

# **FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF YUGOSLAVIA**

## **ASSISTANCE TO REFUGEES AND SOCIALY VULNERABLE**

CHF 8,783,000  
232,000 beneficiaries

Programme no 01.38/99

### The Context

Although fighting in the former Yugoslavia ended in 1995, the agony of the 566,000 refugees and 79,000 persons displaced to the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (FRY) continues. Some 42,000 people continue to live in collective centres and remain dependent on international aid while the conditions of hundreds of thousands of refugees living with host families continues to deteriorate. Repatriation of large numbers of refugees to their homes in Croatia and Bosnia-Herzegovina has not taken place. Yet integration into their host country is made extremely difficult, not least by a deepening socio-economic crisis which has been exacerbated still further by the re-imposition of sanctions in 1998 following the outbreak of conflict in the southern province of Kosovo.

The ICRC has been acting as the International Red Cross/Red Crescent Movement's lead agency in Kosovo since June 1998, but in 1999 the Federation will maintain its programmes benefiting the poorest sections of the province's population and its institutional development work with the local Red Cross.

Meanwhile, the willingness of the donor community to fund humanitarian relief operations in the rest of FRY continues to decline. In 1999, the Federation and the Yugoslav Red Cross (YRC) will be among the few providers of international assistance.

### The Operation

The Federation established a delegation in FRY in 1992 to support YRC in dealing with the refugee crisis created by the Yugoslav conflict. Since then, it has channelled over CHF 110 million worth of relief goods to the country, targeting refugees and displaced people as well as the poorest, most vulnerable members of the indigenous population. In addition, the Federation has supported the development of an extensive Social Welfare Programme run by YRC and helped the National Society to re-establish its traditional youth, home care, first aid training and blood activities.

In 1998 the YRC completed an in-depth institutional analysis which identified areas for strengthening and development. This development programme is of particular importance as the Federation will continue to hand over management of its programmes to the National Society throughout 1999 in preparation for the future withdrawal of the delegation. For the same reason, each programme will have an explicit exit strategy for Federation involvement.

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

#### Objectives of the Operation

- To provide essential hygiene sets to meet the needs of 225,500 of the most vulnerable refugees in FRY.
- To provide baby hygiene parcels to 8,100 refugee mothers with new-born babies.
- To provide cleaning kits for 780 refugee collective centres.
- To support 6,500 socially vulnerable people in Kosovo with food aid and essential hygiene sets.
- To continue to support social welfare services benefiting refugees and the socially vulnerable.
- To support the institutional development of YRC.
- To continue to fund branch-level income-generating projects.
- To help the YRC develop further its traditional activities in the fields of health and youth.

#### Plan of Action

- Relief

In 1999, a total of 676,500 essential hygiene sets will be distributed to 225,500 beneficiaries throughout FRY. Beneficiaries will include all refugees in collective centres; single parent families; mentally or physically disabled or chronically ill persons; elderly persons without other means of support; and destitute refugees. Each set will cover the basic hygiene requirements of one person for a four-month period.

Baby hygiene parcels will support the needs of 8,100 refugee mothers. Refugee collective centres will receive a hygiene kit. All relief will be distributed through the YRC's logistics and distribution network which covers the entire country.

- Kosovo and Montenegro

Federation efforts in Kosovo will focus on the distribution of food parcels and essential hygiene kits to 6,500 of the most socially vulnerable people from all sections of the local community who are not directly affected by the conflict. In addition, the Federation's sub-delegations in Pristina and in Podgorica, Montenegro, will be involved in the nation-wide relief programme discussed above. They will also support the institutional development initiatives of YRC as they affect the local Red Cross structures (see below).

- Social Welfare Programme

In 1999, the Federation will continue its support of YRC's Social Welfare Programme. Annually, its

co-workers and volunteers make over 150,000 contacts with refugees and socially vulnerable people. These refugees are in need of a wide range of services, including social support, psychological counselling and recreational and cultural activities. The existing programme in which volunteers and co-workers receive training from mental health professionals will be expanded. A new network linking mental health professionals involved in the Social Welfare Programme to counterparts in other countries will be set up.

Additional youth and elderly clubs will be established around the country to be run by YRC, providing community-based organisations to connect elderly homes, schools, orphanages and other local organisations.

- Information on Repatriation and Reintegration

The Federation remains committed to assisting refugees if and when the opportunity arises for them to return to their homes. This programme seeks to provide refugees with unbiased, accurate and timely information by supporting publications run by refugee self-help groups. These publications support tolerance and reconciliation and are multi-agency funded. They are distributed through YRC branches.

- Institutional Development

The Federation will support YRC in its 1998 Institutional Development (ID) programme. Key areas identified by the YRC as particularly in need of capacity building are organisational development; information systems; human resources and governance; and fund raising and public relations.

The ID programme aims to involve experts to advise on standard setting, design training programmes and deliver training to staff and/or volunteers. This assistance may take a variety of forms, including the formation of long-term partnerships between YRC and other National Societies in some or all of these areas.

In the sphere of public relations, the Federation will support YRC in a market research programme to assess the public perception of the National Society, resulting in a public relations strategy.

An ongoing programme to establish income-generating projects in Yugoslav Red Cross branches will continue. These aim to help branches establish small businesses that increase their fund-raising capacity and independence, provide communities with vital services and offer employment opportunities to refugees.

- Traditional Activities

#### Health Programmes

In 1999 the Federation will continue to support two important YRC medical programmes: voluntary blood donation and health education and prevention. Both involve the “training of trainers” to ensure their future sustainability, as well as the production of modern educational materials.

The blood programme will focus on educational activities and the development of promotional campaigns targeting the public-at-large and young people in particular. The health education and prevention programme seeks to educate YRC professionals and volunteers, and the printing of promotional material for YRC campaigns. The focus will be on young people, highlighting issues such as AIDS, abuse of alcohol, tobacco and drugs, gender relations, communicable diseases, hygiene and sexually transmitted diseases.

#### Youth Programme

Youth Programme seeks both to educate young Red Cross volunteers in traditional activities and to support vulnerable children.

Red Cross youth volunteers will be trained in first aid, home care and life saving. In addition, promotional material will be produced for YRC youth campaigns aimed at broadening the appeal of the Red Cross to young people.

The Federation will also support two YRC summer schools, each for 1,000 refugee and/or socially vulnerable children. The schools will offer psycho-social support, leisure activities and classes on Red Cross principles and activities.

#### Resource Planning

The Federation has succeeded in persuading a group of important donors of the need to maintain refugee support to FRY. It is hoped that this support will continue in 1999. The ICRC’s lead agency role in Kosovo gives it the responsibility for fund-raising. Consequently, the funding required for Federation operations in Kosovo in 1999 will be met by the ICRC.

#### Capacity

- The National Society

Despite severe financial constraints imposed by cuts in state funding and a limited ability to raise donations from individuals and companies affected by the economic crisis, YRC's 210 branches remain the largest and most effective distribution network in the country. It has the confidence of international donors including ECHO, WFP and UNHCR on whose behalf it distributed food and other commodities to 125,000 refugees in 1998.

- The Federation

The Federation currently has a delegate complement of eight (based in Belgrade and sub-delegations in Montenegro and Kosovo) and plans to reduce this level to 4-5 delegates in the course of 1999.

#### Co-operation

Co-operation between the International Federation and ICRC in FRY is close. A Memorandum of Understanding between the two organisations, signed in June 1998, outlines their respective roles and responsibilities. Mutual support, consultation and co-operation are expected to continue in 1999. Meanwhile, the existing close relationships with ECHO and UN agencies such as UNHCR will be maintained.