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Annual report Kosovo

 International Federation
of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

MAAKV001
30/April/2012

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

*Shelter and camp management training for
Red Cross volunteers. Photo taken by Red
Cross volunteer*



In brief

Programme outcome

For 2011, the programme areas supported in Kosovo are disaster management; health and care, organizational development and principle and values. These areas are based on the priorities and capacities of the Red Cross organizations in Kosovo. All Federation supported programmes in Kosovo are aligned with and contribute to the strategic aims in Strategy 2020 and the priorities of the Red Cross organizations. The main emphasis of the International Federation work in Kosovo is on supporting the Red Cross organizations in developing their operational capacities to better respond to the basic needs of the most vulnerable people.

Programme summary

The **disaster management programme** aims to strengthen the organization's capacity in disaster management programme for the Red Cross organizations in Kosovo to be able to fulfil their humanitarian mandate. With the support from German Red Cross, key achievements during the reporting period were the training and formation of six disaster response teams at branch level; simulation exercise; training on risk mapping and contingency planning; mapping of risks in six branches; finalising the contingency plans for six branches; raising community awareness on potential risks in six communities

During December 2010 heavy rains caused flash floods in several municipalities in Kosovo as well as in the neighbouring countries. A response operation funded through the Federation Disaster Relief Emergency Fund was implemented to support 600 most vulnerable affected families during the period December 2010 to March 2011.

Through **health and care programme** the International Federation continued supporting Red Cross organizations in implementing health and care programme in order to contribute to improve those living conditions, knowledge and behaviours, which lead to better health conditions of the people

who are most in need in Kosovo. In order to achieve this, capacity building trainings, family health education courses, community based health related activities and HIV and AIDS peer education sessions were conducted during the reporting period.

Within the **Organizational Development and Capacity Building programme** the Red Cross leadership, staff and volunteers at all levels benefited from advice, coaching, consultancy, training, peer to peer support and material input which enable them to improve their functioning and service delivery.

In addition, the Federation with the support from Swedish Red Cross cooperates with the Red Cross of Kosovo in order to address the needs of the returning asylum seekers from Sweden and strengthen their ability to reintegrate into their society. More specifically the supported activities aimed to contribute to return in safety and dignity. The activities in the returnee project especially contributed to strategic aims two and three in the Federation Strategy 2020 aiming to enable healthy and safe living and promote social inclusion and a culture of non-violence and peace.

Financial situation

The total budget is CHF 566,470, of which CHF 661,932 (117 per cent) was covered during the reporting period (including opening balance). A budget revision has been made between the original plan and mid-year report, due to new income from donors and lack of funding for some planned activities. Overall expenditure during the reporting period was CHF 372,783 (66 per cent) of the budget. The low expenditure is due to the lack of funding available in the first half of the year as well as late arrival of pledges and some pledges covering periods of more than one year. There were no negative/positive variances (above 20 per cent) between the actual expenditure and the budget and at cost category level.

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

No. of people we have reached

During the reporting period, the approximate number of people that benefited directly from the International Federation supported Plan was 19,836. Indirectly 50,846 were reached.

Reached beneficiaries	Disaster Management	Health and Care	Organizational Development and Capacity Building	Humanitarian Values
Direct	5,000	12,156	2,355	325
Indirect	12,100	33,552	4,798	396

Our partners

The International Federation in Kosovo cooperates and coordinates its activities with a number of different partners be it within the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement or others such as: the British Red Cross, the German Red Cross, the Swedish Red Cross, the Italian Red Cross, the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), UK’s Department for International Development (DfID), Grand Duchy of Luxembourg, UN agencies, and local and central authorities.

Context

Like most of central and eastern Europe, Kosovo has been, and is still undergoing a process of social, economic and political transformation. This transformation from authoritarianism to economic and democratic liberalism has led to severe, and in most cases, long-term transformation crises. Despite investments from the international community in recent years, the needs and challenges in Kosovo remain numerous thirteen years after the conflict. Kosovo continues to face a vicious cycle of low growth, significant trade imbalance and fiscal constraints. It is still highly dependent on the international community and the Diaspora for financial and technical assistance. Remittances from

the Diaspora – located mainly in Germany and Switzerland are estimated to account for 14 per cent of GDP, and donor financed activities and aid for another 7.5 percent. Despite a moderate economic recovery over the last decade, Kosovo faces difficult economic conditions coupled with the highest rate of unemployment and the lowest rate of domestic production in the Balkans. During recent years the political situation and the related developments in Kosovo have been dominated by the status process to such an extent that little or no progress has been made on important internal issues and thus there has been insignificant improvement of the critical situation in the sectors of health, social welfare, economics and education.

