

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

FORMER YUGOSLAV REPUBLIC OF MACEDONIA

23 June 2003

Appeal No. 01.74/2003

Appeal Target: CHF 1,669,766 (USD 1,145,184 or EUR 1,134,795)

Programme Update No. 1

Period covered: January-April, 2003

The Federation's mission is to improve the lives of vulnerable people by mobilizing the power of humanity. It is the world's largest humanitarian organization and its millions of volunteers are active in over 180 countries.

For more information: www.ifrc.org

In Brief

Appeal coverage: 90.3%; (At time of report issue, see below web link for latest contributions)

http://www.ifrc.org/cgi/pdf_appeals.pl?annual03/1-2-3%20-%20ap017403.pdf

Outstanding needs: CHF 161,600 (USD 121,000/ EUR 104,000)

Related Emergency or Annual Appeals: Central Europe 01.76.2003

Programme Summary: The Federation's budgets for year 2003 were approved in March 2003. The funding situation for this year is encouraging mainly because of UNHCR, European Agency for Reconstruction, Norwegian, Swedish and Finnish Red Cross donations.

Operational developments

In 2003 the country continued on the path of increasing stability and development. Significant progress has been made in implementing the Framework Agreement, which marked the end of the 2001 conflict. Several laws ranging from decentralized governance to revised election procedures and the use of languages and cultural symbols have been adopted by the Parliament. Peace in the country however, remains fragile. Security incidents continue and while an ethnically mixed police force now patrols throughout the former crisis area, their effectiveness is hampered by community mistrust and continued ethnic sensitiveness. Vulnerable groups continue to feel the impact of the insecurity, the depleted economy, inadequate health and social service protection, in addition to ongoing political changes.

The International Monetary Fund (IMF) approved a Stand-By Arrangement (USD 28 million) and Macedonian authorities have adopted an economic programme to promote fiscal and external sustainability. The programme restores the fiscal deficit to a sustainable level and builds on the successful record of monetary policy.

Against this political and economic back drop, the face of the humanitarian community has changed. Focus has shifted from relief assistance to activities aimed at strengthening civil society, developing institutional capacity and revitalizing the economy.

Health and care

Goal: Reduce the vulnerability of the refugees, social cases and internally displaced persons through an effective social welfare programme

Objective: To use the information centre to strengthen the capacity of the National Society to increase the wellbeing of vulnerable groups and to respond effectively to their basic needs

Progress/Achievements

Expected Result(s)

- The information centre will be fully operational in 2003, beneficiary needs will have been registered for follow-up at a later date and when necessary referred to relevant aid agencies and institutions.
- Access to medical assistance activities by beneficiaries will have been easy and satisfactory, especially for those with no previous access to medical services.
- Psycho-social support will have been provided to those in need by trained local staff resulting in decreased stress among beneficiaries. Support will have been available in collective centres, local Red Cross branches and collective or private accommodation. Activities for re-socialisation of the beneficiaries through library opportunities and social clubs will have been organized.
- Counseling of beneficiaries regarding their legal status will have been provided.
- Coordination with other aid agencies will have been effective to avoid duplication of activities. Contacts will have been established with relevant ministries to increase cooperation and assist integration of beneficiaries in the local community.
- Hand-over of full responsibility for the running of this programme to Macedonian RC will have been accomplished by the end of 2003.

All activities concerning health and social welfare of the refugees from Kosovo crisis and other vulnerable groups in the country are mainly led by the Federation funded Information Centre of the Macedonian RC. This Centre continues to assist refugees and vulnerable internally displaced persons (IDPs), in referrals and direct assistance. The Centre is well known and enjoys a solid reputation in the community. The Centre refers these persons to appropriate places where they can find assistance. It also solves housing problems, medical problems and deals with educational issues. The centre arranges for people to receive daily necessities, be they monthly bus tickets, relief items or medical care.

