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Annual report Albania

 International Federation
of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

MAAAL002
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**This report covers the
period 01 January 2011
to 31 December 2011.**



In brief

Programme outcome

The programmes of the Albanian Red Cross Society are aligned with the global aims of the International Federation's Strategy 2020 to save lives, protect livelihoods, and strengthen recovery from disasters and crises; enable healthy and safe living; and promote social inclusion and a culture of non-violence and peace. The capacity-building efforts are in line with Enabling Action One to build strong National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies.

Programme summary

Disaster preparedness and response remains the priority area of the Albanian Red Cross Society. The work focuses on implementing its disaster preparedness and response plan at local level in line with the national disaster management plan. Moreover, increasing awareness of the public at large, of the government and non-governmental institutions to disaster preparedness and risk reduction make this another important element of the National Society programming, using vulnerability and capacity assessment (VCA) exercises. All activities are to further improve the operational capacities of the Albanian Red Cross to effectively respond to the events of disaster.

Limited funding meant that only activities in the Disaster Management programme were completed, while the other programmes are to be implemented as soon as support is ensured. The Albanian National Society is following up on the activities of last year (forming a national

team for Disaster Risk Reduction and determining national level priorities) with targeting specific communities and starting the work on risk mapping and the development of contingency plans in twenty most vulnerable communities in the ten municipalities identified as especially risk prone. The Albanian Red Cross has been active in seeking other sources of funding, partners and opportunities.

Financial situation

The total 2011 budget was CHF 77,231, of which CHF 43,068 (56 per cent) was covered during the reporting period, including the opening balance. The overall expenditure during the reporting period was CHF 40,435 or 52 per cent of the budget.

[Click here to go directly to the financial report.](#)

No. of people we have reached

The number of people reached directly through workshops with community representatives in twenty vulnerable communities across ten municipalities is approximately 300. People reached indirectly through further work of trained community representatives amount to tens of thousands.

Our partners

Representatives of local authorities in all of the ten municipalities have been involved with the programme activities by the Albanian Red Cross Society.

Context

The political situation in Albania has been influenced by the economic crisis but still fairly stable. The local elections held in May 2011 were called “the best elections ever held” by the Prime Minister of Albania and despite some disputes over vote counting, there was no major turmoil related to the elections.

The effects of the economic crisis are felt in the country with consumer goods prices going up and the salaries failing to follow appropriately. The economic growth is steady with the Gross Domestic Product being estimated at 3.4 per cent at the end of 2011 (0.1 per cent lower than in 2010) and with the inflation of 1.7 per cent the country’s economy was fairly stable. The unemployment is still estimated at approximately 13 percent with unofficial estimations setting it as high as 30 per cent.

Despite the economy’s growth in recent years, more than 12 per cent of the population lives below the poverty level of USD 2 a day. The poorest of the poor, who comprise about 5 per cent of the population struggle to put adequate food on the table each day.

Progress towards outcomes

Disaster Management

Programme purpose: Reduce the number of deaths, injuries and impact from disasters.

Programme component 1: Organisational preparedness

Outcome:

- Strengthened human capacities both at central and branch level for more effective disaster management.

Programme component 2: Community preparedness

Outcome:

- Improved self-resilience of individuals and communities reducing their vulnerabilities to public health and emergencies

Achievements

The programme activities took place in the second part of 2011 due to the late arrival of the funding. The Albanian National Society project team identified ten municipalities that have been suffering from flooding for the past two years, choosing to focus on improving their resilience and preparedness for response before the season of rains and snowfalls arrive later in the year.

In all of the ten municipalities, the Red Cross teams identified two of the most vulnerable communities, choosing community representatives for each of them, while ensuring for gender balance, and then did the following work:

- Briefing on the Red Cross mission focusing on the Albanian Red Cross Disaster management programme but also covering other programmes like health, youth, first aid, etc.
- Guidelines for public awareness education for disaster risk reduction
- Adult learning principles
- How to make a Vulnerability and Capacity Assessment?