Gaps in the social welfare system are of a great concern. As highlighted by a World Bank study on poverty in Kosovo which claims that around 45% of the population in Kosovo is poor, with another 18% vulnerable to poverty. About 14% of the population is estimated to be extremely poor, defined as individuals who have difficulty meeting their basic nutritional needs. High unemployment¹ and a dramatic rise in poverty, a fragile economy combined with areas in the health sector lacking services have resulted in an extremely high degree of structural socio-economic vulnerability of the population. Only 8% of the population is receiving some kind of modest social allowance.

Kosovo has one of youngest populations in Europe, with 50 per cent under the age of 25 and 40 per cent under the age of 18. Therefore the challenges related to political, economic and social development are first and foremost the challenges of young people.²

The actual health system in Kosovo is not able to cover even the basic health needs of the population so there remain significant needs in the distribution of health services and health information. The limited data available on the health status in Kosovo suggests that it ranks among the lowest in Europe. The health and social welfare system does not cover basic health and welfare needs of the population so significant gaps in service coverage and information remains. Large areas lack basic conditions for life such as water, sanitation, and reproductive health services. Preventive health resources are inadequate most notably in rural areas. Moreover, infant mortality rate, poor maternal health and the decline in immunization coverage are of particular concern as is lack of knowledge about family and reproductive health.

Similarly to many other Eastern European countries, official up-to-date information on HIV and AIDS is very limited, at best scarce and unreliable. The incidence of HIV and AIDS is therefore thought to be much higher than what is registered. The issue of sexually transmitted infections assumes added importance given Kosovo's young population.

Although not prone to frequent natural disasters, the geological configuration of Kosovo – its location within a region characterized by seismic volatility renders it susceptible to earthquakes, landslides and seasonal river floods. Such incidents happen at least once or twice each year. Kosovo can not be described as a high risk area, however, when looking at the low capacities or level of coping mechanisms and particularly high vulnerability, it becomes evident that even small-scale disasters have a strongly negative impact on communities and thus require the development of better disaster preparedness and response capacity.

In recent years an increasing number of people have been returning to Kosovo from European host countries after being denied an asylum. This trend is expected to increase in the coming years. In order to ensure a dignified return process, Kosovo authorities encourage host countries from which people are returning to support the process of reintegration and rehabilitation. The number of returning asylum seekers from Sweden is substantial and these, as well as returnees from other European countries, are especially vulnerable due to the overall health and socio-economic situation in Kosovo.

With the support of the International Federation and other partners, the Red Cross organizations in Kosovo have managed to increase their level of services to the vulnerable population in comparison to previous years – an increase in the number of volunteers, in disaster response and relief increased the number of beneficiaries in family health education, for example. At the same time they have managed to still work on improving their operational and organizational capacity to increase

¹ World Bank report in 2010 '*Unlocking Growth Potential*'

² Statistical Office of Kosovo: Kosovo in Figures 2009

the level of quality support to more vulnerable people, reaching out to individuals, families and communities based upon Red Cross Red Crescent principles.

While the two Red Cross organizations have managed to retain some of their operational capacity in staff and volunteers to implement programme activities, i.e. health education, relief and assist the most vulnerable, they are very much challenged to change their organizational structures and systems to adapt to the new realities and to improve their operational capacity and programme service delivery.

Progress towards outcomes

Disaster management

The International Federation supported disaster management programme aims to strengthen the capacity of both Red Cross organizations in Kosovo (The Red Cross of Kosova and the Red Cross of Kosovo and Metohija) to be able to effectively prepare for and respond to the humanitarian needs within a disaster situation in Kosovo. With the support of the German Red Cross the capacities of the Red Cross organizations are being developed. Capacity building was provided at both headquarters and branch level in order to carry out coordinated disaster response and risk reduction activities. Volunteers constitute the heart of both Red Cross organizations, they are an essential element of efforts to encourage and promote the idea of voluntary service. It is intended that they become key activists in the development of branch and community level disaster management initiatives. However, this is a long term process and requires a continuous support in order to have a timely and proper response in case of disaster.

Programme component 1: Disaster management planning

Outcome

- Central and branch level disaster contingency and response plan developed and coordinated with the authorities to mitigate their impact on vulnerable communities

Achievements

During the year, the Red Cross organizations in Kosovo with the support from the International Federation continued building its capacity in disaster risk mapping and response capacity building and contingency planning at municipal level. One training session on risk mapping and contingency planning was conducted with the participation of 24 volunteers from 6 branches. This strengthened the capacity of the respective branches to conduct risk mapping and prepare contingency plans. To this end several meetings were held between trained volunteers and stakeholders including vulnerable community members. This resulted in having printed risk assessment and contingency plans at branch level, which were shared with local institutions at municipal level.

