

# Annual report



International Federation  
of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

## Kosovo

MAAKV001

30 April 2010

This report covers the period 1 January 2009 to 31 December 2009.



Red Cross volunteers assisting older people with disabilities in growing vegetables. Photo: IFRC

## In brief

**Programme purpose:** All Federation supported programmes in Kosovo are aligned with and contribute to the Global Agenda goals as well as the priorities of the two Red Cross organizations. The main emphasis of the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) is on supporting the Red Cross organizations in developing their operational capacities to better respond to the basic needs of the most vulnerable people. More concretely the support to the organizations aimed at strengthening their efforts in health and care by improving health conditions among women and children; building their capacity in disaster management; organizational development and capacity-building to improve their performance; promoting the principles and values by assisting returnees.

**Programme(s) summary:** The disaster management programme aims to strengthen the organizations' capacity in disaster management for the organizations to be better able to fulfil their humanitarian mandate. This was addressed at both headquarters and branch level in order to carry out coordinated disaster response and risk reduction activities. Key achievements in 2009 were the training of disaster response teams at branch level; mapping of risks; drafting of contingency plans for six branches; and a better defined role of the Red Cross in Kosovo. Operationally 1,320 most vulnerable families received winterization assistance and 5 families were assisted in rehabilitating their houses. Trainings and simulation exercises strengthened the Red Cross organizations' capacity in preparing for and responding to disasters as well as in ensuring coordination.

In order to address health gaps in Kosovo, the Red Cross jointly with the Ministry of Health and UNICEF, sought to improve people's health knowledge and awareness. Through family health education courses and awareness activities, the awareness of almost 10,300 people was raised in relation to urgent health issues. In 2009 the Red Cross organizations conducted 372 courses with almost 5,580 participants benefiting directly and almost 28,000 indirectly. The IFRC is

advocating on behalf of the most vulnerable people for the provision of extended and improved health and care services.

The Red Cross organizations strive to improve their performance at branch and central level for better service delivery. Capacity-building is integrated in all programmes. Particular support for improving governance and management capacity, development of policies and procedures, strategic planning, resource development as well as development of volunteers and youth were prioritized. As a result there is now a better understanding of the roles and responsibilities among presidency members and management staff of the Red Cross of Kosova. A strong network of trained youth volunteers able to provide better services to the most vulnerable has been developed.

The Red Cross of Kosova enhanced its capacity to provide basic support to returning rejected asylum seekers. Volunteers and staff have been trained in psychosocial support. Through this work the Red Cross increased its visibility among local authorities and the public among others through a printed guide for the returnees.

**Financial situation:** The 2009 budget was initially CHF 806,594 (USD 749,344 or EUR 551,407). Following budget revisions the final budget for 2009 was CHF 799,260 (USD 742,530 or EUR 546,391), of which 135 per cent covered. Overall expenditure in 2009 was CHF 633,484. Some of the funds were received in the second half of 2009 and is funding for programmes that runs into 2010.

Financial figures 2009	
Budget (final)	799,260
Income	1,081,747 (135)
Expenditure	633,484 (79)
Balance	448,263

Percentage of budget in brackets.

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

#### No. of people we have reached:

Almost 15,000 people benefited directly from the Federation supported programmes. Including people reached indirectly<sup>1</sup> almost 74,730 were reached. Key target groups were women in rural areas, youth, single female-headed households and older people as well as Red Cross staff, volunteers and health education trainers.

Programme area	People reached directly
Disaster management	1,595
Health and care	10,298
Organizational development	2,934
Principles and values	119
<b>Total</b>	<b>14,946</b>

**Our partners:** The IFRC in Kosovo cooperates and coordinates its activities with a number of different partners within and outside of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement. Key partners are the British Red Cross, the Norwegian Red Cross, the German Red Cross, the Canadian Red Cross, the Swedish Red Cross, the French Red Cross, the Finnish Red Cross, the Italian Red Cross and the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), UN agencies, and local and central authorities.<sup>2</sup>

## Context

Kosovo has been under direct United Nations administration since 1999. On 17 February 2008 the Kosovo assembly announced its independence from Serbia. Since then the political, economic and social situation has been dominated by the issue related to its status. This affects the transformation process that Kosovo is undergoing and means that little or no progress has been made on vital internal issues such as health, social welfare, economy and education.

<sup>1</sup> Indirectly reached here refers to family members of people reached directly.

<sup>2</sup> Additional partners are mentioned throughout the report.

