

# Report 2006-2007



International Federation  
of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

## Montenegro, Serbia and Kosovo (Focus on Montenegro and Serbia)

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.



A beneficiary of the home care programme in Vrbas, Serbia, receiving a parcel provided by a local donation. Photo: Red Cross branch of Vrbas

### In brief

**Programme summary:** In 2006 and 2007, the state union of Serbia and Montenegro was dissolved, leaving two independent countries in its stead. The Red Cross Society of Serbia and Montenegro followed these political changes. The Red Cross of Serbia is considered the continuation of the Red Cross Society of Serbia and Montenegro, and going back even further, to the Yugoslav Red Cross while the Red Cross of Montenegro became the youngest member of the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies in November 2007 .

Many of the programme activities were affected by this transition since the priorities of both National Societies shifted somewhat compared to the original plans. However, the service delivery programmes have not been significantly affected. Over 12,000 people were directly assisted through the health and care and population movement activities. These included **home care, open kindergarten for Roma and other children from socially deprived families, support to children with disabilities, support to asylum seekers and returned asylum seekers and vocational training for refugees**. The disaster management activities continued with **scaling up the National Societies' disaster preparedness and response capacity** but also with developing inter-agency cooperation crucial for community-based disaster preparedness and response. A tripartite agreement between USAID/DAI (United States Agency for International Development/Development Alternatives Inc.), the International Federation and the Red Cross of Serbia was signed to pursue this goal. In organizational development, further support was given to the development of an information system in both societies with the new project on improving the public image

of the society being started in Serbia. In the Red Cross of Montenegro, support was provided to building the finance, IT and international departments of the secretariat.

The funding followed the established plans for the most part, with all the programmes being funded largely according to the budget. A certain lag in expenditure due mostly to the dissolution of the common National Society and the establishing of two new ones has been made up for in the later period.

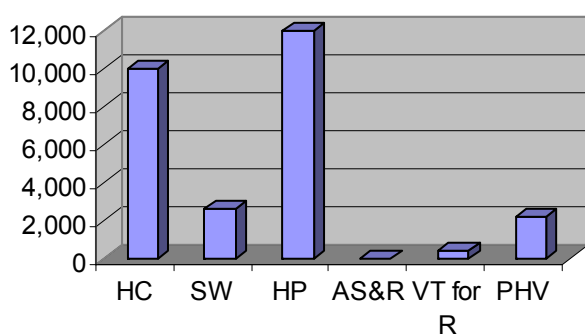
**Goal:** The service delivery is continued, improved in quality and the means to sustain the programmes and activities after the period of external funding is over are developed. The internal structure and business practices of the National Societies are improved, necessitating the organizational development to be integrated in most of the programmes.

**Needs:** Total 2006-2007 budget 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 representation in Belgrade was 4,081,571 Swiss francs (out of which 124 per cent covered). Click here to go directly to the attached financial reports: [Report 2006](#); [Report 2007](#); and [Report 2006-2007](#).

**No. of people we help:**

Year	Project Title	Target Population	Total no. of people we help	% Women	% Children under the age of 18	% Elderly
2006-7	Home Care	10,000	10,000	60 (est.)	Less than 10	90
2006-7	Social Welfare (work with vulnerable Roma children and with children with disabilities)	3,000	2,660	50 (est.)	60	0
2006-7	Health Promotion	12,000	12,000	50	~55	Less than 10
2006-7	Asylum Seekers and Returnees	1200	522 direct beneficiaries	30	0 among direct beneficiaries	0 among direct beneficiaries
2006-7	Vocational training for refugees	400	450	40	N/A	N/A
2006-7	Promotion of Humanitarian Values	2000	2224	50	40	10

**Number of beneficiaries in 2006 and 2007**



**Our partners:** Three Red Cross Societies contributed as multilateral or bilateral donors; two UN agencies contributed as partners; one government agency was a partner, while one contributed as a donor; three ministries to the programmes; and approximately 50 local governments and services were active as partners.

## Current context

The single biggest event during the two years was the dissolution of the state union of Serbia and Montenegro. There was no violence of any kind involved but the subsequent split in the Serbia and Montenegro Red Cross Society and the creation of two new National Societies did at times make for a difficult transitional period with a shift of focus in priorities. This slowed down the implementation of some activities, especially the ones dealing with organizational development.