Red Cross of Kosova (RCK) signed a MoU with the Ministry of Kosovo Security Forces aiming to enhance the cooperation and coordination between them. The agreement includes cooperation and coordination in humanitarian activities in emergencies; mine risk education for general population, capacity building including professional trainings, and protection of the RC/RC emblem. In addition, the RCK participated in municipal level disaster coordination meetings organized by the Agency of Emergency Management municipal level offices.

Another important component of the disaster management programme is active advocacy. To this end the International Federation and the Red Cross of Kosova have been part of the Kosovo level working group on Disaster Risk Reduction led by United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), in partnership with Capacity for Disaster Reduction Initiative (CADRI) and United Nations International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (UNISDR).

As part of this initiative UNDP organized a Disaster Risk Reduction National Platform Training in the framework of the UNDP Regional Programme on Disaster Risk Reduction in South East Europe,

which took place in Pristina, from 30 June to 1 July 2011. Among different stakeholders from local institutions and different international agencies present in Kosovo, Red Cross of Kosova Disaster Management programme coordinator and one branch secretary as well as the International Federation programme manager participated in this training. This workshop aimed at promoting the exchange of knowledge, ideas and experiences about Disaster Risk Reduction, in order to support capacities of the relevant stakeholders and to sustain their coordination in this area. The facilitators of the training were representatives from UNISDR, UNDP Kosovo and Swiss National Platform for Natural Hazards PLANAT.

The overall work done so far under this component has contributed towards building the relations and increased cooperation between the Red Cross and other stakeholders.

Programme component 2: Organizational preparedness

Outcome

- Improved capacity in skilled human resources

Achievements

The disaster management capacities of the two Red Cross organizations in Kosovo are very limited. Hence the International Federation has been particularly focused on supporting the building of such capacities for the organizations to be better able to fulfil their humanitarian mandate. The capacity building activities under this component had an impact on the provision of timely and effective response to the most vulnerable in time of disaster.

During the year, the International Federation supported the Red Cross of Kosova in conducting three capacity building trainings on first aid, shelter and camp management, and search and rescue for disaster response team members from six Red Cross branches. In total 89 participants attended these trainings. The International Federation also conducted three basic trainings for forming six branch-level disaster response teams for the participants of the above mentioned capacity building training, who were also provided with uniforms and limited personal equipment. With the support from International Federation, the Red Cross of Kosova trained 27 new first aid trainers from ten branches. This was done in order to further strengthen the Red Cross of Kosova capacity in the provision of first aid training to the community.

The Red Cross of Kosova also conducted one simulation on flood preparedness in order to have on the job exercise simulating a real time disaster attended by 90 branch-level disaster response team members and 30 other Red Cross volunteers. The simulation exercise contributed to the increased capacity of the Red Cross of Kosova in coordinated disaster response. The Red Cross of Kosovo and Metohija organized a disaster response simulation focused on fire preparedness and a road accident for 40 volunteers and school children. The simulation exercise helped Red Cross of Kosovo and Metohija to strengthen their capacity in coordinated disaster response at branch level. These simulations contributed both RC organizations to raise their image within the community and other stakeholders.

Due to the heavy rainfalls in Kosovo, as in many countries in the Balkans, many villages in Kosovo, some of them in the rural and poorer part, have been flooded in early December 2010. The affected municipalities were Prishtina/ Priština, Kamenice/ Kamenica, Viti/ Vitina, Gjakova/ Đakovica, Dragash/ Dragaš and Skenderaj/ Srbica including their surrounding villages. Approximately 850 households have been affected by the flooding. The Red Cross of Kosova has identified approximately 600 families (3,000 people) in need of urgent assistance with basic food, water and non-food items and initially used its emergency stock to reach them as it worked on further assessment of needs. A DREF operation was launched to support 600 most vulnerable affected families with mattresses, food parcels, drinking water, hygiene parcels, blankets and rubber boots. Additional 100 food parcels as well as 200 blankets were purchased as the International Federation managed to get lower prices than initially planned. The operation was finalized by 12 March 2011.

Programme component 3: Community preparedness

Outcome

- Increased awareness of the community on the potential risk from the disasters.

Achievements

The Red Cross printed 2,000 leaflets containing information messages on potential risks from disasters. All materials used in the related trainings and campaigns were prepared in cooperation with the International Federation, the Red Cross of Kosova and Agency of Emergency Management. Following that the Red Cross trained volunteers conducted information/ awareness raising campaigns in six municipalities. The leaflets were also distributed during these campaigns. These awareness campaigns were conducted at community level through community gatherings, door to door approach, in schools, etc. The campaigns increase the awareness of people and help them be better prepared in order to reduce impact and loss from future disasters. Approximately 4,000 people have been reached through these activities. Red Cross also marked disaster risk reduction day through an awareness raising campaign on earthquake preparedness in Pristina. However, disaster risk reduction activities need further support both for RC volunteers and community members.

