

# PROGRAMME 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

5 February 2004

Appeal No. 01.73/2003

Appeal Target: CHF 1,337,356 (USD 1.077.000) (EUR 853.500)

Programme Update No. 3

Period covered: September- December, 2003

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### ***In Brief***

**Appeal coverage:** For up to date coverage, click on link below:

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**Related Emergency or Annual Appeals: Bosnia and Herzegovina 2004 Appeal no. 01/73/2004.** For further details please see the website: [http://www.ifrc.org/cgi/pdf\\_appeals.pl?annual04/017304.pdf](http://www.ifrc.org/cgi/pdf_appeals.pl?annual04/017304.pdf)

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**Programme Summary:** The International Federation continued to build the Red Cross Society of Bosnia and Herzegovina's (RCSBiH) capacities in order to be better prepared to carry out its programmes and activities in support of the most vulnerable sections of the population.

The RCSBiH took over from the International Federation the responsibility for the Population Movement (PM) programme, since the regional PM programme phased out in September. The German RC started a bilateral project with the RCSBiH to assist the most vulnerable returnees in the north-western part of BiH.

### **Operational Developments**

Bosnia and Herzegovina has achieved commendable results on its path from the post-conflict society to the state of transition. In November, the European Union announced plans to open negotiations on the Stabilisation and Association Agreement with BiH in 2004, following a review of the progress the country

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has made towards membership. In order to fulfil sixteen conditions from the Feasibility Study, BiH authorities have initiated implementation of painful economic reforms, as well as the reforms of the rule of law and security. Strengthening of the state institutions and fostering greater integration of the entities in the economic field are among the priorities. To that end, the adoption of the Law on Indirect Tax Administration and the Defence Law which regulates joint civilian command, parliamentary control and unified command chain at the central level by the BiH Parliament represent major achievements.

In the human rights field, the end of 2003 marked the moment when the local authorities assumed responsibility for human rights protection in the country, as the Office of the State Ombudsman was transferred from international to BiH control.

Local authorities opened four regional centres in major cities for return, upon taking over return responsibilities from the international community. Property Law Implementation Plan Agencies announced in December that as of the end of November, the overall implementation ratio of property repossession reached 92% per cent, while 99% of claimants received the first instance decisions. According to the UNHCR statistics, published in the beginning of December, 43,007 returns were recorded in the eleven months of 2003, making total of 979, 598 refugees and internally displaced peoples (IDP) who have returned to their pre-war homes, including 430, 426 of so-called minority returns since the signing of Dayton Peace Agreement.

Despite certain progress in the implementation of economic reforms, huge trade de-balance and high unemployment rates represent key problems. In the situation when half of the BiH population live at or below the poverty line and international aid is downsizing, the Government has to focus on job creation, attracting foreign investments and ensuring a better social safety net.

The activities of the Red Cross Society of Bosnia and Herzegovina reached its peak in the last quarter of the year. The Society's leadership had very intensive and successful international co-operation in this period. Many of those contacts were made during the RC International Conference and the General Assembly of the International Federation.

In co-operation with the Local NGOs, "Stop Mines" and "BiH Mine Action Center", the RCSBiH selected the beneficiaries/mine victims and carried out distribution of 105 computers donated by Redbus Land Mine Disposal System from UK. The RC staff and volunteers marked the Week of Solidarity, the International Day of Volunteers and Mine Awareness week. In September RCSBiH's two Emergency Response Units (Gorazde and Srbinje) organised joint exercise/simulation of floods, which was co-ordinated by the NS's management team for Disaster Preparedness (DP).

With support of the ICRC, the NS's Tracing Service launched a two-month campaign on Ante mortem data base collection in October, to collect as much data as possible, on missing persons. In order to develop its internal and external communication capacity, the NS organised x-entity trainings facilitated by the Entity RC Information officers and professional journalists. More than 100 branch secretaries and RC Youth active in the area of information/communication were trained at four entity workshops held in Gorazde, Doboje, Novi Travnik and Trebinje. In addition, the remaining four Emergency Response Teams (Zenica, Bijeljina, Travnik and Mrkonjic Grad) were established within the National Society's DP Programme, thus completing the training of twenty teams by the end of 2003 throughout the country (one team per region/canton) and the last group of twenty five auxiliary nurses was trained to provide basic services in the health and care programmes.

Two PNSs (Swiss and Spanish) working in Bosnia and Herzegovina continue programmes in health and care and capacity building of the RCSBiH, while German and Swedish RC established bilateral programmes with the RCSBiH to assist the vulnerable returnees in the country and provide relevant information to the rejected asylum seekers from BiH in Sweden.