The International Federation provided additional support to the governance and management of both societies to assist them through the transitional period. This necessitated changing some of the plans, especially in the organizational development department, to accommodate the new needs and priorities.

## Progress towards objectives

### Health and Care

**Objective:** The National Society is recognized as a credible, influential actor within the sphere of health and care, delivering sustainable services for vulnerable people, representing and advocating for them and promoting healthy lifestyles.

Multi-year health and care programmes such as **home care** and **social welfare** have continued reaching the projected beneficiary numbers (see the table on page 2) and adding new layers to the ongoing activities. Following the recommendations of the evaluation done in late 2006, the social welfare programme has been refocused with new indicators, including gender-sensitive data. The project targeting vulnerable Roma children assisted 1,037 children of pre-school age and elementary school pupils in 30 municipalities in Serbia and 3 in Montenegro, while the project targeting people with disabilities assisted 735 young people with disabilities in 30 municipalities in Serbia and 6 in Montenegro. The programme contributed to the increased integration of Roma children and youth living with disabilities into the wider society. Up to 80 per cent of Roma children who had attended the kindergartens have enrolled in school. Given the average figure among Roma being around 30 per cent this is a noteworthy achievement. In addition, 96 per cent of those who finished the first grade continued into the second grade.

The **home care** programme continued its support to approximately 10,000 older, vulnerable people in both countries with 2,000 volunteers and 160 professional associates being active. The evaluation of the income generating home care pilot project in the branch of Kragujevac in Serbia demonstrated the proportion of the obstacles the Red Cross is facing in relation to programme sustainability. On the other hand, the elderly advocacy network, HumanaS, numbering 15 organizations in its ranks, the Red Cross of Serbia being its founding member and coordinator, is implementing a project backed by USAID, in partnership with the Ministry of Labour, Employment and Social Affairs and with technical assistance from the International Federation. The project is about facilitating the implementation of the National Strategy of Ageing, and, in addition to the participation of both governmental and non-governmental agencies, it involves the representatives of older people. The outcome of this project is the accelerated production of implementation plans of action at local level with about 50 per cent of the covered municipalities currently working on plans.

The **health promotion** project encompassed 14 municipalities in Serbia and 3 in Montenegro targeting 12,000 people, providing promotion, education and direct assistance in the fields of reproductive health, personal and communal hygiene, nutrition, healthy lifestyles, including practical first aid and motivation of blood donors. As in earlier years, the project focus was based on local needs and health hazards, as each branch tailored its activities according to the needs and its existing capacities. The project also focused on capacity building with a strong emphasis on clear procedures in communication, reporting and justification of expenses.

Serbia has expressed its intention to scale up the HIV programme by participating in the first meeting of the

Global Alliance on HIV organized by the Europe Zone for the National Societies of Europe in November 2007. The alliance, launched by the International Federation on World AIDS Day on 1 December 2006, is a collective worldwide commitment to “do more and to do better” to reduce vulnerability to HIV and its impact.

### **Disaster Management**

**Objective:** The National Society continues to provide cost effective direct assistance to the beneficiaries in need, while strengthening its capacity to be prepared for, and respond to emergency situations.

The focus of the work done before the split was on restructuring the disaster management system of the Red Cross. However, the dissolution of the National Society meant further restructuring. The work on standard operative procedures continued but was slowed down due to the split. Both National Societies had their disaster preparedness stock replenished and both organized successful disaster response activities in relation to emergencies during the period. [Click here to read more about the Red Cross assistance to people affected.](#)

The work in the **municipal disaster preparedness project** continued, following the recommendations of the evaluation done late last year. Fifteen simulations have taken place and another 13 feedback meetings have been organized. The absence of a national disaster management system (structures and legislation) however still means that the Red Cross activities are merely preparation for the real work to be done in future. The feedback meetings have shown that about 50 per cent of the covered municipalities demonstrate tangible improvements in disaster preparedness coordination. This project was therefore expanded through the Memorandum of Understanding signed between USAID, the International Federation and the Red Cross of Serbia which will roll out the simulation activities to all the municipalities in Serbia over the next five years, with added assistance in the creation of local plans of action.