Health and Care

In order to address the health needs in Kosovo the Red Cross organizations worked on strengthening their capacity in health and care as well as to offer services to the community in family health issues, HIV and AIDS and drugs and healthy behaviour.

Programme component 1: Community-based health including maternal and child health

Outcome

- Increased knowledge and access to appropriate information about reproductive health, better child care and development and other family health issues.

Achievements

The Red Cross organizations in Kosovo supported by the International Federation through British Red Cross and in cooperation with the Ministry of Health, UNICEF, Grand Duchy of Luxembourg, UNFPA and DFID worked to improve healthcare knowledge and raise health awareness of the general population through family health education courses. The courses focused on reproductive health, family planning, general family health issues, good parenting and prevention of diseases in rural and urban areas. The courses were held by certified public health trainers and open to both females and males with a special emphasis on mothers and young people. During the reporting period, total of 192 family health education courses were conducted with 2,880 participants. 20 out of 192 courses were conducted for RAE (Roma, Ashkali, Egyptians) communities living in Mitrovica.

The provision of family health education is believed to have a positive impact on people's behaviour in everyday life. However, in order to change people's behaviour completely longer term programmes will need to be implemented. Also the Red Cross provided informal health education to citizens through brochures and leaflets on the importance of hygiene and child health topics.

In addition, the Red Cross of Kosova organized regular meetings with 10 field supervisors and 110 trainers in which the implementation of the progress of courses, including monitoring and reporting were discussed. Monitoring was done during the entire period of activities by the Red Cross headquarters and International Federation.

The Red Cross of Kosova (RCK) has been implementing a Family Health Education programme since 2005. Public health programming is the RCK's most compelling case for relevance. It builds on its primary strengths by reaching into communities and relying on volunteers, while addressing the vulnerability throughout Kosovo concerning inadequate access to resources which affect health related needs of the population.

Therefore, in order to define the level of community awareness on health issues and existing practices, RCK conducted a Public Health Needs Assessment study in March 2009 in four municipalities of Kosovo (Malisheva, Skenderaj, Obiliq and Vushtrri). In order to supplement and strengthen Family Health Education component of the RCK health programme, a further qualitative research was conducted with the aim of building on the outcomes of the previously implemented Needs Assessment Study and better understanding the situation of communities in the studied municipalities. The research was conducted in June 2011 by the International Federation together with Red Cross of Kosova with the support of a local consulting company. 16 Red Cross volunteers have been trained to conduct the research. During the research a total of 240 questionnaires have been collected, using semi structured interviews and four focus group discussions.

The qualitative health research provided a better understanding of the community awareness concerning health issues, existing practices within municipalities of Skenderaj, Obiliq, Vushtrri and Malisheva. This qualitative survey identifies the actual needs of communities in the above mentioned municipalities concerning water, hygiene and sanitation, warmth in the houses and their understanding of child and reproductive health.

In view of the recommendations of the research Red Cross of Kosova supported by the International Federation started the implementation of the activities trying to tackle at least some of the issues. Initially training modules have been revised and printed in order to provide key sanitation and hygiene messages as well as to reflect the needs of the targeted communities, specifically to improve awareness of pneumonia and diarrhoeal diseases. Following this, four trainings for family health education were conducted based on the new module for 110 volunteer trainers. Also pre and post test questionnaires have been revised and printed to be used during the courses. All trainers were provided with uniforms. Additionally, training on basic Participatory Community Development was organized for Red Cross branch secretaries and volunteers to facilitate the project implementation. Besides, information/experience sharing and discussions were part of the training. In total 30 participants participated in the training.

Red Cross branch volunteers supported by the secretaries conducted several community meetings in four municipalities. During the meetings the findings of the research were discussed with the community members as well as other major issues of their concern in order to identify best possible ways that everyone can use to improve their life, such as safe water, garbage disposal. This resulted in community members starting to clean their area from garbage, promising they will protect their surrounding and environment by themselves as well. However, they also requested whether Red Cross could help them in arranging meetings with municipality authorities in order to advocate for their needs. Around 200 families in the community and collective centres in four municipalities are participating in the above activities.

Advocacy has been an integral and very important component of the health programme. Meetings between community members and municipal heads in four municipalities (Vshuttri, Obilig, Malisheve and Skendraj) have been organized by Red Cross branches. Advocacy meetings resulted in having the work on fixing the drinking water infrastructure in one community started by the Municipality services. Also, in one community the garbage collection will be improved as per the authorities' promise. The municipal authorities said they will provide containers in order to improve garbage collection from the designated point. Furthermore, the advocacy is continuing and efforts will be made to try and convince municipal authorities to assist the communities to meet their basic civic needs. Thanks to advocacy, supplies of condoms were received from the Ministry of Health and are being distributed during the family health education courses as per course participants' request.

