of June 2004.

### **Communications – Advocacy and Public Information**

RCSBiH representatives in the field gave interviews to the media. The public was informed through the press conferences about the roles and responsibilities of the Red Cross and the measures which were taken.

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