The work took place in the form of regional workshop; two of those were conducted with the participation of community representatives, local governments and Red Cross branches (48 participants). The workshops were structured so that the representatives of the twenty communities could act as community level trainers and continue spreading the information and initiating further activities in their immediate surroundings but also at municipal level. The main topics of the workshops were DRR terminology, the disaster risks threatening communities, vulnerabilities, capacities, formula among them, community actions reducing risks and methods (VCA) for community discussions as well.

Following the workshops community representatives were tasked with preparing and organising discussion meetings in their respective communities, looking for ways to increase the grassroots community resilience to disasters but also to influence decision makers at municipal level to look deeper into the needs and potential risks among the most vulnerable communities. In this work, they were supported by secretaries of their respective Albanian Red Cross branches as well as local Governments, whose representatives were involved in the project through agreements with local Red Cross branches. Besides discussing about risks, in meetings with the communities were also transmitted knowledge on first aid, hygiene and environment, etc.

Furthermore, information materials on DRR were designed and printed out: 3,000 posters and two types of leaflets with information on flood and earthquake, in total 40,000 pieces, and 20,000 booklets on advices about security home conditions. The Albanian Red Cross branches were distributing these materials in their respective community areas. One national TV channel and the local media in particular have broadcasted some of the activities that the National Society organized at community levels.

An evaluation was carried out in the Albanian Red Cross headquarters, in Tirana, with the participation of representatives from the ten local Red Cross branches, from the beneficiary communities and their respective trainers. The following findings and lessons learned were identified in order to improve the future activities:

- The community participants are more aware of the risks and the measures they should take themselves to be better prepared to reduce the risks.
- Local structures are more aware that the disaster risk reduction process should be considered as a course of action, where you have to work every day, week, month and year
- Albanian Red Cross expanded the network of contact points with volunteers from these municipalities (DRR trainers from communities) and has increased Red Cross image in the community as well.

Health and Care

Programme purpose: Reduce deaths, illnesses and impact from diseases and public health emergencies.

Programme component 1: Voluntary non-remunerated blood donation

Outcome:

- Increased public awareness on non-remunerated blood donation through development of Youth Club 25.

Programme component 2: Maternal, newborn and child health

Outcome:

- Improved knowledge of the targeted groups on reproductive health, mother and child care and personal hygiene through health education courses.

Programme component 3: Social support for children and elderly people

Outcome:

- Improved health and social conditions among vulnerable children and elderly people with no family support.

Achievements: No funding for this activity was available in the reporting period.

Organizational Development/ Capacity Building

Programme purpose: To increase local community, civil society and Albanian Red Cross capacity to address the most urgent situations of vulnerability.

Programme component: National Society volunteering development

Outcome:

- Improved volunteer management system at branch level and the involvement of youth volunteers in decision making is increased

Achievements: No funding for this activity was available in the reporting period.

Constraints or Challenges

In connection with the belated arrival of funding, the activities could only take place in the second half of the year in the Disaster Management programme, with the impact as yet being inconclusive. The rest of the activities are on hold until the funding is secured.

How we work

All IFRC assistance seeks to adhere to the [Code of Conduct for the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and Non-Governmental Organizations](#) (NGO's) in Disaster Relief and the [Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Disaster Response \(Sphere\)](#) in delivering assistance to the most vulnerable.

The IFRC's vision is to inspire, encourage, facilitate and promote at all times all forms of humanitarian activities by National Societies, with a view to preventing and alleviating human suffering, and thereby contributing to the maintenance and promotion of human dignity and peace in the world.

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The IFRC's work is guided by Strategy 2020 which puts forward three strategic aims:

1. Save lives, protect livelihoods, and strengthen recovery from disaster and crises.
2. Enable healthy and safe living.
3. Promote social inclusion and a culture of nonviolence and peace.

Find out more on www.ifrc.org

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