During the reporting period four Red Cross branches have conducted initial meetings with community members, particularly families with older people and children in order to discuss locally available best possible solution to improve their living conditions (cold and damp houses with inappropriate heating and thermal insulation). Identified needs during the meetings have been provision of new windows and doors or their repair as well as provision of heating materials. In this regard Red Cross branches are planning to conduct different campaigns in order to do fundraising among local population for purchasing different things such as doors, windows, as well as food and non food items identified as sorely needed. Media will play an important role in the dissemination of campaign.

Programme component 2: Increase awareness about the risk of HIV and AIDS

Outcome

- Reduced vulnerability to HIV and its impact through increasing awareness and reduce stigma and discrimination among youth.

Achievements

The International Federation, with Italian Red Cross funding, supported both Red Cross organizations in Kosovo to continue the contribution towards increasing the awareness about HIV and AIDS and promoting healthy behaviour in order to have an impact on their behaviour change. The planned activities targeted youth from all communities in Kosovo including minorities. The project provided basic knowledge to the staff and volunteers of the Red Cross Organizations and initiated harm reduction activities focusing on HIV and AIDS transmission among drug users. The activities were implemented in 13 branches / municipalities of Kosovo covering Albanian, Serbian and Roma (RAE) communities.

During the implementation the Red Cross Organizations in Kosovo worked to increase the awareness of the risk of HIV and AIDS and increase healthy behaviour among the targeted youth population. It has been very motivating for the youth volunteers as well as their peers participating in the project.

An advanced training of trainers on peer education was conducted by the Red Cross of Kosova. The training was facilitated by a local trainer on social mobilization for youth peer education and on the harm reduction for drug addiction. Total of 30 volunteers participated in the advanced training of trainers from the selected branches.

This training resulted in having strengthened and improved knowledge and skills of trainers for methodology of a good trainer, facilitation skills focusing on peer-to-peer education and learning, and provided more information about counselling on HIV and AIDS, STDs and their risks, personal hygiene and reproductive health issues. The training has also strengthened and improved knowledge on the problematic drug use and their effects, on addiction and abstinence crisis, on harm reduction strategy in drug consumption, on outreach work of street units and syringe exchange programmes.

The trained Red Cross youth volunteers, from the respective branches, have immediately started organizing HIV and AIDS peer education workshops at schools and for out-of-school youth to disseminate information about HIV and AIDS, STDs and their risks, drug consumption and its risks, and increase awareness and reduce stigma among the youth. A total of 260 peer education training workshops for youth in schools in 13 municipalities were conducted. A total of 3,790 youth participated in these sessions.

As already mentioned, these workshops are targeting youth at schools as well as youth in some of the places more frequented by the young drug users or by the potential drug users. A total of 130 out of school sessions were conducted by Red Cross volunteers reaching 1,690 youth in 13 municipalities.

Teachers were also invited from the respective schools to participate in the sessions in order to also increase their knowledge and skills on the above mentioned topics. This helps teachers to advise school children about HIV and AIDS in case of need.

In order to reach other community members, ten theatre based performances were conducted in ten branches. It is assumed that 1,000 people participated in the performances. Also 20 HIV and AIDS awareness raising campaigns were organized in branches reaching approximately 1,800 youth.

Both Red Cross organizations in Kosovo celebrated the World HIV and AIDS day. Volunteers gathered in the main squares of the biggest cities where they lit candles for the victims of HIV making the shape of Red Cross with balloons and red ribbon, disseminated information about HIV and AIDS, distributed condoms, distributed awareness raising material. Red Cross volunteers also played music and entertained others. Some 600 youth were reached.

Organisational Development/Capacity Building

Within the Organizational Development and Capacity Building programme the Red Cross leadership, staff and volunteers at all levels benefited from advice, coaching, consultancy, training, peer to peer support and material input which enable them to improve their functioning and service delivery for communities. In order to improve their performance for better service delivery the two Red Cross organizations continued strengthening their capacities through trainings and improvement of skills, and development of strategy, policy and guidelines documents.

Programme component 1: Support Red Cross organization development process

Outcomes:

- Ensure better functioning Red Cross organizations with improved systems and procedures, and staff with improved managerial and technical competencies.
- Improved Red Cross organizations leadership and management capacities to ensure good performance and accountability

Achievements

The International Federation supports the Red Cross in Kosovo through advocacy, by increasing its profile among potential partners and helping with building better programme portfolio. This is done through advocacy in different meetings with local and international stakeholders and informing them about the important role Red Cross is playing and their presence in the grass root level as well their volunteer structure. This resulted in having diversified funding from international and local donors, such as UNFPA, Grand Duchy of Luxembourg and UNICEF, the Disaster Management Agency within the Ministry of Interior, local municipalities etc.