The following are the numbers of assisted persons January-April and the respective services offered:

	January	February	March	April
Interviews	427	502	512	496
Telephone calls	501	419	473	497
Psycho social support	4	3	6	8

Medical support	107	172	112	182
Other	93	106	121	103
Education	69	78	72	71

Provision of Health and Food Assistance to Refugees in FYR Macedonia is implemented by the Federation Delegation in Skopje, with financial support of the UNHCR Office in Skopje. One part of the project is to provide Primary Health care for refugees and medicines (including materials and baby formula). Three doctors and three nurses are providing primary health care for refugees. The Information Office is also providing transport for patients from the collective centres in Suto Orizari and Katlanovo to the public health institutions. Information Centre staff assisted in getting refugees access to health institutions and intermediated in resolving problems of any kind arising in secondary and tertiary health care institutions.

Two brochures on Family Planning and Contraception and First Aid and HIV/AIDS were printed in Macedonian, Roma and Albanian languages and distributed through the Information Centre.

The German RC continued to support the salary for two physiotherapists in Demir Kapija Institutions for Handicapped.

Impact

This programme is closely connected to the relief programmes for refugees and IDPs. The parallel provision of both psychosocial and in-goods support is most likely to result in a stronger long-term impact.

Constraints

There are no specific constraints concerning this programme. All the issues that the centre can manage to solve are dealt with, and those beneficiaries whose concerns cannot be dealt with are referred to the relevant institutions and governmental services.

Disaster Management

Goal: Improve the living conditions of vulnerable groups in the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and to reinforce Macedonian RC effectiveness in responding to any man-made or natural disaster

Objective: To continue supporting the vulnerable groups (refugees, IDPs and social cases) through provision of relief items and to prepare the Macedonian RC to respond in a timely, effective and focused manner to any disaster in the country and in nearby countries

Progress/Achievements (activities implemented within this objective)

- The supply and distribution of hygiene and baby parcels to refugees, also IDPs and social cases, as needed, will have been carried out, in coordination with ICRC, Red Cross partners, and other agencies (UNHCR, WFP, Intersos, ECHO).
- Basic emergency stock will have been established as a back-up for natural or man-made disasters in Macedonia or neighbouring countries, and staff will have been trained accordingly; training curriculum will have been developed and facilities created to regularly train volunteers throughout the country and mobilise them in time of disasters; increased knowledge and understanding of disaster preparedness by volunteers; and disaster preparedness (DP) policies and related public information will have been disseminated.
- Macedonian RC staff, both at local and central level will have been trained; interaction and partnerships with other National Society DP co-ordinators in the region will have been increased.

Macedonia still hosts around 2,800 refugees from the Kosovo crisis. Most of them have Temporary Humanitarian Assisted persons (THAP) status, which is extended by the Government every six months. The current one expires in September 2003. The Macedonian Government adopted a Draft Law for Asylum, so, many persons with THAP status are now eligible for obtaining refugee status. This law should herald an improvement in their situation.

Still, humanitarian help is the only source of basic provisions for these people. The refugees are either housed with host families or in collective centres. The Red Cross part in supporting these people is by providing hygiene items. For this purpose in March, Federation procured 3,800 middle hygiene parcels, donated by the Finnish Red Cross. However, this quantity is not enough to cover the needs till the end of the year.

Refugees in collective centres

There are 1,308 refugees accommodated in three collective centres in Macedonia (Katlanovo-337, Sutka- 970, Gazi Baba-13). Since February, UNHCR started an initiative for closing the Suto Orizari camp and moving refugees to host families. In order to stimulate refugees to move from the camp, the quantity of goods distributed was slightly increased. As from April they were redirected to receive relief baskets from the distribution point where refugees hosted with families are served.

The distributions for collective centres are as follows:

January	467 hygiene parcels	78 baby parcels
February	460 hygiene parcels	78 baby parcels
March	125 hygiene parcels	23 baby parcels
April	1192 hygiene parcels	111 baby parcels

Please note that baby parcels are distributed every month to babies up to 18 months of age.

Refugees in host families

Distributions for the 1,378 refugees accommodated in host families was conducted according to the same normative as reported in the previous programme update.

	January-February distribution	March-April distribution
Refugees in host families	967 parcels	816 hygiene parcels
Host families	351 hygiene parcels	250 hygiene parcels
Babies up to 18 months	106 baby parcels	106 baby parcels

UNHCR food-items support

Basic food basket for refugees living with host families consists of wheat flour and one box of different commodities i.e.:

Wheat flour-one bag of 9 kg per person and food parcel containing: 1 kg beans, 1 kg rice, 1 kg sugar, 1 kg pasta, 1 litre oil, 500 gr. salt, 100 gr. yeast and 250 gr. of canned fish.

