

# OPERATIONS 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

## **BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA: WINTER HUMANITARIAN NEEDS**

7 November 2003

**Appeal No. 37/2002 ; Operations Update no. 2;**

**Appeal launched on 23 December 2002 for CHF 958,000 (USD 672,324 or EUR 655,874) for six months for 30,000 beneficiaries.**

**With this update, the programme is extended by six months to 31 December 2003.**

**Disaster Relief Emergency Funds (DREF) allocated: CHF 50,000;**

**Period covered: 23 December 2002 - 30 September 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.*

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### ***In Brief***

**Appeal coverage:** For live update of contributions, please click below:

[http://www.ifrc.org/cgi/pdf\\_appeals.pl?02/1-2-3%20-%20ap3702.pdf](http://www.ifrc.org/cgi/pdf_appeals.pl?02/1-2-3%20-%20ap3702.pdf)

**Operational Summary:** This report highlights achievement of the Red Cross since the start of the operation and changes in the plan of action.

The operation has been extended to 31 December 2003. There were several reasons for this:

- There is a need to continue supporting returnees and internally displaced persons. The number of minority returnees is constantly increasing. According to the UNHCR, 34,093 people have returned during the last eight months. The security has been improving and the local authorities make efforts to complete the process of property repossession by the end of 2003. The property laws implementation ratio at the end of August 2003 reached 88 percent;
- It is important to continue supporting the development of the Red Cross Society of Bosnia and Herzegovina. The appointment of a population movement coordinator and her excellent performance has contributed to strengthening capacities of the organization.
- The extension will bridge a three-month gap in the Federation support to the Red Cross population movement programme. The programme ended in September 2003; the new contributions are expected in January 2004 through the Federation's appeal 2004.
- By the end of September 2003, there was a remaining balance of CHF 77,802. It is planned to use these funds in support of the Red Cross population movement initiatives to meet the needs of vulnerable people. More information on the plan of action is provided below.

The final operational report will be issued by the end of March 2004.

## Operational developments

People continue to return to Bosnia and Herzegovina. After the Dayton peace agreement was signed, 963,655 refugees and displaced people returned to their homes. Estimated 2.2 million people had left the country during the war. The process of return reached its peak in 2002 when 102,111 minority returnees were registered.

This accelerated rate of return, however, was not accompanied by adequate assistance to the minority returnees, exposing them to many challenges in the impoverished country.

To bridge the substantial humanitarian gap, which threatened to undermine the sustainability of the return process, in December 2003, the International Federation in cooperation with the Red Cross Society of Bosnia and Herzegovina launched an emergency appeal to help returnees. The focus was on elderly, disabled and female headed households.

In February 2003, the Red Cross and Federation held a meeting in Tuzla to assess the impact of the operation. In response to the continued request from impoverished returnees, the Red Cross supported by the Federation, modified its initial objectives. Changes included the provision of seeds to 8,000 vulnerable returnee families in addition to other planned activities. The UNHCR undertook to distribute firewood and stoves through its implementing partners, in some cases the local authorities. It was also agreed that the second objective of the Red Cross original appeal related to the establishment of Red Cross mobile social integration teams would be covered through the population movement programme. The initial budget, as mentioned above, was consequently revised and the number of target beneficiaries was reduced to 23,000.

Subsequently, the Red Cross distributed 18,000 welcome parcels and 8,000 seed packs along with 114 bales of winter clothes and footwear to beneficiaries in six regions/cantons. Beneficiaries were identified according to pre-established criteria.

### **Plan of action for October-December 2003**

Given the pressing needs of new returnees and other factors mentioned above, the Red Cross in cooperation with the Federation adjusted its plan of action once again. By the end of 2003, it is planning to distribute additional 2,000 welcome parcels with food and hygiene items and 700 sets of bed-linen, pillows and blankets to another 2,500 most vulnerable returnees in four target areas - Tuzla, Dobo, Bratunac/Srebrenica and Glamoc/Bosansko Grahovo. 15% of the assistance will be provided to local vulnerable population. To increase the capacities of four Red Cross mobile socio-integration teams, it is also planned to purchase locally four chain-saws. One of the main activities of the teams in winter time is cutting firewood for elderly beneficiaries. Budget for these activities is summarized in a table below:

**Budget for October-December 2003**

<b>Items</b>	<b>Quantity</b>	<b>Amount (CHF)</b>
Welcome parcels	2,000	32,000
Sets of bed-linen, pillows and blankets	700	38,345
Chain-saws	4	2,400
PSR	6.5%	5,057
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>77,802</b>

The revised plan of action was designed in cooperation with Red Cross staff at the headquarters, regional/cantonal and branch levels.

