

Report 2006-2007



International Federation
of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

Montenegro, Serbia and Kosovo (Focus on Kosovo)

Appeal No. MAACS001

3 April 2008

This report covers the period of 01/01/2006 to 31/12/2007 of a two-year planning and appeal process.



Winter assistance is provided by the local Red Cross units to older people without family support in remote and difficult to access areas. Photo: International Federation

In brief

Programme summary: In 2006 and 2007 the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies together with the Red Cross units of Kosovo achieved many of the planned objectives and initiated a number of long-term development issues, despite an invariable lack of funding. A high programme implementation rate of 89 per cent (expenses versus funding) shows that within the financial framework available, a maximum level of support was provided to the local Red Cross units and significant progress in achieving the humanitarian goals was attained.

The Family Health Education (FHE) project supported both Red Cross units to further develop their already strong networks of trained health instructors to reach vulnerable people, especially women, in rural areas. The social welfare programme targeted two groups, namely unemployed youth and single female-headed households, in order to improve their socio-economic well-being. Two emergency operations in response to flooding were conducted, one in 2006 and one in 2007, with a total combined budget of 254,847 Swiss francs which was fully funded from the International Federation's Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF).

Goal: The strategic goal of the International Federation in Kosovo, as set out in the Kosovo strategic priority document developed in 2006, is to strengthen the local Red Cross in a context of change to achieve the highest possible degree of self-sufficient sustainability in terms of organizational functioning and in the provision of quality services to the most vulnerable. [Click here to go directly to the Kosovo strategic priorities document.](#)

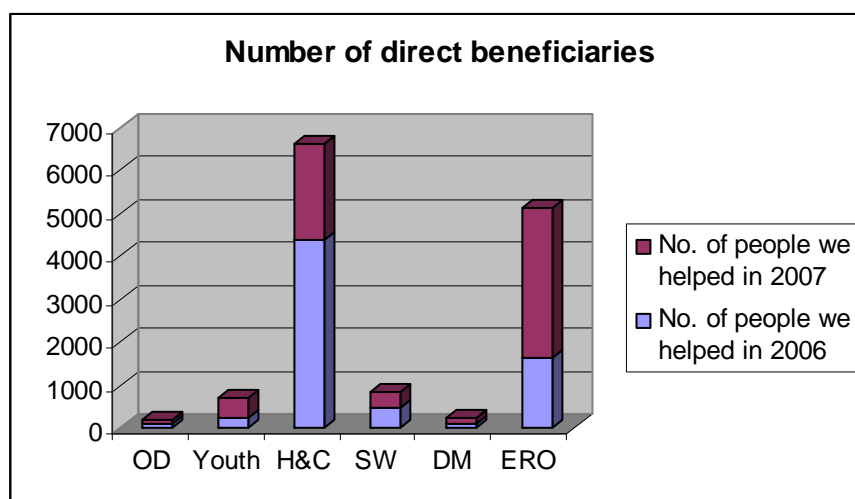
Needs: Total 2006-2007 budget for Montenegro, Serbia and Kosovo was 5,889,059 Swiss francs (USD 5,267,495 or EUR 3,569,127) (out of which 107 per cent covered). The overall 2006-2007 appeal budget for the International Federation's Kosovo Office was 1,807,490 Swiss francs. The total

income was 1,121,366 Swiss francs or 70 per cent of the total budget. Click here to go directly to the attached financial reports: [Report 2006](#); [Report 2007](#); and [Report 2006-2007](#).

The main donors were the Swedish, the Norwegian, the American, the British, the Finnish and the German Red Cross Societies, and the Norwegian government.

No. of people we help: In total, 13,693 people benefited directly from the International Federation programme support provided to the local Red Cross units in Kosovo in 2006 and 2007.

Programme	Target beneficiaries	No. of people we helped 2006	No. of people we helped 2007
Organizational Development	Red Cross staff, Red Cross volunteers	84	120
Youth Development	Red Cross volunteers, youth	230	455
Health and Care	women in rural areas, youth	4,400	2,213
Social Welfare	single female-headed households, youth, elderly without family support	490	336
Disaster Management	Red Cross staff, Red Cross volunteers	86	155
Emergency Relief Operations	Flooding in 2006 and 2007	1,624	3,500



However, it is important to mention that the priority of the International Federation in Kosovo is to support the local Red Cross units to continuously develop their capacities and be able to fulfil their humanitarian mandate and assist the most vulnerable.