Commodity	January/February distribution	March/April distribution
Wheat flour	26.955 kg	24.659 kg
Food parcels	2.942	2.678 boxes

Refugees in collective centres Katlanovo and Suto Orizari continued to receive basic and complementary food, procured by IFRC under UNHCR funded project.

	Normative per person	January	February	March	*April
Wheat flour	12 kg	12.517	12.517	12.000	504
Oil	1 lit	1.380	1.380	1.310	500
Beans	1 kg	1.400	1.400	1.350	500
Sugar	1 kg	1.380	1.380	1.350	500
Salt	0.2 kg	236	236	262	100

**Due to the above mentioned reasons, refugees from Suto Orizari during the April distribution received food as per normative for refugees in host families. In quantities, April distribution contained 8.730 kg of wheat flour and 970 food parcels.*

During the period from January-April 2003 Federation distributed several other items on an ad-hoc basis to the refugees:

- With January-February distribution, refugees received mattresses, blankets, bed sheets and pillows. Refugees hosted in Skopje also received underwear. This was UNHCR supported relief.
- Children and elderly people also received diapers on a monthly basis.
- A second hand winter clothes from Finnish RC was distributed during March-April to refugees, as well as to IDPs and other social vulnerable groups in Macedonia.

Internally Displaced People (IDP's)

The number of IDPs in Macedonia, according to latest statistics, reduced. The latest figure is 6,060 persons. They are mainly hosted in families near their places of origin: Skopje, Kumanovo and Tetovo- 4,524 persons, 1,535 people are living in collective centres.

The European Agency for Reconstruction has been financially supporting host families of IDPs. In the period between January-March a second phase of financial support finished. The number of host families assisted was 910 families. The Macedonian RC, with Federation support, prepared a database with the names and addresses.

Disaster Preparedness Department of the Macedonian RC continued collecting information for training volunteers for Disaster Management as well as beginning with the realization of the Working Plan on the country level.

The manual with instructions for the water purification station is also being prepared.

Regulations for Action in case of Disaster have been adopted by the Macedonian RC Executive Board. Disaster Preparedness Unit was also reorganized at the country level. One unit was established for the city of Skopje and eleven regional units throughout the country. All units will be coordinated through the Disaster Preparedness Centre in the Macedonian RC Headquarters.

Macedonian RC Disaster Preparedness Coordinator and Federation Country Representative participated at Regional Disaster Management Workshop in Montenegro in March, facilitated by Regional Delegation from Budapest.

In January this year, heavy rainfalls affected Kumanovo region and flooded one part of the city. Macedonian RC DP Team together with the Secretary General of the Macedonian RC and Kumanovo Branch Secretary visited the flooded area making an estimation of the affected population. A total of 150 families were evacuated, and around 250 were highly affected.

Also in January, a relief distribution was organised to these flood affected families in Kumanovo. During this period in other parts of the country a similar distribution was also carried out to a smaller number of affected families. Blankets, mattresses, hygiene and baby parcels were distributed from Macedonian RC/ Federation emergency stock, and food parcels donated from ECHO.

Impact

The Federation continued to support the Macedonian RC in its relief programmes to assist refugees by providing hygiene items, which complement the food support provided by UNHCR.

Organisational changes in the Disaster Preparedness Department of Macedonian RC will be a good asset for prompt response in case of any emergency.

Constraints

A main constraint that the Macedonian RC is facing concerning disaster management is the lack of emergency stock- hygiene and food parcels. Federation funding for hygiene items support to refugees until the end of the year is still pending.

Organizational Development

Goal: Improve the overall capacity of the Macedonian RC to develop and deliver responsive and sustainable programmes to meet the needs of the vulnerable groups in FYROM

Objective: To increase the ability of Macedonian RC to manage programmes and obtain funding both for headquarters and branches

Progress/Achievements (activities implemented within this objective)

- Reporting, management and coordination skills of the Macedonian RC staff will have been improved, including financial management, with provision of financial software and training, that will contribute to better project management and increased funding.
- The role of the National Society within civil society will have been better defined and the image of the National Society raised.

