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RED CROSS & RED CRESCENT INFORMATION

Report No. 43

This report is published twice-weekly as a general update on Red Cross Red Crescent activities during the Balkans crisis, targeting primarily the Movement's components and supporters. Today's text can also be found on the internet: www.ifrc.org and www.icrc.org

LATEST EVENTS

With no established structures in place it is difficult to estimate how many refugees have already returned to Kosovo, or how many will decide to return in the next few days.

Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia)

In the immediate aftermath of the agreement on the withdrawal of Yugoslav security forces and the beginning of the deployment of KFOR in Kosovo, Red Cross action has focused on intensified direct distributions to displaced persons in Kosovo and assistance to those who were leaving the province.

Relief distributions: Over the weekend, ten trucks/semitrailers were dispatched from Belgrade to Nis and Pristina, with 112 MT of wheat flour, 12 MT of pasta, 12 MT of sugar, six MT of salt, 18.5 MT of oil, 1.2 MT of yeast and 11,480 individual food parcels.

Over 10,000 Serbs have left Pristina during the last few days. The Yugoslav Red Cross (YRC) has signaled the existence of two large pockets of displaced, notably in the Novi Pazar and Kursumlija regions.

The YRC has set up transit points on all the roads linking Kosovo with the rest of Serbia, providing water, food and medical care to the displaced. In addition to this, the YRC has opened three transit centres, in Nis, Prokuplje and Ribarici (Novi Pazar), where the displaced are offered accommodation. Those centres have reported the figures of displaced having transited so far as follows: Ribarici 7,000, Nis 10,000, Kursumlija 7,000. They are mainly on their way to relatives and friends in Serbia.

Red Cross delegates have been to Novi Pazar and to Nis to carry out surveys of needs in the region. To cope with the immediate problems stemming from this new emergency, the Red Cross has donated 10,000 individual food parcels and 5,000 litres of fuel to the YRC. A German Red Cross mobile clinic given to the YRC is now operational in the Prokuplje region.

On 14 June, two MT of tinned food and pasta were purchased locally by the Nis Red Cross transit centre. The Red Cross branch in Novi Pazar organised the production of 1,000 loaves of bread on Sunday.

Delegations: The Nis field office will serve as a logistical base both for bringing relief into Pristina (Nis is just 125 km away from Pristina) in the weeks ahead, and as a distribution point to Serb displaced from Kosovo. Five trucks will make daily rotations from Nis to Kosovo, thus radically increasing supply and distribution in the region. Final preparations have been made with the YRC on the implementation of the programme for soup kitchens. The Joint Field Offices have identified the kitchens that need to be expanded, since the programme is destined for 50,000 beneficiaries.

(Kosovo)

Relief distributions: For the first time since the return of the ICRC team to Kosovo, delegates were able to make direct distributions in the volatile Srbica region, near Glogovac. On Friday, two trucks transported 14 MT of wheat flour and 1,820 individual food parcels to a village outside Srbica. Some 10,000 displaced persons, mostly from Kosovska Mitrovica, were estimated to be in the region. A CNN team followed the ICRC convoy and filmed the distributions.

On Friday, the Red Cross delivered 10,000 food parcels to the Yugoslav Red Cross.

Last Saturday four ICRC trucks brought 23.5 MT of wheat flour, 2,400 individual food parcels, 2,400 blankets, 2,400 jerrycans and 1,600 baby parcels to a village near Glogovac. Over 10,000 displaced received their first Red Cross assistance since the end of March.

On Sunday, two distributions were made in the Podujevo area: one (2 truck loads with 3,250 individual food parcels and 6.75 MT of wheat flour) was the third delivery to the village of Metohija, and the other (the same quantity) was the first distribution to the village of Sajkovac (some 10 km to the south of Podujevo).

Since its return to Kosovo on 24 May, the ICRC has directly distributed close to 16,000 individual food parcels and almost 70 MT of bulk food, as well as 5,400 blankets, 500 kitchen sets, 2,100 baby parcels, 2,400 jerrycans and 2,000 m² of plastic sheeting to several sites housing displaced in Podujevo, Stimlje, Glogovac and Srbica areas.

Health: The first medical evacuation by the ICRC since its return to Kosovo took place on 12 June, when four wounded people were transported from a village housing displaced near Glogovac to Pristina hospital. A mobile clinic, a Red Cross donation to the YRC, has been operating in the Prokuplje area.