## Red Cross and Red Crescent action

### Emergency relief (food and basic non-food items)

**Objective 1:** To distribute one-off welcome parcels to 18,000 most vulnerable minority returnees with up to 20% of the relief going to local vulnerable population in a community-based manner. In addition, to distribute 8,000 family seed packs to the most needy and 2,000 welcome parcels along with 700 bed-linen sets with blankets and pillows to additional 2,500 minority returnees.

### Progress/Achievements:

The procurement of all relief items was arranged for locally to ensure efficient and effective implementation of the operation and at the same time support the local economy. The procurement followed Federation rules and procedures. Companies participating in the tender submitted their bids in accordance with the DDU terms and sanitary inspection requirements.

Criteria for beneficiary selection were established by the Federation jointly with the Red Cross. The focus was on:

- recent returnees (returned within the last six months);
- minority returnees (as defined by the UNHCR);
- elderly people (65 or over);
- families with children and without stable income, and
- local vulnerable populations.

20% of beneficiaries were local vulnerable population to ease tension with minority returnees and facilitate reconciliation in line with the Federation policies on repatriation. Selection of beneficiaries and distribution of relief items was carried out by Red Cross mobile team workers with assistance of Red Cross population movement volunteers based in local Red Cross branches.

### Welcome parcels:

Distribution of 18,000 welcome parcels was carried out in three rounds in Tuzla, Doboј, Bratunac/Srebrenica and Glamoc/Bosansko Grahovo. During each round 6,000 parcels were distributed.

During the first round, 1,500 parcels were provided to beneficiaries in each of the target four regions. The first round was completed in January 2003.

The second round was carried out in March 2003. The Red Cross distributed welcome parcels donated by the Swiss Red Cross in the same target four regions.

The third round was completed in April in the same target regions with a slight difference though from previous rounds. Tuzla, Doboј and Bratunac/Srebrenica regions received 1,500 parcels each, while Glamoc/Bosansko Grahovo received 1,100 parcels. The remaining 400 parcels were stored in the Red Cross warehouse in Sarajevo for distribution to returnees from Western European countries. Table below shows the number of welcome parcels distributed to returnees by the Red Cross:

Region	Number of parcels
Tuzla Canton	4,500
Doboј Region	4,500
Srebrenica/Bratunac	4,500
Glamoc/B. Grahovo	4,100
Red Cross warehouse in Sarajevo	400
<b>Total</b>	<b>18,000</b>

Each parcel contained:

- 1 kg of washing powder;
- 1 tube of toothpaste;
- 1 piece of soap;

- 10 candles;
- 1 pack of matches;
- 0.25 kg coffee;
- 0.12 kg of tea;
- 1 kg of sugar;
- 0.4 kg of biscuits, and
- 2 cans of canned meat.

**Distribution of seed packs:**

To reduce dependency on external food support, the Red Cross purchased 8,000 packs of seeds for 8,000 returnee families. This support was vital for people in rural areas to produce their own food and strengthen self-sustainability.

Each pack contained:

- 25 kg of potato seeds;
- 1 kg of onion seeds;
- 0.25 kg of pea seeds;
- 0.04 kg of lettuce, cabbage and carrot seeds, and
- 0.02 kg of beet, parsley and spinach seeds.

The seeds were purchased through tender. Contract was granted to a local provider from Sarajevo who made the best offer.

The supplier delivered the seeds to regional and cantonal branches. Red Cross staff and volunteers then distributed the seeds according to pre-established plan.

The Red Cross paid CHF 15.45 for each pack of seeds. This was cheaper than what was initially budgeted and enabled us to procure 8,000 instead of initially planned 7,000 packs benefiting additional 1,000 families in Una-Sana Canton and Prijedor Region.