As much as 44 per cent of the population is living in poverty and 15 per cent is living in extreme poverty<sup>3</sup>. These poverty rates are high compared to neighbouring countries and have unfortunately not changed over time. The limited data available on the health status in Kosovo suggests that it ranks among the lowest in Europe. The current situation stems from the 1990s when the public health infrastructure suffered a complete breakdown. The health system does not cover basic health needs of the population so significant gaps in service coverage and information remains. The population's vulnerability to health risks is due to a number of problems including lack of access to safe drinking water; poor nutrition; poor hygiene; low levels of health education and promotion; different post-conflict psychosocial problems; and limited use of health services. Old and new health problems are increasing including tuberculosis (TB), and HIV and AIDS. The infant mortality rate, maternal health and the decline in immunization coverage are of particular concern. Lack of knowledge about family and reproductive health continues to cause challenges.

The Roma population continues to be the most vulnerable group in Kosovo. Roma communities experience marginalization because of little or no access or opportunity for income generation; unemployment; lack of education; lack of access to cultural events; and lack of access to health services. Another particularly vulnerable group is people returning to Kosovo after being rejected asylum as only limited support from the government is offered. These people therefore need assistance upon return. Finally the conditions for youth require increased attention. Kosovo has one of the youngest populations in Europe with 50 per cent under the age of 25 and 40 per cent under the age of 18.<sup>4</sup> Hence the political, economic and social challenges are first and foremost the challenges of the youth.<sup>5</sup>

Although not prone to frequent natural disasters, the geological configuration of Kosovo and its location in a region characterized by seismic volatility, renders it susceptible to earthquakes, seasonal river floods, avalanches and landslides. Owing to the level of vulnerability and insufficient capacities and coping mechanisms, even small-scale disasters have a strong negative impact on communities.

## Progress towards outcomes

### Disaster Management

#### **Programme component 1: Disaster management planning**

**Component outcome 1:** Central and branch level disaster contingency and response plan developed and coordinated with the authorities.

In disaster management planning advocacy is a priority. The IFRC approached the authorities to define the roles and responsibilities of the Red Cross of Kosova in case of disaster. A promising outcome is that the Red Cross is now regarded as an important actor in emergencies by the Department of Emergency<sup>6</sup>. A memorandum of understanding was signed to facilitate the cooperation between the Red Cross and the department. This means that the organization is better able to play its due role as an auxiliary to the authorities. As part of this cooperation, the organization participates in municipal level disaster coordination meetings and takes part in working group meetings addressing the disaster management law in Kosovo.

Both Red Cross organizations continued to build their capacity in disaster risk mapping and contingency planning at branch level. Two trainings on mapping and planning were conducted with 48 volunteers from 12 branches participating. Risk mapping capacities were strengthened

<sup>3</sup> Second Millennium Development Goal Report for Kosovo, 2007, UNDP

<sup>4</sup> Officially youth is defined as people aged 15 to 24, which currently amounts to 21 per cent of the population.

<sup>5</sup> UNDP Kosovo Human Development Report 2006. A New Generation for a New Kosovo, p. 15.

<sup>6</sup> Operates under the Ministry of Interior.

and contingency plans at branch level drafted. Both organizations participated in a climate change workshop in Montenegro organized by the Montenegro Red Cross.

In the organization's work towards preparing contingency plans in six branches, Federation disaster response and contingency planning guidelines, and national guidelines for disaster preparedness and response mechanisms were translated into Albanian. This raised the awareness on contingency planning tools and response mechanisms. The documents will also be shared with interested local partners and thus increase the visibility and understanding of the Red Cross' role in disaster management and its cooperation with relevant actors. The Red Cross organizations recognize that capacity-building in disaster management is a longer-term process which requires continuous support in order to develop the appropriate response capacity.

#### **Programme component 2: Organizational preparedness**

**Component outcome 1:** Basic disaster response teams have been created and are able to effectively respond to disaster situations.

Three capacity-building trainings on first aid, shelter and camp management, and search and rescue were conducted for 90 disaster response team members from 6 branches from the Red Cross of Kosova. Moreover the teams were equipped with limited personal equipment. The organization also conducted a simulation exercise on flood preparedness with the participation of 60 team members. The Red Cross of Kosovo and Metohija conducted two four-day long disaster response team trainings with 40 participants from 4 regional disaster response teams taking part. The facilitators came from the Red Cross of Serbia.