## **Disaster Response**

Although it was initially planned to implement the activities in the Emergency Winter Appeal (launched in December 2002) in a six month period, the Appeal was extended to the end of December 2003. The returnees most in need, received 2,000 welcome parcels (combination of food and hygiene), 700 bed linen sets, blankets and pillows. Distribution of 18 tons of second-hand clothing and the same quantity of baby sets is ongoing. All four mobile/social integration teams received new chain saws as one of their main services at this time of year is chopping firewood. In addition, those teams visited 2,061 beneficiaries and continued to provide services such as distributing various relief items and in-house help.

As a response to the RCSBiH's appeal to provide additional funds for the communities hardest hit by a four-month drought, the International Federation gave EURO 10,000 in September to organize, in cooperation with the Civil Protection and local fire-brigades, distribution of drinking water for the inhabitants in remote villages in southern Bosnia and Herzegovina. Two months earlier the Federation gave the NS EURO 6,000 to provide drinking water for 1,745 families (5,235 beneficiaries) in three municipalities in the same area.

## **Health and Care**

**Goal: Position the RCSBiH as a credible partner and provider of services within the fields of social welfare and public health through its country-wide community based network.**

**Objective: To enable the RCSBiH to provide Home Care services to beneficiaries and to increase the capacity of RCS BiH to provide education campaigns on health issues and blood donor schemes.**

### **Expected results**

- **RCSBiH at all levels has become a partner to local government structures in providing services through the home care programme involving beneficiaries in the implementation of the programme and increasing locally secured funding**
- **Public awareness on health issues has been significantly raised through campaigns, namely by making use of teams of peer educators giving presentations on reproductive health, HIV/AIDS and drug abuse in secondary schools throughout the country**

### **Progress/Achievements (activities implemented within this objective)**

On the 1<sup>st</sup> of October the RCSBiH staff and volunteers marked the Day of Older Persons with a press conference to remind the authorities and all other stakeholders of their obligation to provide assistance to vulnerable elderly people who live in extreme poverty and to advocate to donors for the Home Care programme (HCP). This conference was only an introduction to the whole range of activities to alleviate the difficult situation of HCP beneficiaries. Many branches visited and distributed relief items to the people most in need, organised social gatherings for beneficiaries or launched fund-raising campaigns. The Red Cross branches in Krajina/Banja Luka region decided to launch a two-month fund-raising campaign, "Help us to help", within their region. They were selling three types of coupons at KM 1, 2 or 5 (50 cents, EURO 1, EURO 2.50). Results of the campaign were encouraging, as more than KM 20,000 (EURO 10,000) in cash and sizeable donation in-kind was raised and distributed to the vulnerable elderly people. There are some branch secretaries who tried to get funds from the local authorities to sustain the home care activities in their municipalities. The latest positive example is the RC branch in Banja Luka, which submitted a project proposal to the city authorities and got funding for provision of services to 160 HCP beneficiaries for the period of one year.

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The RCSBiH decided in December to purchase 2,000 hygiene parcels and 120, 000 pieces of diapers which will be distributed to the HCP beneficiaries.

During the Week of Struggle against TB (14-21 September), the RCSBiH organised a round table entitled "We must not forget TB". The Red Cross staff and volunteers, health workers and media took part in it. The role of the Red Cross in public education was especially underlined, as well as the fact that the degree of TB incidence in BiH is the second highest among the Balkan countries. Red Cross volunteers were selling RC stamps during the week, visited patients with TB in hospitals and organised a week long tuberculosis prevention campaign targeting general public. At the presentations, special attention was paid to promotion of healthy lifestyle and anti-smoking campaign, since WHO data show that 48 % of the BiH grown ups are smokers and number of young smokers is increasing constantly.

On the occasion of the World AIDS Day, the RCSBiH conducted various activities as a part of the world-wide campaign called "The truth about AIDS. Pass it on..." to fight HIV/AIDS-related stigma and discrimination. The NS organized a press conference at "Dom Pisaca" in Sarajevo in order to raise awareness about the campaign, where the NS Chairperson and Entity RC Secretary Generals and Health Co-coordinators answered the questions of numerous journalists from leading media. Moreover, the NS printed 7,000 posters and 20,000 leaflets which were distributed together with condoms and brochures about HIV/AIDS and sexually transmitted diseases (STD) at the Red Cross points established on that day or during the presentations. The RCSBiH cantonal and regional teams of peer educators organized presentations in different regions and cantons within a reproductive health peer education programme, informing more than 2,000 of their peers about HIV/AIDS, STDs, unwanted pregnancy and gender violence. Only on the 1<sup>st</sup> of December, more than 600 of the targeted youth in eight towns attended the presentations on reproductive health.