Our Partners: The International Federation Office in Kosovo works, and/or coordinates, with a total number of 46 community-based, local, government-

based, non-government-based, international, United Nations and other development organizations and agencies as well as partners within the Red Cross Red Crescent Movement.

Current context

Despite large investments from the international community in the past nine years that Kosovo has been under direct United Nations administration following the 1999 conflict it continues to face a vicious cycle of low growth, significant trade imbalance and fiscal constraints. High unemployment and increasing poverty remain major issues of concern and affect more than half of the population. Combined with weak governmental institutions which are not in a position to cover the basic needs in the health, social welfare and employment sectors, this has resulted in an extremely high degree of structural socio-economic vulnerability of the population. To give only a few indicators: according to UNDP Second Millennium Development Goals Report for Kosovo of 2007, Kosovo is one of the poorest societies in the Western Balkans with 44 per cent of the population living in poverty and a

further 14 per cent living in extreme poverty; only a small percentage of the resident population is receiving the very limited social assistance benefits that are available and many more vulnerable families are not eligible for such assistance due to highly restrictive criteria; infant mortality is up to ten times higher than the European Union average.

There is a general agreement among the members of the international community that the economic and social stagnation in Kosovo is to a large extent linked to the current lack of a permanent political status¹. As the UN Administration has always been perceived to be a temporary measure, a process to define the final status of Kosovo was started in February 2006 and has not yet been completed. Unfortunately, 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 no improvement of the critical situation in the sectors of health, social welfare, economics and education. In 2007 the vulnerability of the population in Kosovo increased further due to a significant rise in the prices for basic commodities such as bread and cereals, cooking oils and fat and vegetables. Consequently, the Red Cross units in Kosovo were - and still are - required to play an increasingly important role in assisting the most vulnerable.

Despite the increasing demands for humanitarian support and the challenges of all Red Cross structures working in Kosovo to find sufficient funding, the local Red Cross units, with the support of the International Federation and other partners, managed to increase their level of services to the vulnerable population in comparison to previous years while at the same time significantly enhancing their operational and organizational capacity. Nevertheless, there exists a continuing need for support to the local Red Cross units, assisting them in increasing the level of quality support to more vulnerable people while at the same time progressing towards becoming *one* modern and well-functioning Red Cross organization supporting a multi-ethnic society.

Progress towards objectives

Health and Care

Objective: The awareness of the population on public health issues, HIV prevention and risk behaviour and other health related issues is increased.

With the support provided by the International Federation and other partners, the local Red Cross units in Kosovo were able to increase the awareness of the population on public health issues through a variety of projects and activities. The Family Health Education (FHE) project showed itself to be the most effective and an increasingly sustainable component of the health and care programme. Both Red Cross units further developed their already strong network of trained health instructors, which helped them reach most of the rural areas and provide health education courses to the most vulnerable people, with a special focus on women. In an environment where the public health services are not able to cover even the most basic needs, it is the aim of the ongoing project to provide basic education on family health issues such as prenatal and natal care, family planning and sexually transmitted diseases (STDs), and to empower the beneficiaries to apply this preventative knowledge in their daily lives. Feedback from the local health centres and post-course testing has shown that the project is successful in achieving this aim. During the two years, some 6,613 direct beneficiaries were trained in 466 courses. At an average family size of five people in Kosovo, it means that a minimum of 33,065 people (indirect beneficiaries) benefited from this project implemented by the local Red Cross units. The advocacy role of the International Federation Office assisted the Red Cross units in Kosovo to develop better institutional links and access funding from governmental institutions and other donors. Further, the Red Cross units successfully contributed towards raising awareness on HIV and AIDS

¹ On 17 February 2008 a specially convened extraordinary meeting of the Kosovo assembly unilaterally declared the province's independence from Serbia. A number of countries immediately or subsequently recognized Kosovo as a state, but others have not done so.

among the young population of Kosovo by implementing a number of awareness campaigns.

Social Welfare

Objective: The well-being of the target groups is improved through social welfare and home care-based programmes.