During the year, Red Cross youth volunteers conducted diversified membership drive (recruitment of new members) in their respective branches and will continue to do in the coming period as outlined in the plan. Red Cross youth volunteers conducted fundraising events in six branches, Prishtina, Peja, Gjilan, Kamenica, Prizren and Vushtrri. They organized different campaigns such as: first aid, promotion of volunteerism, social games etc. Youth volunteers during campaigns used different Red Cross messages carrying slogans about the volunteering, community and different humanitarian issues such as 'become a volunteer', 'you can make a change in people's life by donating'. During these campaigns, the volunteers collected donations in kind and cash from the public. In these campaigns around 115 volunteers and 400 people of different ages, gender and ethnicity participated. The collected goods were then distributed among vulnerable families in need.

During the first half of the year the Red Cross of Kosova printed its Strategy 2011-2014 and shared it with its branches and other stakeholders. Future work of the Red Cross of Kosova for realizing its strategic priorities will be guided by the above strategy that is based on the International Federation Strategy 2020.

The International Federation, Red Cross of Kosova, UNHCR Office in Kosovo and United Nations Volunteers UNV have agreed to join forces for marking World Refugees Day on 20 June 2011. 24 Red Cross volunteers were involved in the one week long events. During this week, the volunteers provided assistance to the most vulnerable refugees in Mitrovica, Istog, Peja, Lipjan and Viti municipalities through provision of food and hygiene parcels, cleaning of their living quarters in the collective centre, painting of an elderly lonely lady's room, awareness raising activities with children and mothers on health education, hygiene, humanitarian values as well as planting of trees in their surroundings. On 20 June 2011, the main event was organized by UNHCR where all partners and many guests were present. Red Cross volunteers who did the majority of activities were highly praised in the ceremony. 200 Red Cross volunteers participated in the main event. The volunteers also received appreciation letters. The events were closely monitored and covered by the media. The International Federation assisted the Red Cross of Kosova in the mentioned activities.

In December 2011, one governance and management training was organized with 25 Red Cross of Kosova branch presidency members from two branches. This training will contribute to the better understanding of their different and complementary roles and their possible contribution to the

development of their respective branches. International Federation Strategy 2020 was translated to the local language and disseminated among staff and members of Red Cross

Since the Laws on the Red Cross of Kosova and the emblem of the Red Cross were approved by the Kosovo assembly in June 2010, the Red Cross of Kosova continues its efforts to tap income/donations from domestic sources such as 1% of insurance premium from vehicle insurance companies, 1% of the fund dedicated for humanitarian support from lottery of Kosovo. In this regard meetings are ongoing with different local institutions

Monthly coordination meetings between the Red Cross of Kosova and the Red Cross of Kosovo and Metohija were conducted in order to review progress and implementation of activities.

Programme component 2: Volunteering and Youth development

Outcome

- Promote and support development of volunteers and youth and their involvement in programme and services

Achievements

The Red Cross organizations improved their public visibility and image through several public events. Both Red Cross organizations celebrated World Red Cross Day on 8 May and conducted promotional activities for the period of one week, with their volunteers. Different activities were implemented such as health education sessions, voluntary blood donation, and demonstration of first aid in emergencies, drawing competition, membership drive, photo exhibition, and different games. Some 600 volunteers were involved. The activities that were implemented by the Red Cross youth volunteers were followed by distribution of posters, leaflets containing Red Cross messages.

Also International Day of Volunteers on 5th of December was celebrated by both Red Cross organizations. This activity was organized jointly by Red Cross, International Federation and United Nations Volunteers. Red Cross of Kosova with its 180 volunteers from different branches was engaged in a month long campaign to celebrate the event. They organized a mobile campaign with a van that was travelling around Kosovo and stopping in major cities where they were playing music, disseminating the ideas of volunteering, Red Cross fundamental principles, volunteering policy as well as information about Red Cross activities. The motto was 'Find the Volunteer Inside You'. On the main day, 05 of December, the central ceremony was organized in Pristina. International Federation representative, Red Cross of Kosova Secretary General as well as UN resident representative delivered speeches in this regard. Participants in this event also had a chance to see a theatre performance by Red Cross youth volunteers. A documentary video highlighting volunteering in Kosovo was also launched during the event.

Red Cross of Kosovo and Metohija (RCKM) also observed the International Day of Volunteers on 05 December with the participation of 400 volunteers in 10 branches. To mark the day they organized info sessions in schools on volunteering, distributed promotional materials in the street, and participated in talk shows on local TV and radio.