On the 5<sup>th</sup> of November, the RCSBiH organized the second First Aid competition of the RC Youth on state-level in Travnik. The RCSBiH winner of the nation-wide FA competition - a team from Doboje - will represent its National Society at the European First Aid competition which is to be held in Salzburg next year.

In line with the training module for the Emergency Response Teams, all fifty six RCSBiH volunteers engaged in the activities of four newly established Emergency Response Teams and were trained how to provide First Aid and psycho-social support to the victims of disasters.

The Swiss RC has completed the last of the envisaged 20 courses for auxiliary nurses, throughout BiH. Twenty five attendants in Grude (Western Herzegovina Canton) successfully completed their course in the past four months and in that way, the RCSBiH and Swiss RC closed the cycle in which 500 attendants were trained and many of them are involved in the NS's Home Care Programme, or in the work of various institutions helping this category of people. The Swiss RC continues to implement a community development project assisting displaced people accommodated in the refugee camp Mihatovici near Tuzla.

At the beginning of the new school year, the Spanish Red Cross started a new round of activities related to public health education and psycho-social activities in the Eastern Herzegovina Region. 1, 941 primary school pupils and 78 teachers are involved in the Children Affected by Armed Conflict (CABAC) programme in Eastern Herzegovina, while training for teachers in Old Herzegovina Region and Gorazde Canton, was organized in October. All pupils in those regions attending eighth and ninth class at primary school take part in the Public Health Education activities, which focus mainly on prevention of sexually transmitted diseases and drug abuse. The Spanish RC also provided equipment for the kitchen in the collective shelter in Gorazde and launched a pilot project related to professional Home Care service in Srebrenica.

### **Constraints**

Dependency on external funding, slow economic recovery in BiH and complex working context of this programme has resulted in less than expected progress in the Home Care Programme's self reliance.

## Organisational Development

**Goal: Strengthen the National Society in developing its capacities and in mobilizing its resources to efficiently respond to the needs of the vulnerable population of BiH through its programmes and activities.**

**Objective: To develop an integrated development plan, diverse revenue sources and structures that allow the RCSBiH to respond to humanitarian challenges in the community and ultimately provide better service.**

### Expected results

- **An integrated five-year development plan of the RCSBiH has been established, a mission statement and vision defined**
- **Annual revenues for services provided have been increased, a fund-raising strategy has been developed and at least one staff member per branch has been trained in fund-raising activities**
- **The number of non - functional branches has been reduced (after the outcome of the assessment made by the National Society) and co-operation between different levels of the RCSBiH structure has been strengthened**

### Progress/Achievements (activities implemented within this objective)

In the final version of the BiH Appeal for 2004, the Federation will continue to provide support to the RCSBiH with the only difference being the inclusion of support to the NS's Population Movement (PM) programme, as the sub-regional PM programme was phased out in September 2003.

Meetings organised in the last two years by the International Federation and the ICRC in an attempt to find a solution to the position of the NS's Secretary General/Office Manager, finally yielded fruit. The RCSBiH Presidency in its last session of 2003, held on 29 December in Sarajevo, selected the Society's Office Manager. The candidate, who comes from outside the Red Cross, is a medical doctor, with working experience in local health institutions and United Nations. It is expected that she will start working in the first half of January as part of a probation period that will last three months.

The RCSBiH Population Movement Co-ordinator attended the European seminar on branch development and twinning co-operation that was held in Gripsholm, Sweden from 1-3 September. Representatives from fifteen NSs from Europe, Africa and Asia took part in the seminar. It was announced during the seminar that the RC branch from Swedish town Vaxjö is interested in twinning co-operation with the RC branch in Srebrenica, BiH.

From 10-15 December the RCSBiH facilitators, trained at joint Federation/ICRC Red Cross Movement Culture seminars held last year, organised similar seminars for 108 RC Youth members from all cantons and regions. Main topics covered by this training included History of the Movement, Fundamental Principles, Voluntary Service, Tracing Service, Migrations, Mine Problems and Drug Abuse. Owing to the positive response from the youth and evident success of such training, the RCSBiH is planning to organise another cycle in the next year.

The RCSBiH Presidency organized a promotion of its first RC Youth Manual, written by three co-authors (two are NS Presidency members and the third one is one of the most eminent Red Cross members and author of several books about the Red Cross), during the second national competition on Mine awareness, held in Pale mid-December. The manual was printed in 5,000 copies with the financial support of the International Federation and the ICRC. This manual will be used primarily in elementary schools throughout the country as

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a tool for promoting Red Cross values among schoolchildren and help teachers attract kids to the work of the Red Cross organisation.

