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## Information bulletin

# Montenegro: Fire in a Camp

 International Federation  
of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

**Information Bulletin n° 01**  
**3 August, 2012**

This bulletin is being issued for information only and reflects the current situation and details available at this time. The Red Cross of Montenegro is seeking direct assistance to provide support to the affected people and families.

[<click here for detailed contact information>](#)



Camp Manager assisting with damage assessment. Photo: Red Cross of Montenegro

## The situation

In the morning of 24 July 2012 at 5.00 AM, the refugee camp Konik, in the suburbs of Podgorica, Montenegro, caught fire, which led to the complete destruction of 150 dwellings where 800 residents of the camp had their shelters. The camp is currently hosting part of those 4,000 people of Roma origin who fled from Kosovo to Montenegro during the escalation of the Kosovo conflict in 1999.

Following the incident, all relevant authorities and organizations came to inspect the site of the disaster. Their main concern was to provide temporary shelter for those people who lost their homes in the camp. It was agreed that a certain number of elderly inhabitants would be accommodated in a rest home for elderly people in Bijelo Polje, and several children were put up in a house for children without parental care in Bijela. All the other camp inhabitants were given accommodation in a tent settlement at the premises of the Konik camp.

## Red Cross and Red Crescent action

Since the very moment of the onset of the disaster, the Montenegro Red Cross (MRC) has been working with national and local authorities and the international community to alleviate the suffering of the affected population and to meet their basic needs.

The Red Cross erected a tent settlement with a total of 152 tents for the temporary accommodation of the affected population and distributed blankets, mattresses, kitchen sets, and jerry cans.

An ambulance tent was also set up in the settlement, where medical doctors and nurses are providing help to the camp dwellers. A mobile office was also set up by the Ministry of Interior, the UNHCR and the Bureau for the Care of Refugees to help the displaced population in receiving new identification documents in those cases when the former ones had been destroyed in the fire.

During the first seven days after the fire, meals were provided by the Montenegro Red Cross, the UNHCR and the Municipality of Podgorica.

## Cooperation and partnerships

Starting on Tuesday, July 31<sup>st</sup>, the German NGO "HELP" began, through the German Embassy in Podgorica, the distribution of one hot meal each per day to the people accommodated in the camp. That kitchen service will be provided throughout August, after which it will be taken over by the ADRA organization. The Montenegro Red Cross will provide logistic support for these activities.

The USAID office in Montenegro donated to the Red Cross a grant of 50,000 USD, which will be used for the procurement of an ambulance vehicle and kitchen containers for the camp.

The Khalifa bin Zayed Al Nahyan Foundation from the United Arab Emirates contacted the Red Cross of Montenegro through the United Arab Emirates Embassy in Podgorica with an offer of support. At that time, the National Society had requested support in procuring mattresses, kitchen sets, blankets, but the newly identified priorities highlighted the need for the procurement of container houses for accommodation. The Khalifa bin Zayed Al Nahyan Foundation will reallocate the funds so that they can be used for the procurement of the containers. These containers shall remain the sole property of the Red Cross of Montenegro, thus when they are no longer needed at this camp, they can be used elsewhere in the event of some other disastrous situations in the country.

At its meeting of July 26<sup>th</sup>, the Government of Montenegro endorsed an information report about the activities in the Konik Camp, prepared by the Operational Crisis Headquarters, of which the Red Cross of Montenegro is a member.

A working group composed of representatives from the relevant ministries, UN agencies, the EU Delegation, the Municipal Government of Podgorica and the Red Cross of Montenegro was established with the aim of finding a solution to the issue of accommodation of the displaced people in container houses, as well as of examining further how to raise funds to respond to this accident.

According to the data received, a total of 216 container houses (15 square meters each) are currently needed for accommodation in the price range of EUR 4,000-5,000 each.

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## Contact information

**For further information specifically related to this operation please contact:**

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The IFRC's vision is to inspire, encourage, facilitate and promote at all times all forms of humanitarian activities by National Societies, with a view to preventing and alleviating human suffering, and thereby contributing to the maintenance and promotion of human dignity and peace in the world.

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1. Save lives, protect livelihoods, and strengthen recovery from disaster and crises.
  2. Enable healthy and safe living.
  3. Promote social inclusion and a culture of non-violence and peace.
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