In addition, both Red Cross organizations young volunteers implemented two community based humanitarian activities. Solidarity among people was one of the activities implemented by young volunteers who together with community members collected goods such as food and hygiene items from public in order to transfer them to the most vulnerable. They also conducted awareness sessions about hygiene and other health related topics. 15 Red Cross volunteers were engaged in this activity and 46 families benefited by this project, who were identified by the RC volunteers as most vulnerable. The other activity was focusing on anti trafficking. This activity included awareness raising sessions in the schools about trafficking. Moto of this small project was 'Stop trafficking'. On the main day of this activity, a film called "Sisters" was played in the town cinema in Pristina. The film deals with trafficking in human beings. Total of 25 young volunteers were engaged in implementation of this activity reaching approximately 300 young people. The project also included a humanitarian fundraising component for a student suffering from a heart disease who needed urgent surgery. The Red Cross placed donation boxes in the town cinema hall for people to donate

as much as they can. Volunteers managed to collect around 400 euro that were given as a donation to this person.

Principal and Values

The programme focuses on improving understanding of principles and values in local communities and within the Red Cross organizations. Emphasis is on ensuring that capacity building initiatives and trainings will contain a principles and values component in order to influence the behaviour of staff, volunteers and people from different ethnic communities through promoting respect for diversity and reducing discrimination, intolerance and violence.

Programme component 1: Promotion of Fundamental Principles and Humanitarian Values

Outcome:

- Increase knowledge and understanding of Fundamental Principles and Humanitarian Values
- Basic support to prospective returnees from Sweden

Achievement

Red Cross of Kosova conducted Training of Trainers for the promotion of humanitarian values for 25 volunteers at branch level and five staff members. A facilitator from Macedonian Red Cross was invited. Following this, trained youth volunteers started implementing community sessions at branch level. Following the completion of training Red Cross of Kosova will conduct sessions for youth in the coming period.

Red Cross of Kosovo and Metohija also conducted 20 sessions dealing with humanitarian values in four municipalities. Eight volunteers were engaged in implementation of this activity reaching some 150 children in primary and secondary schools.

The overall objective of the returnee project is to contribute to return in safety and dignity. More concretely the project implemented by the Red Cross organizations in cooperation with the International Federation and supported by the Swedish Red Cross aims to develop an efficient system of information gathering, provide counselling and support before, during and after return, monitor returnees conditions after return, and provide support for their re-integration in Kosovo. Interviews with people that had already returned were carried out throughout the year asking questions about what they thought of the biggest challenges.

Increased networking and cooperation helped the gathering of information which provides returnees with pre-departure counselling as well with the information about the general situation in Kosovo. Many returnees according to their needs have linked-up with different institutions and other stakeholders.

Through cooperation and joint advocacy with stakeholders such as government authorities, local and International NGOs, The International Federation and the Red Cross organizations in Kosovo were able to ensure temporary transit accommodation for one family and transport for two returned families that had no means to go from the airport to their final destination. One person was provided accommodation in a safe house.

During the year, 12 families with 56 members and three individuals returned and were assisted. In addition 32 families and two individuals that had returned earlier continued receiving assistance through monitoring visits and moral support during the reporting period.

The Red Cross also provided the returnees with information and guidance about where to get official documents such as identity cards; how to register children in schools; and available health and social services. In addition to psycho-social support, material support in the form of food parcels, hygiene parcels, blankets, pillows and clothes for two returnees, kits for kids was also provided to the returnees. Moreover, as part of this project the International Federation managed to assist some returnees in increasing their capacity for self-sustainability and possible income generation through provision of tools such as sewing machines and accessories, lawn mowers, gas wood saws, grass trimmers. One individual provided with sewing training course and one teenager attended in a

language and computer skills training course; two returned families also are provided with heating stoves.

During the reporting according to the available data, none of the returnees have found permanent settlement or job and only a limited number of them managed to receive small social assistance. This forced many families to leave Kosovo again and try to find settlement in other European countries.

Red Cross of Kosova (RCK) staff and volunteers have been fully involved during the implementation of the above activities. Moreover, the Red Cross branches are including these returnees into their beneficiary lists in order to provide them with the assistance of any kind whenever available. In order to help them reintegrate faster into the society Red Cross has encouraged them to join in the activities of the organization as volunteers.

As stated by the returnees themselves, Red Cross staff and volunteers are the only ones that approach them as well as visit them regularly prior to and after their return. Therefore, beside basic assistance provided to them, moral support remains the most important one. They often expressed that Red Cross staff and volunteers are the only ones they talk to about their problems and the supply of food and non food items helps them have the basic things for their daily life.