During the visit of the Austrian RC representative to the RCSBiH HQ, it was agreed that the NS will start the reconstruction of its building in Sarajevo with funds secured by the Austrian RC, as soon as the construction season starts. In the meantime, the RCSBiH has started lobbying other donors to support this project. On the other hand, after local authorities in Pale donated a plot of land and ICRC provided initial funds, the RCSBiH HQ started construction of its premises in Pale at the end of September. It is estimated that the value of the works will amount KM 450, 000 (EURO 300,000) and the building will have surface of 588 square meter.

The outstanding issue of the Red Cross Law on national level has not been resolved despite frequent meetings of the RCSBiH leadership with relevant state bodies. However, the RC representatives got assurances that the National Assembly will adopt the Law by June 2004.

In Republika Srpska, where Entity Red Cross Law was adopted in 1994, the entity Parliament adopted changes to the existing Red Cross Law. The most important changes are related to the following fiscal concessions granted by the Republika Srpska Government: 5% of profit from entertainment, sports events, selling of music cassettes and compact discs is transferred to the RCSBiH; the RC will be exempted from postal and telephone charges during epidemics, natural and technological disasters and armed conflicts and the RC will be charged for the public utilities at the same price like households. Moreover, the RCSBiH got favourable position in provision of First Aid training to learner drivers and safety at work courses.

Adhering to the twinning plan of action for 2003, the Red Cross organisations in Banja Luka/Krajina region and Vest Agder District (Norway), organised a joint seminar on Home Care programme on 25 -26 October in Laktasi. This seminar was an opportunity for both sides to deepen their ongoing twinning project and it was agreed that three branches from each region will be linked through branch to branch co-operation. For the beginning it was decided that Banja Luka RC will co-operate with Kristiansand, Gradiska with Mandal and Kotor Varos with Lista. During the NorCross delegation stay in Krajina Region, the representatives of those six branches discussed areas of their future co-operation, while Regional Secretaries focused on regional-level co-operation. The Regional Secretaries agreed that they will propose to their respective board's following activities in the next year: Youth activities (including participation in camps and FA competitions), continuation of the IHL training, leader training within OD and joint activities on drug and alcohol abuse prevention, Home Care and Disaster preparedness. In order to increase fund-raising capacities of the branches in Krajina Region, the RC in Vest Agder is willing to provide cash boxes which will be placed in key locations in interested branches. Due to the fact that other branches from Krajina region were eager to find interested branches in Vest Agder for twinning with them, there are possibilities for two more branches to be linked with branches in Vest Agder.

Two RC Youth members from Krajina Region and Vest Agder District attended a seminar on the European Commission's new programme for young people -YOUTH, on behalf of the Norwegian National Office for Children, Youth and Family issues (BUFA). BUFA administrates youth exchange programmes between Norway and other countries within YOUTH programme. The seminar was held in Belgrade on 19-23 November. One of the tasks for the participants was to leave the seminar with a description of the project between two districts, which they did and also proposed establishing the International Youth Training Center.

The RCSBiH purchased and distributed personal equipment for 220 members of the Emergency Response Units (ERU), as well as for the DPP Management team members. Then, each Entity Red Cross organization received KM 19,500 (EURO 10,000) for rehabilitation of warehouses which are to be used for DP programme. In Republika Srpska three warehouses were rehabilitated (KM 4,200/ URO 2,000 was spent on the WH in Trebinje, KM 9,700/ EURO 5,000 in Gradiska and KM 5,600/ EURO 2,800 in Pale), while the RC in Federation of BiH decided to spend the whole amount on the warehouse in Tuzla. DPP Management team

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established an editorial board to prepare and design a uniform training manual. It is envisaged that the manual will be printed in 2,400 copies.

The Swiss RC has continued to financially support the RCSBiH in small scale projects designed by the local branches and related to the traditional RC activities. During the reporting period three projects (in RC branches in Srbac, Travnik and Mrkonjic Grad) were implemented and eight new proposals received.

The Spanish Red Cross provided funds for building the additional storey to the Red Cross premises in the Regional/Local Red Cross in Srbinje, Old Herzegovina Region. Following the closure of the Federation Office in Banja Luka, all of the office furniture and equipment was donated to the RCSBiH branches in that area.

### **Constraints.**

Non-adoption of the RC Law in the course of 2003, albeit set as one of the NS's overriding objectives in the last two years, as well as unacceptable delay in appointment of the NS's Office Manager had a negative impact on the RCSBiH development.

