

BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA

EMERGENCY SERVICE, REHABILITATION AND CAPACITY BUILDING

CHF 10,230,000
83,000 beneficiaries

Programme no 01.37/99

The Context

Nearly three years after the signing of the Dayton Accord, many of its provisions remain to be implemented in Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH) - particularly the return of 600,000 refugees and 950,000 displaced persons to their original homes. The focus of the international community's financial assistance is on political, economic and infrastructural reconstruction, leaving the present welfare needs of the most vulnerable in BiH underfunded. The capacity of the authorities to implement welfare reform and establish a safety net for the country's elderly, sick and poor still lags far behind. Close to 20% of households have incomes of under DEM 50 per month, while unemployment is estimated to be over 1 million.

The Federation's strategy in Bosnia and Herzegovina will remain the same for 1999: to continue its assistance to many of the country's most vulnerable people through the Home Care programme, while developing the capacity of the 82 local Red Cross branch offices in the Federation Entity and the 64 branch offices in Republika Srpska. A key priority is the continuing work with the two entity-level Red Cross structures on the development of a single National Society.

The Operation

Considerable progress was achieved in 1998 in the institutional development of the two entity-level Red Cross structures in BiH: the Red Cross of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, and the Republika Srpska Red Cross. This progress justifies hopes that in the near future a single National Society can be formed. Red Cross meetings across the Inter-Entity Boundary Line have been productive at all levels. Such reconciliation efforts continue to be an integral part of each of the Federation's programmes.

The humanitarian needs across the country remain great, however. Therefore, the Home Care programme, run by the Federation and the local Red Cross, will continue to provide vital assistance to 12,500 of the most vulnerable elderly people, who will receive approximately 55,000 visits each month. The Mobile Technical Team (MTT) programme will be merged with the Home Care programme, ensuring greater cost-effectiveness and boosting the sustainability of the technical services component of local Red Cross assistance. Continuity is

even more important because many international organisations are either leaving the country or are decreasing their operations. The World Food Programme, for instance, has removed many elderly from its beneficiary lists at a time when the Home Care volunteers point to a lack of food as a major concern. As a result, many of the elderly have become even more vulnerable and dependent on Red Cross assistance.

For the Federation's operations benefiting the refugees in BiH who fled the Kosovo conflict, please see the Kosovo Refugees appeal elsewhere in this document.

Objectives of the Operation

- To complete the integration of the MTT programme into the local Red Cross Home Care operations and maintain the current beneficiary level of 12,500 of the most vulnerable elderly people.
- To assist people made vulnerable by population movements through direct assistance and the provision of information.
- To strengthen the current Red Cross organisational structure through branch rehabilitation and financial support, while initiating a self-determined and sustainable plan for long-term programme development and financial self-reliance.
- To revive traditional Red Cross activities in the fields of health and youth.
- To negotiate a clear role for the Red Cross with the BiH government and the international community, aiming at financial sustainability by the year 2003.
- To increase efforts for human resource development.
- To promote reconciliation amongst Red Cross personnel across the country.

Plan of Action

- Home Care

In 1999, the Home Care programme, which covers every municipality in the country, will provide the most vulnerable elderly people with a range of essential services: assistance with personal hygiene, housekeeping, shopping, and the treatment of wounds. The social contact with a Red Cross volunteer is the greatest benefit to this group.

Beneficiaries are people of 65 years and older who are living alone, ailing, disabled, without external support, and often living in remote areas. Regular screening will ensure that only the most vulnerable are included in the programme. Approximately 1,000 Home Care volunteers will make approximately 55,000 monthly visits to more than 12,500 beneficiaries.

Relief items, such as diapers for the incontinent, hygiene articles and mobility aids will be provided to those who need them. ICRC will provide the beneficiaries with winter fuel and food, to be distributed through the local Red Cross branches.

Increasingly, the management of the Home Care Programme will come under the direct control of the entity-level Red Cross organisations. Each entity has a Home Care Co-ordinator, and in 1999, each region/canton will have a “support unit” to assist the Home Care volunteers.

- Institutional Development

Progress in the establishment of a National Society was significant in 1998. Following the formation, late in 1997, of a unified Red Cross structure in the Federation of BiH to mirror the one in Republika Srpska, an Inter-Entity Contact Group (IECG) was established which during 1998 began work on drafting National Society statutes. This momentum will be increased in 1999, but financial support from the Federation and the ICRC will be essential to maintain this process.

