

Operations update



International Federation
of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

Serbia: Earthquake

Emergency appeal n° MDRRS004
GLIDE n° EQ-2010-00218-SRB
Operations update n° 2
17 December, 2010

Period covered by this Ops Update: 30 November – 17 December 2010.

Appeal target (current): CHF 409,759

Appeal coverage: 18%; [<click here to go directly to the updated donor response report, or here to link to contact details >](#)

Appeal history:

- This **Emergency Appeal** was initially launched on 19 November 2010 for CHF 409,759 for seven months to assist 8000 beneficiaries.
- **Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF):** CHF 102,347 was initially allocated from the Federation's DREF to support the national society to respond.



Red Cross assessment team. Photo by Red Cross of Serbia

Summary: On 3 November 2010, at 1.58 A.M. an earthquake, measuring 5.4 on the Richter scale/ 7.5 on the Mercalli scale hit central Serbia, the epicentre being the village of Vitanovac, some 15 kilometres northwest of the town of Kraljevo. Two people were killed and another 120 sought medical assistance. The damage to the city and its surroundings is huge, estimated to be more than EUR 100 Million. The Red Cross of Kraljevo branch, supported by the Red Cross of Serbia and the International Federation is acting alongside municipal and national authorities in assessing the needs of the affected population and providing the immediate assistance. The Red Cross of Kraljevo branch is distributing relief assistance at the territory of the municipality using both Red Cross stock and other goods (from different sources) towards those in need, in accordance with the assessed needs. At the same time, the Red Cross is participating in the assessment of longer term needs, particularly the needs of people in temporary accommodation. This assessment is following the assessment of expert commissions that have categorised households according to damage. It will be finalised by the end of December and in line with the results, the Red Cross will be providing assistance with recovery and rehabilitation, including tools, materials and technical assistance as well as psychosocial support to up to 8,000 people.

The situation

On 3 November, at 1.58 A.M. an earthquake, measuring 5.4 on the Richter scale/ 7.5 on the Mercalli scale hit central Serbia. The epicentre was in the village of Vitanovac, some 15 kilometres northwest of the town of Kraljevo. Two people in the Kraljevo suburb Grdica were killed when their house collapsed. Another person died

from a heart attack the following afternoon due to panic caused by aftershocks (more than 200 have been registered so far).

Immediately after the earthquake, 120 people approached health services in Kraljevo for some kind of treatment. Although the Hospital in Kraljevo was badly damaged by the quake (the operating block and polyclinic sustained the most damage), services are being provided to the injured and other people in need.

Additional hospital beds and other services have been put at Kraljevo Health Centre's disposal in several neighbouring cities.

A state of emergency has been proclaimed in the municipality with more than half of the schools and kindergartens closed until damages have been assessed and emergency repairs have been made. Some 11,000 students were without classes for almost two weeks and approximately a third of them are still unable to go to school due to damages to buildings.

The visible damage effects of the earthquake in the streets of Kraljevo included rubble, broken glass, and cracked facades. About a quarter of the urban area has been without electricity for the first day. Telephone lines were briefly out of service but soon restored. Tap water was unsafe to drink for the first three days following and 42,000 litres of water were trucked in daily. The Red Cross offered additional capacities of up to 30,000 litres per day but the need subsided quickly.

The Serbian government has pledged EUR 10 million for longer term assistance and at the time of reporting some RSD 300 Million (approximately EUR 2.85 Million) have been provided to the city of Kraljevo from the government budget and donations. The area was visited by the President, the Prime Minister and several ministers.

40 expert teams working under the authority of the Municipal Disaster response Headquarters have assessed all of the 16,200 buildings and houses that have been reported as damaged. A second tier commission is currently doing a refined assessment, separating the buildings into categories. Out of 8,700 buildings and houses assessed so far, the split between categories is as follows:

- 490 houses are to be demolished
- 475 houses have been 75% damaged
- 484 houses have been 50% damaged
- 7,521 houses have damages between 10 and 30%

The people from heavily damaged houses – approximately 2,000 families at the moment – are temporarily accommodated either with their relatives or in collective centres (Hotels etc.). 789 people are in collective centres, 326 people are accommodated in tents and 152 in containers. More containers are being shipped to the area to accommodate bigger families. Since the weather conditions deteriorated, the issue of accommodation is even more pressing. Some remote villages around Kraljevo are difficult to reach because of snow and the people using tents are increasingly leaving them in the night time to seek accommodation with friends or relatives due to the severe cold.