The activities supported by this programme focused on improving the well-being of two target groups, each in different municipalities: unemployed youth who have not completed secondary school and single female-headed households (SFHH). Through the provision of vocational trainings, 60 youth were selected by the Red Cross branch based on specific criteria to attend a government-certified vocational training course of their choice. Upon completion and following an advocacy campaign by the local Red Cross branch, some 80 per cent of the beneficiaries were able to find jobs in private companies and therefore are able to generate an income. Further, a youth centre was established in the branch providing a venue for organizing different capacity building events for youth volunteers and a base to implement youth projects. Based on the identified needs of fund-raising, team building, advocacy, project writing and dissemination, capacity building training was provided. As a result of the increased capacity, several projects were developed, funded and implemented by the youth themselves. One of the projects was on 'Road safety' and increased the awareness of 2,335 children in nine primary schools and one pre-school. An 'advocacy' project targeted many institutions, schools and the local community with a variety of messages ranging from a request for better employment opportunities for youth to not selling alcohol and cigarettes to children below 18 years of age and not allowing access to some sites in internet cafés to children below 18. The impact of this project can only be measured later on during 2008 since the activities are still ongoing.

The socio-economic situation of 19 SFHH was improved through an income generation project which first distributed a dairy cow to each of the households and later trained the women in the production of dairy products such as cheese which are being sold at the weekly market from a stand outside the local Red Cross branch. At the same time the project has been building up a self-support group among the SFHH which has further helped these women escape their social exclusion.

Further, the International Federation Office in Kosovo solicited bilateral programme support for both local Red Cross units in Kosovo and ensured the bilateral continuation of the social welfare projects in two municipalities with the support of the British Red Cross in 2008.

Disaster Management

Objective: The capacity of the Red Cross units to plan and manage effective disaster preparedness and response initiatives is increased.

Since the capacities of the two local Red Cross units in the area of disaster management had been very limited, the International Federation was particularly focused on building up these capacities so that the Red Cross units could better fulfil this part of their humanitarian mandate. Despite many financial difficulties, a number of basic disaster response teams were created and training was provided in damage and needs assessment; logistics and warehousing; contingency planning; and developing an action plan and budget. A first disaster simulation exercise was successfully conducted incorporating other local disaster response actors. In total there are now some 121 trained members of disaster response teams in Kosovo. A first tangible result of the knowledge and skills gained during the trainings was already visible in the response to the floods in late 2007, when compared to the flood response in early 2006, there was a visible and significant improvement in the two DREF operations in terms of assessment, planning and implementation of the response. However, there is still room for improvement in order to offer even better services in the future. [Click here to read more about the Red Cross assistance to people affected by the winter floods.](#)

Another important component of this programme was the advocacy that was conducted very actively by the Red Cross and the International Federation. In regular meetings with the Emergency

Department and local authorities the different roles and responsibilities were discussed. As a result, it is expected that an agreement will be signed in early 2008 clearly defining the role and responsibilities of the Red Cross in Kosovo in the areas of disaster preparedness, disaster risk reduction and disaster response.

Organizational Development

Objective: Improved management skills and structures of the Red Cross units with increased volunteer and programme capacity at all levels.

As both local Red Cross units in Kosovo identified this programme to be their top priority, the International Federation also put resources into providing both capacity building and organizational development support. The capacity building support improved the project cycle management skills of Red Cross staff and some volunteers and the provision of general management trainings resulted in improved management performance of key Red Cross staff. This has led to a visible improvement of project planning, implementation, reporting and monitoring and has resulted in the development of higher quality project proposals, timely and efficient project implementation and better transparency through improved monitoring. Due to the limited funding available, a significant part of the capacity building was done through on-the-job-training provided by the International Federation staff in Kosovo. Strong emphasis was given to developing the Red Cross finance management systems. However, due to insufficient funding and the inability of the local Red Cross units to also allocate some resources and capacity to this component, the detailed development plan which had been developed could not be implemented. This issue will remain a top priority and will be further supported in the coming years.

A constraint which has affected the implementation of activities in this programme was a lack of high quality training expertise available in Kosovo. To date, only one organization could be identified which was able to fulfil some of the identified training needs.

The issue of having two Red Cross units operating in Kosovo and the unresolved political status preventing progress in the evolution of *one* Red Cross organization remains a matter of great concern for the International Federation and the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC).

Youth Development

Objective: The Red Cross units in Kosovo have raised the profile of the youth programme and attracted and retained youth members through a more structured youth volunteer system.

Due to the demographic fact that more than 60 per cent of the Kosovo population is under the age of 25, it is evident that the Red Cross must pay particular attention to the development of a youth volunteer management structure and youth capacity building as a sustainable investment in the future of the Red Cross in Kosovo. Therefore, the International Federation assisted the local Red Cross units to develop youth management structures and provide different trainings on topics including advocacy, project proposal writing, fund-raising, volunteer management, dissemination, team building and leadership. Today there is a proper youth volunteer management structure in place with a number of youth volunteer leaders at regional level, each leading groups of volunteers with clear roles and responsibilities. In addition, both Red Cross units gave more room for input by the youth volunteers into the organizational decision-making processes and have thus strengthened the integral role of youth within the units.