The distribution of seeds was completed in April 2003 according to the distribution plan. See table below.

**Seeds distribution plan**

<b>Region/Canton</b>	<b>Number of families</b>	<b>Quantity (tons)</b>
Birac Region	2,550	67.48
Doboj Region	2,550	67.48
Tuzla Canton	1,500	39.72
Una -Sana Canton	500	13.24
Prijedor Region	500	13.24
Glamoc/Bos.Grahovo	400	10.60
<b>Total</b>	<b>8,000</b>	<b>211.76</b>

Red Cross staff from regional offices together with Federation representative monitored the distribution through field visits and interviewing beneficiaries. People expressed their satisfaction with the quality of relief items provided by the Red Cross. They appreciated the rapid response to their requests. Seeds were distributed timely. The supplier delivered seeds to Red Cross branches in four days, which is remarkable.

**Distribution of winter clothes:**

Distribution of winter clothes was delayed because of administrative constrains. The first shipment with 90 bales of second-hand clothes and 24 bales of footwear arrived on 23 June 2003. The distribution was carried out in July 2003 according to pre-established plan. See table below.

**Clothes and footwear distribution plan**

<b>Region/Canton</b>	<b>Second-hand clothes (bales)</b>	<b>Second-hand footwear (bales)</b>
Una -Sana	9	2
Posavina	3	2
Tuzla-Podrinje	14	2
Zenica-Doboj	12	2
Bosnia-Podrinje	3	2
Central-Bosnia	12	2
Herzegovina-Neretva	11	2
West. Herzegovina	5	2
Sarajevo	10	2
Herzeg-Bosnia	7	2
Red Cross stocks	4	4
<b>Total:</b>	<b>90</b>	<b>24</b>

The second shipment with clothing and shoes is expected to arrive in November together with 11,000 baby parcels.

Clothes and footwear will be distributed in nine regions of the Republika Srpska. The baby parcels will be provided to returnee and local families with little babies.

**Dissemination**

**Objective 1:** To advocate on behalf of returnees with a special, but not exclusive, focus on minority returns; to raise the Red Cross profile among the population and all stakeholders in the field relevant to population movement.

**Progress/Achievements:**

The Red Cross has initiated a range of activities to increase awareness of the population of the Red Cross role in protecting rights of people.

The Federation posted on the Federation's web page a press release and few stories on Red Cross initiatives within the current operation.

Stories about the living conditions of minority returnees were published in the regional Red Cross magazine *The Bridge* and the *Red Cross Red Crescent Magazine*.

Red Cross population movement coordinator together with Red Cross dissemination officers prepared a series of articles on Red Cross population movement programme with a focus on Red Cross work with returnees. These articles were published in a Red Cross magazine *Entity*.

In addition, in July 2003 within the population movement programme, the Red Cross launched the poster campaign *Help Returnees*. 2,000 posters were printed and distributed throughout the country to raise awareness of communities of the plight of returnees and encourage solidarity.

Local radio and TV stations broadcast regular features on Red Cross distributions and assistance to returnees. They interviewed beneficiaries and Red Cross staff involved in the operation. Local newspapers also published a number of stories on the distributions.

**Appeal title: Bosnia and Herzegovina: Winter Humanitarian Needs; Appeal no. 37/2002; Operations Update no. 2**

For the first time since the Red Cross Society in Bosnia and Herzegovina was created, its emblem was used on the parcels distributed to beneficiaries within this operation. This increased visibility of the organisation.

A network of 100 volunteers recruited from among the local communities has been monitoring the return process. They were involved in the selection of beneficiaries and distribution of relief items too. Involvement of local communities in the operation has strengthened Red Cross image as a reliable partner of people in need.

**Federation coordination**

Red Cross regularly participated in meetings with the government, particularly with the ministry of human rights and refugees, as well as municipal authorities and beneficiary communities.

Federation representative and regional population movement coordinator together with Red Cross population movement coordinator took the lead in coordinating international support to the National Society, primarily by liaising with major donors, embassies and international organisations based in Sarajevo.