Three-year strategic plans were developed in 1998 by both entity-level Red Cross organisations, and were incorporated by the Federation and the ICRC into their 1999 appeals.

These plans will be supported by organisational development. The strength of the National Society will depend on the capacities of the entire organisation, at all levels. Currently, branches are not able to

fund-raise locally and will require financial assistance throughout 1999. This assistance will gradually be phased out, as the fund-raising capacities of the Red Cross improve.

Human Resource Development will focus on strengthening the capacities of personnel in terms of providing services to the most vulnerable and improving the public image of the Red Cross. A Volunteer Management System covering recruitment, training, management and recognition of volunteers will be developed.

Preparedness Planning for natural and man-made disasters will be completed in 1999, followed by the appropriate preparedness and response measures.

- Resource Development

Economic conditions in BiH frustrate the development of fund-raising initiatives. But this is expected to change and therefore, Red Cross staff must have the skills to carry out these activities.

A feasibility study on income-generating projects (IGPs) was carried out in 1998. They will be an important source of funds whilst the economic recovery is still in progress. IGP training of Red Cross personnel is foreseen, while a revolving loan fund will allow new projects to be started and existing ones to be extended. Promotion and marketing will be another priority for 1999, strengthening the public’s awareness of the activities of the Red Cross. This will be

achieved through Public Relations training of local Red Cross staff and through the development of promotional material.

- Traditional Activities

Health Programmes

The Blood Donor Recruitment, Public Health Education and First Aid programmes were traditional Red Cross activities before the war. Co-operation with governmental and non-governmental agencies will be instrumental in successfully relaunching these activities.

In 1998, co-operation began with the Transfusiology Departments in BiH. This joint effort will be developed further in 1999, as the blood programmes within the respective entities are unified. More efficient public information campaigns will be developed, as will a system of recruitment and training of blood donor recruiters.

Co-operation with the respective Health Ministries on public health education campaigns will be expanded in 1999. They will specifically target young people, warning them of the dangers of alcohol, drugs, smoking and sexually-transmitted diseases. Both Red Cross structures will work with their ministries to better identify priority health problems.

Income-generating opportunities exist in the field of First Aid training, mandatory for all who are learning to drive. Both entities will focus on standardizing such training in 1999. First aid material will be made available to all regions and cantons. Finally, specialised training in child accidents for kindergarten teachers, other child-care workers and mothers will take place in 1999.

Youth Programmes

In 1998, 39 new municipal Red Cross Youth groups were formed in 14 of the country's 17 regions/cantons. The remaining 3 regions or cantons will be targeted in 1999. Summer camps will be continued to promote Red Cross and Red Crescent values and to allow children to meet their peers.

Resource Planning

The 1999 Emergency Appeal target represents a 17% reduction from the previous year. It makes maximum budget cuts while maintaining the resources necessary to achieve the Federation's principal goals in BiH.

In recent years, the Federation has persuaded a group of important donors of the need to maintain support to BiH's vulnerable people. It is hoped that this support will continue in 1999, and that Participating National Societies will contribute generously to the rebuilding of Red Cross structures and capacities, including the formation of a single National Society.

Capacity

- The Operating National Society

The Red Cross of the Republika Srpska has its headquarters in Pale and seven regional branches, with 64 local (or municipal) Red Cross branches. The Sarajevo-based Red Cross of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, which became fully operational in 1998, has 10 cantonal branches and 82 local branches.

- The Federation

The Federation will maintain its headquarters in Sarajevo. During 1999, the plan is to reduce the number of delegates from 19 to 11. In 1998, the Federation closed both of its sub-delegations in the country, as well as two of its field offices. In 1999, the anticipated increased capacities of local Red Cross structures should allow the delegation to scale down further its field operations, from nine field offices to seven and field delegates from three to two.

Co-operation

The International Federation maintains excellent co-operation with the other major humanitarian and donor organisations in Bosnia and Herzegovina, particularly UNHCR, ECHO, WHO, CARE as well as other key organisations such as the Office of the High Representative and the World Bank.

The Federation maintains close cooperation with the ICRC and is currently working with it and the entity Red Cross structures on increasing this co-ordination and prioritising the tasks of the International Red Cross Movement in Bosnia and Herzegovina.