Also, the International Federation successfully facilitated a long-term bilateral partnership of the Finnish Red Cross with the local Red Cross in Kosovo which complements and further supports the youth development work in Kosovo.

Working in partnership

During the course of the two years, the International Federation office in Kosovo put a lot of effort into the development of better and new partnerships. A first ever Kosovo Partnership Meeting was organized with all Movement partners that are bilaterally or multilaterally active in Kosovo. During the meeting all partners agreed that there is a need to maximize the support provided to the local Red Cross units in Kosovo. It was also acknowledged that the International Federation in Kosovo plays an important role and as such it is crucial to maintain its presence and provide stable support to the local Red Cross units for some more years to come. Intensive networking activities were initiated to improve the working relationships with external partners. Relationships with UNDP, UNICEF, WHO, the Institute of Public Health, the Ministry of Health, the Department of Youth, the Department of Disaster Response and the Kosovo liaison offices of various potential donor countries were instigated and further developed. Amongst other things, this has resulted in the International Federation now being a regular participant in the Kosovo UN Theme Group meetings on HIV and AIDS; potential joint project initiatives being discussed with a number of other organizations; the raising of some co-funding for a International Federation supported project which otherwise could not have been successfully implemented.

Contributing to longer-term impact

All the International Federation programmes in Kosovo are aligned with and contribute to the International Federation's Global Agenda Goals. By supporting the Red Cross units to build up their capacity to help reduce the impact of disasters; by contributing towards improving the general health situation of the population; by contributing to the beneficiaries' ability to effectively meet their basic socio-economic needs, by increasing the capacity of the local Red Cross units to offer support to vulnerable groups and communities in order for them to become more resilient; by building the capacity and management structure of the youth volunteers to offer better support to vulnerable groups, the International Federation, together with the Red Cross units has contributed to all four Global Agenda Goals. Also, many of the programmes have a strong focus on gender issues, like the Family Health Education project and the social welfare programme. Also, the International Federation together with the Red Cross units in Kosovo contributes toward the commitments made at the 7th European Regional Conference of the International Federation (Istanbul 20-24 May 2007) especially in the areas of health and social care and strengthening capacities and cooperation.

Looking ahead

In the coming years the International Federation will have a particular focus on the scaling up of Red Cross activities in Kosovo with the aim of providing quality services to the vulnerable population. This will be achieved by building on the success of the health and care programme, including family health, reproductive health and family planning education, and the disaster management and the organizational development programme. Throughout all the programmes and activities special attention will be given to the promotion of humanitarian values, Red Cross/ Red Crescent principles and anti-discrimination. In this process, the Red Cross youth will be heavily involved. Pending a clarification of political status, assistance to the evolution of one Red Cross organization would be a priority.

How we work

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 \(Sphere\)](#) in delivering quality and accountable assistance to the most vulnerable. For support to or for further information concerning Federation programmes or operations in this or other countries, or for a full description of the national society profile, please access the Federation's website at <http://www.ifrc.org>

The International Federation's activities are aligned with its Global Agenda, which sets out four broad goals to meet the Federation's mission to "improve the lives of vulnerable people by mobilizing the power of humanity".

Global Agenda Goals:

- Reduce the numbers of deaths, injuries and impact from disasters.
- Reduce the number of deaths, illnesses and impact from diseases and public health emergencies.
- Increase local community, civil society and Red Cross Red Crescent capacity to address the most urgent situations of vulnerability.
- Reduce intolerance, discrimination and social exclusion and promote respect for diversity and human dignity.

Contact information

For further information on this Appeal, contact:

- **Federation Office in Kosovo:** Shafiquzzaman Rabbani, Head of Office, Pristina, phone: +381 38 228 400, fax: +381 38 228 599, email: shafiquzzaman.rabbani@ifrc.org
- **Central Europe and Southern Caucasus Regional Representation:** Elias Ghanem, Regional Representative, Budapest, phone: + 36 1 248 3300, fax: +36 1 248 3322, email: elias.ghanem@ifrc.org
- **Europe Zone Office:** Leon Prop, Deputy Head of Zone, Budapest, phone: + 36 1 248 3300, fax: +36 1 248 3322, email: leon.prop@ifrc.org