Since the beginning of the project implementation, capacity building has been a very important component. With the support from Swedish Red Cross, training of Red Cross volunteers on Psychosocial Support to Returnees was conducted. 23 volunteers from 11 Red Cross branches have participated. Also, in April a meeting with 30 Red Cross of Kosova HQ staff and branch secretaries was held. During the meeting, the returnee's project was discussed in order to discuss how the project is being implemented and how it can further be improved. A workshop was also organised for Red Cross branch secretaries to facilitate information/experience sharing and discuss the future role of the Red Cross in assisting returnees. The workshop Cross of Kosova assisted by the International Federation and the Swedish Red Cross. In total 30 participants participated in the workshop. The facilitators came from the Swedish Red Cross.

With the additional support from Swedish Red Cross, the Federation together with Red Cross organizations in Kosovo is able to offer psycho social treatment for the returnees suffering from Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), depression, anxiety and panic attacks. The services are being provided by Kosova Rehabilitation Centre for Torture Victims NGO. Eight returnees are receiving professional psychiatric treatment with Kosova Rehabilitation Centre for Torture Victims (KRCT). For these returnees the International Federation covered expenses for medicines and medical examinations as prescribed by medical doctors.

Constraints or Challenges

No major challenges or constraints hampered the implementation of the programme activities in Kosovo. The Federation supports the local Red Cross organizations to ensure sufficient and stable programme implementation through building their organizational and operational capacity. The particular needs are however greater than what the Red Cross can meet. Although the work of the Red Cross organizations is making an impact for the most vulnerable, the Red Cross cannot directly provide services that would contribute the overall socio economic welfare of the people. Hence the support evolves around meeting the basic needs of the most vulnerable within the current capacities and resources of the Red Cross organizations.

Working in partnership

The local Red Cross organizations and the Federation office built on the increased level of partnerships which were developed over the last two years. These partnerships, which have an emphasis on local and non-Red Cross partners, contribute to: a) ensuring a constant exchange of information and analysis which complements the view and expertise of the Red Cross in assessing the needs and implementing programmes for the most vulnerable; b) providing funding and capacity-building support to the local Red Cross organizations and thus enhancing their programme implementation ability and quality; and c) allowing for better focused planning and activity

implementation through an increased level of cooperation and coordination with other actors. The partnerships have enabled the organizations to increase their service delivery to vulnerable communities and to build the capacity of staff and volunteers.

Both organizations work closely with the International Federation. In its support to the organizations International Federation continued focusing on locating new potential partnerships and sources of funding. Actors such as the United Nations, the European Commission, central and local authorities and Movement partners were and will be approached for possible joint assistance. In 2011 the International Federation succeeded in securing much needed support to reach extremely vulnerable Roma communities in Mitrovica through a new partnership with UNFPA in Kosovo. International Committee of Red Cross provides capacity-building support in dissemination and tracing including restoring family links and mine risk education activities. Increased participation in coordination and planning meetings with existing and new partners and stakeholders will be a future priority.

Contributing to longer-term impact

The International Federation supported programmes in Kosovo are aligned with and contribute to the strategic aims in Strategy 2020. The Red Cross organizations play an important role in strengthening local communities and developing civil society. The programmes' strong focus on gender issues, including the family health education project and the social welfare programme contributes to this end. Through awareness-raising people are better able to prevent and cope with difficult situations. The integration of the fundamental principles and humanitarian values in all programme activities influences people's behaviour by promoting respect for diversity, reducing discrimination, intolerance and violence. The emphasis of the Red Cross continues to be on providing direct services with a lasting impact. In doing so capacity-building is pursued in parallel. Still, the Red Cross organizations cannot yet address such evident vulnerabilities without external support. In order to ensure the sustainability of its programmes, and subsequently to contribute to longer-term impact, the Red Cross in Kosovo needs to develop a stable financial resource base.

Looking ahead

The Red Cross organizations in Kosovo, supported by the International Federation will continue to assess the situation of the most vulnerable people living in Kosovo. In the coming period the IFRC will be particularly focusing on two core areas. First it aims to assist the Red Cross organizations in improving their level and quality of services to the vulnerable population. This will be achieved through family health education with a special emphasis on women; awareness-raising activities on HIV with a special emphasis on youth; increased response and support to people affected by natural disasters through better trained and equipped disaster response teams; and decreased vulnerability and impact of disasters through risk reduction activities; provision of basic supports to prospective returnees from Sweden;. Second the Red Cross organizations will strengthen their operational capacities. This will result in a more effective use of financial and human resources for the greater benefit of vulnerable people. This will be achieved through enhanced capacity and skills of management and governance structures; increased number of trained volunteers through improved volunteer training and management; increased number of partnerships through enhanced transparency; and an improved public image and better capacity to forge and manage partnerships (see *Working in Partnership*).

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.



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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