The Red Cross of Serbia has continued its regular work with **asylum seekers and returnees** through visits to the shelter for detained irregular migrants near Belgrade, providing assistance – phone cards, hygiene items and clothes – to 522 detainees from many countries. These include China, Ukraine, Moldova, Russia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Iran, Iraq, Pakistan, Cuba, Sierra Leone, Albania, Georgia, Turkey, Macedonia, Romania, Ethiopia, Cameroon, Bulgaria, Germany, Sweden, Nigeria, Austria, the Czech Republic, Ghana, Greece, Italy, Hungary, Tunisia and Palestine.

The Red Cross of Serbia has provided first-aid training to the staff of the shelter, deemed necessary because of frequent injuries, and self-injuries among detainees. They also provided expert assistance in designing a video-surveillance system in the shelter to prevent self-injuries, but the costs of the project were too high to be implemented. The parliament of Serbia finally adopted the Law on Asylum, the creation of which the Red Cross of Serbia contributed over the past years.

The average monthly number of returned asylum seekers from western countries is around 40, many of them opting for voluntary return with some financial assistance from the host country. Thus, the set-up of the airport readmission office was completely changed during the first six months of 2007, with internship students meeting returnees instead of employed staff, and without a maintained Red Cross presence. Leaflets produced by the Red Cross were distributed to returnees regularly and the readmission office was kept supplied with however many they needed until a new one with changed data was published by the Agency for Minorities and Human Rights of Serbia.

The Red Cross of Serbia has established very good connections with the Agency for Minorities and Human Rights of Serbia (replacing the former federal Ministry of Human and Minority Rights) whose mandate, among others, is to assist rejected asylum seekers. A representative of the Red Cross of Serbia regularly participates in all activities organized by the agency, and has become a member of the programme board. Moreover, during the European Council for Refugees and Exile (ECRE) regional meeting in Macedonia, a representative of the agency accompanied the programme coordinator of the Red Cross of Serbia to the meeting and presented the National Strategy for Returnees. The programme coordinator also acted as advisor during the creation of a training curriculum for local authorities in Serbia, related to readmission. The Red Cross of Serbia has also participated in several inter-agency meetings on return, organized by the

United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), Integracija and Group 484. A meeting with the German Red Cross to coordinate the work with beneficiaries returning from Germany was held during the ECRE meeting in Lisbon. However, the readmission agreement between the government of Serbia and the European Union was signed in autumn 2007, and came into force on 1 January 2008, without defining the dynamics of return, which can potentially create a problem if a large number of returnees come back to Serbia from various host countries at the same time.

During the PERCO (Platform for European Red Cross Cooperation on Refugees, Asylum Seekers and Migrants) board meeting in Athens in November 2007, the Red Cross of Serbia representative was inaugurated as co-chairperson. This is a recognition of the importance of the work the Red Cross of Serbia has been doing and still does with many migrants in the region (still the largest refugee population in Europe, plus additional 200,000 internally displaced persons) but also an opportunity for the Red Cross of Serbia to increase its contribution to the work with migrants in Europe, following the commitments made at the 7<sup>th</sup> European Red Cross Red Crescent Conference in Istanbul in 2007.

The **vocational training for refugees** is the programme for providing vocational training and certificates to refugees opting for local integration to help them find employment. The programme is planned with the help of the National Employment Agency. Over the two years, 450 people have gone through the programme in 4 training cycles across 8 municipalities. The training courses ranged from language courses, through driving courses, to caretaker and business secretary. The rate of success has been very high, especially considering the unemployment rate in Serbia being over 20 per cent. Moreover, the results have been improving with each new training cycle as the municipal Red Cross branches were actively assisting their beneficiaries in seeking and applying for employment. The overall rate of employment within the four months following the end of a training course has been over 60 per cent and, to illustrate the improvements; in the first cycle in 2007 some 52 out of 80 people have been employed within four months, while in the second cycle this increased to 79 out of 110 people. The employment enables these beneficiaries not only to sustain themselves but in most cases to sustain their families through increased income.

The last cycle of training courses was initiated in November 2007 and is still ongoing, based on the trends in the job market and the expressed wishes of the beneficiaries.

### Organizational Development

**Objective:** The National Society has devised, adopted and put into common use standard financial and managerial procedures and tools.