#### **Programme component 3: Community preparedness/Disaster risk reduction**

**Component outcome 1:** Increased awareness of the community on the potential risk from disasters.

Totally 1,320 vulnerable families living under poor conditions in 22 municipalities were assisted with winterization support to be able to cope with harsh winter conditions. Owing to the conditions many remote mountain areas became inaccessible. The Red Cross organizations provided the families with foodstuff, blankets and firewood. Moreover the living conditions of the five most vulnerable families in Skendraj region were improved through housing rehabilitation. As a result the families were better able to cope with the harsh winter. The families took part in monitoring the rehabilitation activities and expressed high satisfaction with the support.

## Health and Care

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

**Component outcome 1:** Increased knowledge and access to appropriate information about family health issues including good parenting, reproductive health/family planning and better practice to prevent diseases.

In order to address gaps in health education, the Red Cross organizations continued to implement their family health education project.<sup>7</sup> The project aims at providing basic education on family health issues such as prenatal and natal care, family planning and sexually transmitted infections (STIs), and at empowering people to act in a preventive manner. Through its extended network of trained health instructors the organizations were able to increase the awareness on public health issues. In 2009 the Red Cross organizations conducted 372 courses with almost 5,580 participants benefiting directly and almost 28,000 indirectly.

In addition to this the Red Cross of Kosova organized health education courses targeting Roma children and mothers in Grace Village in Vushtrri municipality. The activities included recreational and educational activities. In total 35 children, women and men regularly attended the activities and showed great enthusiasm. They were supported by 100 volunteers. As a result the women

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<sup>7</sup> In addition to the multilateral support through the IFRC, UNICEF is supporting the Red Cross of Kosova bilaterally in implementing the project.

socialized more and showed more responsible behaviour towards their children and families while children became more educated and got better manners.

The health project is considered one of the most effective projects within the Red Cross organizations and is recognized as an increasingly sustainable component of the health and care programme as a whole. It continuously extends the network of trained health instructors who reach the most vulnerable people in rural areas with health education courses. The courses have a special focus on women. To maintain the network of instructors, both organizations conducted refresher training of trainers. Totally 135 health instructors participated. Around 90 per cent of the instructors were female. The instructors are certified by the Institute for Public Health.

In order to strengthen the project a survey was conducted in the municipalities of Vushtrri, Skenderaj, Malisheva and Obiliq. The aim of the survey was to measure the potential impact on health conditions in the communities. The final survey report will be finalized during the first half of 2010, which is slightly later than what was expected in the terms of reference.

Owing to the risk posed by the H1N1 pandemic, the Red Cross focused on awareness-raising and organizational preparedness. Two orientation meetings for branch staff and volunteers were conducted. In total 26 secretaries and 52 volunteers from 26 branches participated. The facilitators were from the Institute for Public Health. In consultation with the Ministry of Health, the prevention of H1N1 was included in the family health education courses. To this end the Red Cross, in cooperation with the Institute for Public Health, conducted training for 120 health trainers. Prevention activities included the dissemination of 5,000 posters and 30,000 leaflets.

**Programme component 2: Increasing awareness and reducing stigma associated to HIV through awareness sessions and social mobilization among youth**

**Component outcome 1:** Increased awareness about the risk of HIV and AIDS among youth.

In order to promote healthy behaviour and to reduce stigma among youth the two organizations started implementing HIV and AIDS peer education and drug and harm reduction project in 13 branches. Initially a five-day training of trainers was organized in August. The training was facilitated by the Peer Education Network (PEN) and Villa Maraini. Totally 22 youth volunteers took part. Subsequently, the volunteers conducted 236 peer education workshops in addition to 12 workshops for school leavers. Some 3,700 youth participated. All activities were supported by printed materials for use in the trainings and awareness campaigns. These activities are expected to continue until mid-2010. The organizations marked World AIDS Day. Candles were lit in Pristine and Mitrovica, and theatre-based performances and a photo exhibition were carried out reaching about 500 people.

## Organizational Development

**Programme component 1: Improving National Society leadership capacities to develop and implement strategies to ensure good performance and accountability**

**Component outcome 1:** Improved performance based on policies and procedures.

**Component outcome 2:** Better understanding of roles and responsibilities of governance and management (all levels).

The Red Cross organizations sought to improve their performance in line with their existing policies. Four small projects were implemented by youth volunteers in four Red Cross branches. The projects were “*Road Safety*” which focuses on awareness-raising among drivers as well as traffic rules among children; “*Smarter Kids*” through which information about the Red Cross as well as hygiene was being disseminated in primary schools; “*HIV and AIDS among youth*” which aims at raising youth awareness in schools as well as in Roma camps; and “*Voluntary Non-Remunerated Blood Donation*”. More than 200 youth participated.