Organisational Development is one of the two main priorities identified in the Appeal 2003/2004. Year 2003 will mainly be a period capacity building of the National Society. The handover process started at the beginning of the year 2003. A first kick-off meeting between Macedonian RC and Federation representatives was held in mid-March. A consultant from Organisational Development Secretariat Department attended this meeting. The agenda was centred on the hand-over process and Macedonian RC capacities to receive the programmes project by project (human resources, material and logistic resources needed). A follow up meeting was scheduled for May 2003 when the discussions for the Appeal 2004 will be held.

During this period two workshops were held with Macedonian RC representatives:

- Late January, representatives from Regional Planning and Reporting Department in Budapest conducted a Workshop on Capacity Building in Emergency Operations. Participants were Macedonian and Albanian RC staff, as well as Federation representatives. The main goal was to build the appeal and reporting capacities of national societies, in order for the national societies to develop a comprehensive understanding of the tools that are available in times of emergency.
- At the end of April, a Geneva representative facilitated a three day Financial Training for Programme Managers. Representatives came from Macedonian RC, IFRC-Kosovo Office and Albanian RC, as well as Federation Representatives. The main objectives were to provide useful tools and financial information to better manage Federation programmes and to give participants an overall understanding of the financial implications and responsibilities of being a programme manager/ budget holder.

In line with regional cooperation and evolving experience, the Federation encouraged and supported Macedonian Head of Fundraising to visit her counterpart Head of Fundraising and Marketing of Bulgarian Red Cross. The meeting was of mutual benefit and was considered by both parties as a promising beginning of fundraising and marketing co-operation between the two National Societies

During this period Participatory Community Development (PCD) project was finalised. In three local Branches micro projects were developed- reconstruction of the Red Cross premises in Cair and Suto Orizari; Social internet club in Kocani. In late February a conference was also held in the municipality Suto Orizari on the topic of the future of Suto Orizari. There were representatives from different organizations (Governmental and Non-Governmental) and representatives from the municipality. The participants took an active role and the results were greater than expected

Impact

Workshops organized during the reported period contributed to the Macedonian RC Headquarters' staff to strengthen the capacity for providing effective, efficient and sustainable services. The delivery of assistance to the vulnerable population in Macedonia as a result of this organisational change and long term development assistance will be seen in the coming months. Increased impact is expected in future with upcoming trainings on branch level.

Constraints

The readiness the Macedonian RC during the process of transfer of Federation run programmes in the country is a risk. First steps have been made but there are still various challenges that the Federation and Macedonian RC has to deal with utilising all the resources available from the Federation's long presence in the country.

Coordination

The Federation Delegation still plays an important link amongst the humanitarian community. The Federation Representative regularly attended inter-agency meetings chaired by UNDP and OSCE-Information meeting. Regular bi-monthly meetings have continued with RC Movement representatives: Macedonian RC, ICRC, Federation and American RC.

The American RC was the only Participating National Society (PNS) in Macedonia until February, when they moved their Regional delegation to Bulgaria. The Macedonian Delegation was moved to Macedonian RC building. Their last project on mobile medical clinics finished in April and approval for future projects is still pending.

Following the exit strategy and scaling down of programmes, the Federation Office has been supported by the Regional Delegation in Budapest. Late January the Budapest Regional Reporting Officer visited the Delegation to give significant input to preparation of Annual Report. The Regional Health Delegate also visited Federation and Macedonian RC in March to familiarise with social Welfare activities.

For further information please contact:

- *Macedonian Red Cross, e-mail: mrc@mol.com.mk; tel :++ 389 (0)2 114 355; fax:++389 (0)2 230 542*
- *Macedonia Delegation, Heikki Estola, Country Representative email: hod@ifrc.org.mk; tel :++ 389 (0)2 114 271; fax:++389 (0)2 115 240*
- *Regional Department: Penny Elghady, email: Penny.Elghady@ifrc.org, Phone: 41 22 730 43 19; Fax: 41 22 733 03 95;*

All International Federation assistance seeks to adhere to the Code of Conduct and is committed to the Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Disaster Response (SPHERE Project) in delivering assistance to the most vulnerable.

For support to or for further information concerning Federation programmes or operations in this or other countries, please access the Federation website at <http://www.ifrc.org>