The plans and activities in the organizational development section of the appeal have suffered the hardest consequences of the split of the National Society and a lot of time was spent working with the new national organizations on setting new priorities, creating new plans and programmes as well as assisting in governance issues. However, a lot of the work was done. Both the Red Cross of Serbia and the Red Cross of Montenegro are progressively switching to the use of the HUBIE-erp management software and the management procedures that go with it. The following table illustrates the use of the HUBIE-erp software modules across Serbian municipal branches:

ERP Modules / Region	Financial Accounting	Budget	Cash flow	Pay roll	Liquid assets	Material and supplies management	Fixed assets	Small inventory	Personal evidence
Belgrade	4	2	3	5	3	21	5	3	11

Kragujevac	10	2	9	8	10	16	5	4	12
Kraljevo	6	6	6	5	6	20	7	3	10
Nis	21	2	20	20	0	31	22	3	25
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>109</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>67</b>

The need for a new module (Universal Invoicing and Reimbursements) was identified and it was created, designed, installed and tested first in the secretariat of the Red Cross of Serbia and then in the secretariat of the Red Cross of Montenegro, enabling both National Societies to produce uniform invoices for all partners across the country, at all levels.

In general, the use of the new information and management software has significantly improved the level of accountability, reliance and transparency of both National Societies. As an example, the Red Cross of Montenegro has for the first time in its history conducted an annual audit of its finances and will use the report in its future applications for grants. It has enabled the Red Cross of Serbia to enter into more complex arrangements with the government, receiving financial support earmarked for specific programmes and activities, as opposed to the un-earmarked, flat rate funding of previous years. As demonstrated by the table above, there are still significant challenges to be overcome in rolling out the use of the software nationwide and ensuring it is used to its full potential in all branches of the National Societies, but this is a process well understood by the leaderships and the appropriate commitments are in place.

The **public relations** project for the Red Cross of Serbia underwent several changes to the work plan, signifying that the original project was too ambitious and that the National Society needs to find its own pace in this area. The initial baseline survey was done with 300 companies and potential partners with results showing little interest to support the Red Cross at the moment, although only about ten per cent taking time to respond at all. As this demonstrates a lower than desired level of interest to support the Red Cross that also extends to the general public outside of emergency situations, the activities within the project were designed to address this issue. Firstly, the internal structure is being addressed to ensure better cooperation between informational and programme departments; secondly a newsletter with photos and a calendar of activities was designed and distributed to all potential partners and stakeholders; thirdly the web site of the Red Cross was completely redesigned and the work on the design of individual web sites for branches has begun; and finally an interactive game/ quiz package for children aged 7-10 was designed, focusing on the Red Cross and its history, principles and activities in the national context. The results of these activities will be seen in 2008 and 2009.

The **volunteering and youth** project has covered 2,224 people in 12 municipalities, focusing on the Red Cross youth work in promoting humanitarian values and the activities designed by relying on local needs in each community. Its biggest achievement is that it was primarily managed, designed and implemented by youth across all the implementing branches, giving an important example for other programmes and activities.

## Working in partnership

The work detailed in this report is supported by three national Red Cross societies, two through the International Federation appeal – the British and the Norwegian Red Cross Societies – and one bilaterally – the Danish Red Cross. The Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation is also an appeal donor. All of these organizations are active participants in programme planning and design. The long-term nature of the majority of programmes and the efforts to integrate them into the wider context has resulted in joint efforts between the Red Cross and international or local partners officially starting in the reporting period. These

include a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with USAID/DAI for disaster management and the HumanaS home care advocacy project backed by the Serbian government and funded by USAID. Locally, the activities are increasingly relying on partnerships and the collaboration between the Red Cross and governmental, non-governmental partners and stakeholders in home care, social welfare, municipal disaster preparedness and vocational training for refugees. This is natural for the programmes that are focusing on community empowerment and the use of existing local resources.

## Contributing to longer-term impact

The direct work with vulnerable populations in Serbia and Montenegro, addressing their health practices, the level of their access to the institutions of health support, social support, education and ensuring a community-wide response to the needs are directly following the Global Agenda and its emphasis on preventing deaths and illnesses as well as building the communities' capacities to combat their own vulnerability. There is also a very strong anti-stigma component in all of these activities, for example striving for greater inclusion of Roma and children with disabilities into communities as part of the social welfare or through promoting cross-generational communication and exchange of knowledge and skills in home care. These programme components are not only in line with the Global Agenda, but are also compatible with local and regional initiatives such as *The Decade of Roma Inclusion* or the *Poverty Reduction Strategies* in both countries. Similarly, the disaster preparedness work follows the Global Agenda priorities of reducing the number of deaths and injuries and the impact from disasters as it is very much necessary in the context of both countries where larger-scale disasters, both natural and man-made, seem to be becoming more frequent.