Two projects were implemented by youth in the Kacanik branch. One project targeted 15 older people living alone for whom home care services as well as basic social assistance were

provided. Totally 16 youth volunteers were trained to effectively perform this service. In the second project 1,033 schoolchildren in two secondary schools were targeted with first-aid training. A total of 30 volunteers provided the training.

The Red Cross of Kosova finalized a proposal for the Red Cross law in Kosovo. The law was submitted to the Ministry of Health and was later passed on to the prime minister's office for vetting. Meanwhile working meetings took place in order to clarify remaining issues. Income from domestic sources is expected to increase following the enactment of the law. Currently the IFRC supports the Red Cross in Kosovo through advocacy which is expected to contribute to this.

The Red Cross of Kosova held its general assembly in June 2009 in which around 100 branch and central presidency members participated. During the assembly central and branch presidencies were elected. A new youth commission was also elected in which youth is a majority and 50 per cent is female. By the end of 2009 all the branch level presidencies had one youth representative in their presidency. Furthermore the assembly approved the amended statutes of the organization and also approved the four-year financial and narrative report as well as the draft plan and budget for 2010 and 2011 respectively. The organization's volunteer policy, drafted by the youth commission, was approved by the central presidency. Moreover the organization's Red Cross magazine, which is mainly prepared by youth, was distributed. The magazine shows the important role youth volunteers play in promoting the organization. Youth are also maintaining the organization's webpage which improves its image. The Red Cross of Kosovo and Metohija organized branch level working assemblies which were followed by their central working assembly in July.

Two one-day trainings were organized for governance members of the Red Cross of Kosova. In total 52 members participated. As a result of the training the participants better understand their role as presidency members as well as their role vis-à-vis the management function. The training was very much welcome by all participants and more training of this kind was requested.

Both Red Cross organizations improved their visibility and image by celebrating different events such as the 150th anniversary of the battle of Solferino which was the very beginning of the Movement; the 90th anniversary of the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies; the 60th anniversary of the Geneva Conventions; and the Red Cross and Red Crescent Day on 8 May. Several other activities were implemented by Red Cross youth through questionnaires, posters, leaflets, materials for drawing, playing, and demonstrations.

**Programme component 2: Ensuring a well-functioning organization with sustainable systems and procedures, and staff with the desired level of managerial and technical competencies**

**Component outcome 1:** Improved organizational capacity through HR management system and procedures.

**Component outcome 2:** Improved finance management capacity and reporting system.

In the first half of 2009 the IFRC supported the Red Cross of Kosova in drafting the Code of Conduct for volunteers, members and staff. The code was later approved by the central presidency and is the organization's first code of conduct. Moreover the IFRC supported the process of developing a human resource system and procedures. It is expected that this process will help the organization to revise its structure and develop job descriptions, classification schemes of positions and a staff appraisal system.

The Federation office conducted training for Red Cross headquarters staff in reporting with the participation of eight people. Subsequently all programme coordinators started preparing and sharing monthly narrative reports with both the IFRC and ICRC. A visible improvement in the organizations' reporting skills has been observed in a short time.

**Programme component 3: Increasing capacity for programme development and management**

**Component outcome 1:** Better-functioning Red Cross organizations with long-term development plan.

**Component outcome 2:** Increased knowledge and understanding of the Fundamental Principles and humanitarian values.

The process for developing a longer-term development plan started at the end of 2009 and will continue in 2010. The promotion of the fundamental principles and humanitarian values is an integrated part of all programmes in the two Red Cross organizations in Kosovo and thus a natural element in all trainings conducted by the Red Cross.

#### **Programme component 4: Volunteering and youth development**

**Component Outcome1:** Promote and support the development of volunteers and youth and their involvement in programme and services.

The Red Cross of Kosova continues to improve its youth management structure and volunteering practice. Essentially youth is considered one of the most important and vital components of the organization, especially due to the fact that youth constitute the majority of volunteers. Improvements contribute to developing and extending the strong network of trained youth volunteers who reach the most vulnerable people including children and youth. Furthermore the Red Cross seeks to recruit new volunteers and enhance their capacity to implement new youth-focused activities as well as supporting the implementation of other programmes and projects.