The government of Serbia has pledged to build 500 prefab houses, 100 of them until the end of the year. As of 17 December only five have been built and another 70 have been started.

Coordination and partnerships

Minister Marković, of the Ministry of Public Administration and Self-Government is coordinating the national-level disaster response, whereas Kraljevo Mayor Simović is coordinating local-level response. The chain of command is functioning well, and the overall opinion of the representatives of the international community is that the government responded capably to this disaster. The Ministry of Interior and line Ministries are delivering disaster relief, with support from surrounding municipalities and citizen volunteers. The United Nations have taken over the responsibility of facilitating the coordination of the international response. The UN is issuing regular situation reports including a matrix of donor support to date.

The preliminary list of priority needs, presented by Mayor Simović includes repairing more than 100 municipal buildings, reconstruction of several wings in the Kraljevo hospital and the institute for public health as well as several school buildings that were badly damaged or destroyed. In addition, approximately 9,000 single and

multi-family homes need different degrees of repair. Building materials are being procured or donated, but much more is needed and it is still not clear whether local market will be able to meet all the needs. At the same time, according to Minister Marković, the national government will provide financial support through its budget; however this may well be insufficient to cover all the needs as the budget has been almost exhausted by the earlier emergencies this year in Serbia (two large scale floods). The government stresses that the damage caused is much greater than expected by an earthquake of this magnitude, possibly due to the quality of land in Kraljevo area. Also, Kraljevo's difficult economic situation with low industrial potential and a great number of refugees and IDPs from Kosovo has been enhanced by this emergency.

All activities in the field are being coordinated at municipal level by the Municipal Disaster Response Headquarters, in line with the new Disaster Response Law. The Red Cross of Kraljevo is part of this response structure and has been involved in the work of the headquarters from the beginning. The Red Cross branch put a special vehicle for rescue activities at the disposal of fire-fighters immediately after the earthquake and has offered additional human resource capacities through the engagement of Red Cross Assessment and Coordination Teams, Mobile Technical Teams and Water and Sanitation teams.

The Red Cross is also distributing food to 800 people through its soup kitchens (which already served 600 people before the quake. The Serbian government provided 1.5 Million dinars (approximately EUR 14,000) for the soup kitchen operation.



Temporary accommodation in tents. Photo by Red Cross of Serbia

According to the rough estimates, total damages could run to EUR 100 Million, which is roughly five times the annual Kraljevo municipal budget. The municipal authorities have appealed for 150 containers and 50 prefab houses to potential in country donors, and the government has pledged EUR 10 million overall. Objects of public importance will be repaired with funds from the National Investment Plan. The government is considering prefab houses for families whose houses are declared uninhabitable. Meanwhile, local authorities have also distributed relief items including plastic foil, roof tiles, cement, building blocks and roofing timber.

Red Cross and Red Crescent action

The Kraljevo Red Cross is active with between 20 and 30 volunteers every day assisting with distribution of humanitarian goods and doing assessment. Food is distributed through its soup kitchen service.

Assistance is still arriving from the government, institutions, organization, and neighbouring cities. Since the biggest need will be the reconstruction of the damaged houses and short-term shelter for at least 1,000 people, the Red Cross is tailoring its activities to support the need of Kraljevo municipality in detection of the most appropriate transitional shelter. This is currently being done through the joint work of Red Cross volunteers and representatives of the city communities, and representatives of the National Civil protection department through the shelter needs assessment. The Red Cross is providing assistance in identifying precise shelter needs and possible solutions but is not required or expected to provide emergency shelter or temporary accommodation. The Red Cross of Kraljevo, with help from Red Cross volunteers from other branches and alongside the representatives of the Municipal authorities has so far processed 2,696 families mostly from the households suffering between 10 and 50% of damage, covering 9,164 people in total. The following table shows the needs as expressed by these people:

	Degree of Damage to Houses	Needs																
		Assessed			Family sets			Clothes	Heater			Bed linen and furniture						
		Sub-municipalities	Households	Number of people	Family hygiene parcel	Family food parcel	Repairs and wall painting kit	Male, female, children and adolescents	Electric	Gas powered	Solid fuel	Bed Linen	Blanket	Bed	Kitchenware	Table	Chair	Refrigerator
1	Red ¹	32	760	2444	596	549	NO											
2	Yellow ²	29	1005	3306	723	656	YES											
3	White ³	27	931	3414	563	514	YES											
	Total		2696	9164	1882	1719	671	1247	92	24	229	1370	1329	634	712	225	761	272

Table 1: Assessed needs by the Red Cross of Serbia teams

Most of the affected families are still close to their houses and are not willing to move to collective centres provided by local authorities.

In line with the assessment efforts and in the period since the previous update⁴ (30 November) the Red Cross branch of Kraljevo has so far distributed the following items from the Red Cross stock and donations:

Item	Quantity
Family food parcels	297
Family hygiene parcels	160
Clothes parcels	68
Baby parcels	2
"Aqua Box" ^{**}	21
Water	2190 litres
Kefir (Sour Milk)	560 portions
Apples ^{**}	2,100 kg
Beds/Linen	2 sets
Yogurt	81 litres
Meat products ^{**}	620 kg
Money ^{***}	1,000,000 RSD

Table 2: Red Cross of Kraljevo distribution from the Red Cross stock

* Contains hygiene items, kitchen sets, clothes and toys for children

** (donated to the soup kitchen and people in temporary accommodation)

*** 50,000 RSD for 20 families according to the criteria set by the Headquarters

The Red Cross of Serbia has in the meantime responded to the floods⁵ hitting municipalities along the rivers of Drina and Sava. Even though Kraljevo and its surroundings have not been hit, the division of efforts is straining the national society's capacity.

¹ Condemned houses

² Heavily damaged houses

³ Moderately damaged houses

⁴ <http://www.ifrc.org/docs/appeals/10/MDRRS004ou1.pdf>

⁵ <http://www.ifrc.org/docs/appeals/10/MDRRS005do.pdf>

The needs

The Red Cross of Serbia has carried out initial needs assessments and has identified several priorities for its work in close consultation with other actors. The needs assessment is not finished yet and the longer term needs, related to rehabilitation and early recovery are a subject of the current assessment process to be finalised by end December.

Immediate needs: Assistance to people in temporary accommodation (provision of mattresses, blankets, bed linen, food etc. for people in collective centres and in host families) for up to 2,000 families/ 8,000 people up to two months.

Longer-term needs: Assistance with temporary accommodation in line with the reassessed needs. Assistance with shelter support: provision of materials for reconstruction and refurbishment of living facilities for up to 2,000 families for up to seven months. Psychosocial support for up to 2,000 families will be provided for up to seven months.

Beneficiary selection: The Red Cross is in its efforts be focusing on the most vulnerable population, that is the population with the least capacity to recover. Red Cross will identify the population in most need and provide assistance to it after the second needs assessment is finished. It is at the moment estimated that this population will not exceed 2,000 families. The assessment will show what the split will be between urban and rural areas, both of which have specific challenges.

The families whose houses will be declared uninhabitable by the assessment will be the main focus of the relief distribution efforts while the most vulnerable families whose houses are in need of repair will be the target of early recovery efforts.



Red Cross distribution of food for the people in temporary accommodation. Photo: Red Cross of Serbia

Progress towards outcomes

Relief distributions (food and basic non-food items)

Outcome: 2,000 families, approximately 8,000 vulnerable people residing in temporary accommodation will have received urgent relief items (mattresses, blankets, bed linen, canned food, hygiene parcels)

Outputs (expected results)	Activities planned
The food and hygiene needs of approximately 8,000 people residing in temporary accommodation for two months will be met through provision of adequate relief items.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct rapid emergency needs and capacity assessments. • Develop beneficiary targeting strategy and registration system to deliver intended assistance. • Distribute relief supplies and control supply movements from point of dispatch to end user. • Monitor and evaluate the relief activities and provide reporting on relief distributions. • Develop an exit strategy.