Greater attention to gender awareness can be seen in the programmes too. Examples are:

- In disaster preparedness, psychosocial support is part of the standard and advanced training for the members of the disaster response teams. Part of the psychosocial support specifically focuses on gender, ensuring that the needs of each family member are adequately assessed and met.
- In vocational training for refugees, great attention is being paid to providing training in professions appropriate for both genders. As there are still jobs considered "gender-specific", this is balanced through ensuring professions for both genders are available for training.
- In health promotion, the activities are decided in each municipality individually, although gender balance is indicated as one of the priorities. This results in projects dealing with reproductive health, as well as sexual hygiene, with specific activities for target groups of both genders.
- In volunteering and youth activities, and the organizational development programme, part of the focus is to promote humanitarian values through a project designed and implemented by young volunteers and the guidelines for this project stipulate explicit gender focus.

## Looking ahead

The newly forged partnerships, although a long time in the making, are perhaps the defining points in this programming period. In disaster management they will, no doubt, significantly change the final outcomes of the municipal disaster preparedness project, enabling the Red Cross of Serbia to assist in covering the whole territory of Serbia, increasing the disaster preparedness and response capacity on a much wider scale. This way, a pilot project was upgraded into a nation-wide enterprise.

Similarly, the HumanaS project supported by USAID puts the Red Cross of Serbia as one of the key players in the field of advocacy for older people but also one of the major forces in the mobilization of communities in implementation of the National Strategy of Ageing. This is an important breakthrough because it improves the coordination of the activities of all key stakeholders locally and nationally and leads to greater involvement of older people themselves in the creation of plans to assist them. The refocused social welfare programme will continue working with pre-school and schoolchildren as well as with the parents paying

closer attention to gender issues.

The regional representation in Budapest and the country representation in Belgrade will focus on assisting the two National Societies to strengthen their capacities to better contribute to the Global Agenda Goals and to take forward the *Istanbul Commitments* of the 7th European Regional Red Cross and Red Crescent Conference, as well as to follow up on International Conference, General Assembly, Council of Delegates decisions, declarations and pledges.

<b>How we work</b>	
<p>All International Federation assistance seeks to adhere to the <a href="#">Code of Conduct</a> and is committed to the <a href="#">Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Disaster Response (Sphere)</a> 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 <a href="http://www.ifrc.org">http://www.ifrc.org</a></p>	
<p>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".</p>	<p><b>Global Agenda Goals:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Reduce the numbers of deaths, injuries and impact from disasters.</li><li>• Reduce the number of deaths, illnesses and impact from diseases and public health emergencies.</li><li>• Increase local community, civil society and Red Cross Red Crescent capacity to address the most urgent situations of vulnerability.</li><li>• Reduce intolerance, discrimination and social exclusion and promote respect for diversity and human dignity.</li></ul>
<b>Contact information</b>	
<p><b>For further information on this Appeal, contact:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>The Red Cross of Serbia:</b> Vesna Milenović, Secretary General, phone: +381 11 30 32 125, email: <a href="mailto:secretary@redcross.org.yu">secretary@redcross.org.yu</a></li><li>• <b>The Red Cross of Montenegro:</b> Slobodan Kalezic, Secretary General, phone: +382 81 241 819; email: <a href="mailto:ckcg@cg.yu">ckcg@cg.yu</a></li><li>• <b>Country Representation in Belgrade:</b> Olav Ofstad, Country Representative, phone: + 381 11 32 82 202; Fax: + 381 11 32 81 791; email: <a href="mailto:olav.ofstad@ifrc.org">olav.ofstad@ifrc.org</a></li><li>• <b>Central Europe and Southern Caucasus Regional Representation:</b> Elias Ghanem, Regional Representative, Budapest, phone: + 36 1 248 3300, fax: +36 1 248 3322, email: <a href="mailto:elias.ghanem@ifrc.org">elias.ghanem@ifrc.org</a></li><li>• <b>Europe Zone Office:</b> Leon Prop, Deputy Head of Zone, Budapest, phone: + 36 1 248 3300, fax: +36 1 248 3322, email: <a href="mailto:leon.prop@ifrc.org">leon.prop@ifrc.org</a></li></ul>	