Six responsible youth volunteers<sup>8</sup> and another 26 youth volunteer leaders were selected for advancing the youth work of the organization. The volunteers received training on the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement history and the fundamental principles; youth and volunteer policy development; the role of responsible volunteers and youth leaders; skills for trainers; fund-raising; activity and project planning; proposal writing; and volunteer recruitment. Moreover a meeting was organized with the purpose of informing the participants about the organization's youth and volunteer work and the roles and responsibilities of the volunteers to support this work. Later the volunteers received youth leadership training. Upon the training youth leaders from both organizations provided trainings for youth volunteers in their branches. This again resulted in 70 per cent of the branches implementing several small activities including activities related to HIV and AIDS; environmental protection; harm reduction focusing on drug use; home care for older people; volunteer recruitment; the International Volunteer Day; H1N1; and the integration of orphans. Approximately 260 volunteers participated.

In addition youth volunteers from both Red Cross organizations implemented a range of minor projects at community level including first aid for youth; support to children with disabilities; environmental protection; reproductive health; and road safety. The projects were implemented by the branches of Novoberde, Rahovec, Viti, Gračanica, Mitrovica and Obilic. More than 680 vulnerable people were reached. Through awareness-raising youth is now better informed and capable of preventing and coping with issues related to health, environment and road safety.

## Principles and Values

#### **Programme component 1: Promotion of Fundamental Principles and humanitarian values**

**Component Outcome 1:** Basic support to prospective returnees from Sweden.

The Red Cross of Kosova continued the pilot project on assisting returnees to Kosovo. The aim of the project is to develop an efficient system of information gathering, to provide pre-departure counselling and support to especially vulnerable returnees, to monitor their conditions after return, and to provide support for their re-integration in Kosovo. Totally 27 families were assisted in 2009. Since the beginning of the project none of the returnees have found permanent settlement or work, and only one person is receiving social assistance. Returnees have received information and guidance about where to get official documents like identity cards; how to register children in schools; and available health and social services. Moral support as well as items such as food and hygiene parcels and kits for kids was provided.

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<sup>8</sup> From Pristine, Ferizaj, Gjiilan, Mitrovica, Prizren and Peja regions.

A return guide was printed in Albanian, Serbian and English with information about the Municipal Centre for Civil Registration (MCCR), the Regional Employment Centre, the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare and the Centre for Education. Red Cross contact details and information on health costs were included as well. The organization gathered much of the information through communicating and networking with stakeholders and government authorities, local and international NGOs and agencies.<sup>9</sup>

Since this was the first time the Red Cross in Kosovo assisted returnees, capacity-building was a key priority. A basic training course for volunteers and staff in psychosocial support to returnees was organized with 26 participants. Another workshop focusing on support to returnees was organized for 26 branch secretaries.

### **Constraints or Challenges**

No major challenges or constraints hampered the overall implementation of the programme activities in Kosovo. However, both Red Cross organizations need continued financial and technical support to be able to respond to the needs of the most vulnerable people. The IFRC will strive to support the organizations to build the organizational and operational capacity of the Red Cross in Kosovo.

## **Working in partnership**

The local Red Cross organizations and the Federation office will build 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 Red Cross organizations work closely with the IFRC in Kosovo as well as at zone level. ICRC also provides capacity-building support in the field of dissemination and tracing including restoring family links activities. The Federation office works to strengthen these partnerships and to establish new ones. There will be increased participation in coordination and planning meetings with existing and new partners and stakeholders.

## **Contributing to longer-term impact**

All the IFRC's programmes in Kosovo are aligned with and contribute to the Global Agenda goals. 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 Red Cross has been among the few humanitarian actors providing assistance during the winter period which has had a significant impact on people's life and well-being. 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 supporting the implementation of programmes through direct services. 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

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<sup>9</sup> Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare; Central University Clinical Centre; National Health Institute; Psychiatric Clinic; Ministry of Health; several hospitals in Turkey; Kosova Rehabilitation Centre for Torture of Victims; Kosova Women's Network; UNHCR.

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 IFRC, will continue to assess the situation of the most vulnerable people living in Kosovo. Various stakeholders such as the United Nations, central and local authorities and Movement partners will be approached for possible joint assistance. In its support to the organizations the IFRC puts emphasis on locating new partnerships and sources of funding. In the coming period the IFRC will be particularly focusing on two core areas. Firstly 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. Secondly the Red Cross organizations will strengthen their operational capacities. This will result in a more effective use of available 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 actively contributing through improved volunteer training and management; increased number of partnerships through enhanced transparency; and an improved public image and better capacity to manage partnerships.

How we work	
<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>
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