The distribution of relief items is going well, following the assessments done jointly by the Red Cross and the authorities. The response of national donors in kind has so far been encouraging and the Red Cross stock has been utilised so the basic needs of the most vulnerable people in terms of nutrients, hygiene and health are met.

Early recovery

Outcome: 2,000 affected households in Kraljevo municipality have been provided with shelter support through the provision of locally appropriate materials and tools and assistance in repairs, in order to help preserve their physical and mental well-being and human dignity, and prevent the further deterioration of the humanitarian situation.	
Outputs (expected results)	Activities planned
2000 households are recovered and safe for living through provision of appropriate materials, tools and assistance with repairs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assess the extent of damage done to houses not declared unsafe to use. • Design of two kinds of household repair assistance kits: one for urban areas (apartment buildings) and one for rural areas (houses). • Purchase and distribution of materials and tools as well as essential household objects for select households. • Provision of assistance in repairs through deployment of mobile technical teams. • Promotion of increased awareness and understanding of safe and adequate shelter response programming with the National Society and affected communities.

The activities in this area are still on hold until the assessment is finalised and the precise needs are determined. The Red Cross assessment has so far listed 1170 houses that fit the criteria for providing their inhabitants with materials, tools and assistance with repairs. The assessment is expected to be finalised by end December and the procurement of goods can then start, depending on the funds available.

Psychosocial support

Outcome: 2,000 affected families will be assisted with strengthening their coping mechanisms and supported in recovery efforts.	
Outputs (expected results)	Activities planned
2000 affected families receive regular psychosocial support from Red Cross volunteers and are able to better cope with the effects of the disaster.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assessment and selection of beneficiary groups (mothers with children etc.). • Design of training and training manual for Red Cross volunteers. • Two training sessions for 50 Red Cross volunteers. • Provision of psychosocial support. • Monitoring and evaluation of support activities

At this point the Red Cross of Kraljevo maintains a standing information service to the citizens of Kraljevo in order to keep them updated and informed about all the important issues. The curriculum for the psychosocial support workshops is being prepared and the activities will begin in December. The information material for leaflets is prepared and will be printed shortly.

Communications – Advocacy and Public Information

Maintaining a steady flow of timely and accurate information between the field and other major stakeholders is vital for fundraising, advocacy and maintaining the profile of emergency operations. During an operation, communications between affected populations and the Red Cross as well as with the media and donors, is an essential mechanism for effective disaster response and the cornerstone to promote greater quality, accountability, and transparency. The communications activities outlined in this appeal are aimed at supporting the National Society to improve their communications capacities and develop appropriate communications tools and products to support effective operations. These activities are closely coordinated with the Communications department of the IFRC's Secretariat in Geneva. A detailed communications plan of action is forthcoming.

Following the initial report on <http://www.ifrc.org/docs/news/10/10110301/index.asp> on the day the disaster struck, the Europe Zone communications office will continue to provide communications support to the Red

Cross Society of Serbia to ensure wide national and regional publicity for its role in the disaster response and subsequent activities. As needed, the Zone communications team will visit the affected area to assist in gathering information materials (written information, photographs, video, testimony) from Red Cross workers, volunteers and the affected population. The resources of the communications department will also be available to advise on informational materials for those made vulnerable by the earthquake.

How we work

All IFRC assistance seeks to adhere to the [Code of Conduct for the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and Non-Governmental Organizations \(NGO's\) in Disaster Relief](#) and the [Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Disaster Response \(Sphere\)](#) in delivering assistance to the most vulnerable.

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.

The IFRC's work is guided by [Strategy 2020](#) which puts forward three strategic aims:

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.

Contact information

For further information specifically related to this operation please contact:

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