To avoid overlapping, planned activities were co-ordinated with various organisations operating in the country such as UNHCR, IOM, Office of High Representative and numerous other local and international NGOs.

Thanks to rapid response of the Federation's disaster response and emergency fund (DREF) and partner national societies of Sweden, Iceland and Japan, as well as to donations in kind (food/hygiene items and winter clothes) from the Red Cross Societies of Switzerland and Sweden, the Red Cross Society of Bosnia and Herzegovina achieved the appeal objectives and met urgent needs of 23,000 vulnerable people.

Through this operation the Red Cross population movement programme established links with the Red Cross home care and mine awareness programmes. This was important because many returnees are elderly people and the number of beneficiaries of the home care programme has considerably increased. In addition, Bosnia and Herzegovina is the most heavily mined country in Europe and returnees are one of the worst affected group. Semi-annual statistics issued by the International Committee of the Red Cross show that during 1 January-30 June 2003, 29 mine accidents were reported in Bosnia and Herzegovina, of which 14 were returnees and three internally displaced persons.

**Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement -- Principles and initiatives**

The Red Cross work is guided by the Fundamental Principles of the Movement. The operation targeted mainly minority returnees helping them to improve the living conditions.

The Red Cross contributed to the reconciliation and reintegration of minorities in their places of origin. This was achieved through involvement of Red Cross volunteers from local communities in assistance to minority returnees.

The society in Bosnia and Herzegovina remains ethnically divided. The Red Cross role in promoting peace, tolerance and culture of non-violence, therefore, gains significant importance. Throughout the operation the Red Cross has been disseminating humanitarian values to influence people's behavior and contribute to the resolution of differences in the communities.

**National Society Capacity Building**

This operation offered a good opportunity for the Red Cross to enhance its image and strengthen its institutional capacity. Red Cross population movement coordinator, who was the focal point in the programme implementation, together with other 11 Red Cross staff attended a seminar on reporting and capacity building organised by the Federation regional delegation in Sarajevo in March 2003. The seminar aimed to improve the quality and Red Cross ownership of appeals and reports, particularly during emergency situations.

In January 2003, eight members of the Red Cross mobile socio-integration teams attended a one-day training in finance and reporting. During the training, participants also discussed how to strengthen the links with other Red Cross programmes.

Another 20 Red Cross volunteers recruited by the Glamoc and Bosansko Grahovo branches attended a seminar on the Red Cross work with refugees/returnees in April 2003. Topics discussed at the seminar also included the Movement's Fundamental Principles and networking with other agencies operating in cantons/regions.

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The Red Cross will continue cooperating with 150 staff and volunteers trained and engaged in the provision of services within this operation. Their experience, skills and knowledge gained during the operation will be indispensable in assisting returnees through the Red Cross population movement programme.

Through training and co-ordination, the Federation helped the Red Cross to develop effective partnerships with agencies active in the field of population movement, such as UNHCR, Office of High Representative, International Organisation for Migration, as well as local authorities, associations of returnees and charity organisations such as Caritas and Merhamet.

**Assessment and lessons learned:**

The operation was implemented smoothly except for some delays encountered during the distribution of relief items to beneficiaries in few remote villages in Glamoc/Bosansko Grahovo. These villages were inaccessible in January due to heavy snowfalls. There were also delays in the arrival of winter clothes from Sweden as reported above.

**Lessons learned:**

- Co-operation between the Red Cross headquarters and the branches has significantly improved because local Red Cross staff and volunteers were involved in the operation from the very beginning;
- Timely response from partners - Swedish, Swiss, Japanese and Icelandic Red Cross Societies – enabled the Red Cross to achieve objectives of the operation;
- Professionalism of Red Cross and Federation staff ensured effective implementation of the planned activities;
- Involvement of beneficiaries in the operation through information network of volunteers increased the effectiveness of the operation and strengthened the Red Cross profile among the community;
- Local procurement secured high quality of items and timely distribution;
- The Red Cross capacity to address population movement related issues has strengthened;
- Good co-ordination with other stakeholders was achieved through regular contacts with UNHCR, Office of High Representative, IOM, ministry of human rights and refugees, local authorities and community leaders.

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