## **Federation Coordination**

Owing to the Federation effort to strengthen the partnership and co-operation with other sister National Societies, the RCSBiH, in mid-November, started a bilateral project with the German RC. Since then, two mobile teams established in Una-Sana Canton and Prijedor region will distribute various relief items to the returnees most in need, in those areas. This includes 4,000 welcome parcels, 1,000 kitchen sets for six persons (plates, glasses, cutlery, pots), 100 stoves and 3 cubic meter of firewood for 200 families. The German RC will provide financial support necessary for the two-year work of two more social-integration teams, which will be established in the beginning of 2004.

Implementation of the bilateral project "Info-network for asylum seekers from BiH" in co-operation with the Swedish RC has been running without major obstacles. Three local Red Cross staff based in Banja Luka, Mostar and Zvornik provided their counterparts in Sweden with all information relevant for rejected asylum seekers from BiH, currently staying in Sweden, including the info on security, employment opportunities, health institutions, contact persons in aid agencies, etc. More than 30 municipalities have been processed so far.

Six RCSBiH representatives (two Entity Secretary Generals and DP Co-ordinators, as well as two members of the DP management team) attended the UN Disaster Management Training Programme (DMTP) workshop, held in Sarajevo on 9-11 December, which was hosted by the UNDP. This workshop, organised in close collaboration with the Stability Pact's "Disaster Preparedness and Prevention Initiative" (DPPI) and the International Federation Regional Delegation, was seen as an opportunity to highlight potential areas of further co-operation between institutions in the Federation of BiH and Republika Srpska, and to increase understanding at the State level concerning the need to foster this co-operation in order to enhance the safety and security of the population in the entire BiH territory. Its objectives were to:

- discuss and familiarise all the participants with the institutional disaster management structure in Bosnia and Herzegovina and how this structure will be organised at the state level through the Ministry of Security.
- identify ways of strengthening the national system of co-ordination in crisis management and response, with the co-operation of both entity Civil Protections
- increase knowledge/level of comfort with contingency planning and relevant methodology

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Since the contingency planning process, as a standard tool, was the central topic of the workshop; both Entity DP coordinators had presentations on the Red Cross activities in that area.

The Federation Office facilitated visits from several PNSs (Austrian RC, Swedish RC, Norwegian and German RC) to Bosnia and Herzegovina to assess the achievements of the RCSBiH programmes and activities assisted by those PNSs and to discuss areas of improvement and further support in the coming year.

Delegation from the Qatar Red Crescent visited RCSBiH in the beginning of September. The representatives discussed possible areas of future co-operation and were especially interested in the Home Care and institutional development.

### **International Representation**

Three RCSBiH representatives took part in the sub-regional Disaster Preparedness/Communication workshop for NS communicators and media contact persons, held on 17-18 September in Debeli Rtic, Slovenia. In the course of the two days, the participants discussed information/communication problems in disaster situations and ways of including communication in Disaster Preparedness planning.

Two people from RCSBiH staff attended Training of Trainers on the Sphere handbook, held in Zlatibor, Serbia and Montenegro from 13-16 October. The aim of this workshop was to train the participants who will be then able to implement the Sphere standards and to utilise the handbook.

The RCSBiH Delegation participated in the 2003 Balkan Conference held in Athens from 15-17 October. This was a good opportunity for further strengthening of regional co-operation among the NSs in the Balkans.

Two Entity RC DPP Co-ordinators attended the Sub-regional Disaster Preparedness workshop for NS DP Co-ordinators, which took place on 3-4 November in Struga, Macedonia. The main topics of the workshop were lessons learnt from the 2002 floods and follow-up on the Psychological support workshop. After this workshop, a four-day follow up training for members of Regional Disaster Response Team (two of them are from the RCSBiH) with simulation was organised in the same town and all Co-ordinators were invited to participate in those activities, as well.

The RCSBiH PM and Programme Co-ordinator participated in the Regional Seminar on the World Disaster Report 2003 - "Forced Migrations-Forgotten Disaster?" - held in Zagreb on 20 November 2003. The main focus of the seminar was on the present situation for migrants in Southern Europe.

The RCSBiH delegation, headed by its Chairperson, travelled to Geneva at the end of November in order to attend the 14th session of the General Assembly of the International Federation, Council of Delegates and the 28<sup>th</sup> International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent. This visit was extremely important for the NS leadership, which actively took part in those events and at the same time managed to have meetings with top officials of the International Federation and the ICRC, where they had an opportunity to discuss possibilities for further support to the RCSBiH. The RCSBiH had numerous bilateral contacts with sister NSs where its leadership lobbied for assistance in construction of the NS's headquarters in Sarajevo and in implementation of Society's core programmes.

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