Tracing: The ICRC has been approached by some 2,500 people anxious to notify their families about their whereabouts, either by telephoned Red Cross Messages or by having their names broadcast by world services. IDP leaders transmitted a list of 400 requests for ICRC phone calls to relatives abroad, and 120 messages to be broadcast on public radio. Delegates make over 1,000 phone calls per day from the Pristina office. Names are collected by the tracing delegate during food distributions and phone calls to relatives are then made later by office staff.

Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Montenegro)

Over the week-end, over 9,000 people (mostly Serbs and Montenegrins) arrived from Kosovo in Rozaje and then proceeded to Andrijevica, Berane and other municipalities of Montenegro. Their situation is carefully monitored and arrangements have been made for immediate distributions in case of need. In addition to the influx of displaced arriving from Kosovo, some 500 people arrived last week in Ulcinj from Kosovska Mitrovica.

Health: At the Dekor II camp in Rozaje, six showers have been set up, and maintenance has been completed on the camp's latrines. In Ulcinj, construction of the Red Cross camp (Pine Tree III) has commenced and 50 tents had been erected by 11 June. Construction of showers and latrines is accompanying the erection of tents. A medical assessment has been carried out in the Neptune and Pine Tree camps.

Tracing: A new phone line office has been opened in Plav. A total of 2,291 phone calls to relatives were made by IDPs using the Red Cross phones, while 67 names were collected for broadcasting during last week. Large numbers of people have asked the Red Cross about relatives in Kosovo.

Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia

On Sunday, about 200 refugees crossed the Blace border on foot, and on Monday there were over a hundred cars lined up at the Blace border to cross into Kosovo.

A total of 1,769 refugees left Macedonia for third countries under the UNHCR-IOM humanitarian evacuation program over the weekend. UNHCR is currently reviewing the evacuation programme in the light of the peace agreement, in consultation with concerned governments. It estimates the number of refugees in Macedonia to be 255,400 (14 June).

Relief distributions: The Red Cross is developing a logistics structure in Skopje to support relief distributions in Kosovo.

The ICRC is distributing water and high protein biscuits to refugees as they travel back to Kosovo. The Federation and the ICRC are dispatching a contingency stock of bottled water to the Blace border area. There are 109,960 1.5-litre bottles and 33,422 high protein biscuits (BP5) in the border contingency stock

	RECEIVED	DISTRIBUTED TO:			
RELIEF SUPPLIES		Refugees	Host families	Social cases	TOTALS
Mattresses	3,671	800			800
Mattresses (German RC)		1,824			1,824
Blankets		5,300			5,300
Hygiene parcels (German RC)		696			696
Hygiene parcels (ECHO)		1,338			1,338
Hygiene parcels (IFRC)		96	69		165
Hygiene parcels (French RC)	3,108				0
Cooking sets			915		915
Diapers (500 packs)		36			36
Baby food (packets)		65			65
Baby parcels (Swedish RC)	13,308				0

(Relief distribution/ logistics 11-14 June)

Macedonian Red Cross: The Macedonian Red Cross (MRC) information centre in Skopje provides advice, psychological counselling, and other services for refugees. In May, the centre conducted interviews with 1,603 people, had 675 information requests by telephone, provided medicaments and related support for 693 people, and gave psychological counselling or referral to 27 people. These services will be expanded to the MRC Tetevo branch next month.

Participating National Societies: The American, German and French Red Cross are working in close co-operation to prepare for the expanded distribution of aid to social cases, which starts in July.

External Relations, information and publicity: International Red Cross and Red Crescent delegates met with the following members of the press during the period 11-14 June: Radio Suisse Romande, ABC News, 15 Norwegian journalist accompanying the Norwegian prime minister, ASC.

Norway's Prime Minister, H. E. Mr. Kjell Magne Bondevik visited the Norwegian Red Cross hospital at Cegrane camp on Saturday (12 June). The prime minister, accompanied by a 15-member official delegation and 15 media representatives, was on a three-day visit which also included Albania.

Delegations: The Federation's Senior Officer for Refugees and Deputy Head of Europe Department visited the delegation.

Albania

The UNHCR reports that on Tuesday 5,000 refugees who were in Kukes returned to Kosovo this number is expected to increase rapidly over the next few days.

Relief distributions:The following table shows the operation's progress after the latest dispatch to the six regions:

Region	Mt. W/F dispatched	Mt. W/F needs for region	% of needs met	Mt. FP dispatched	Mt. FP needs for region	% of needs met
Kukes	182	720.6	25.3	507	900.8	56.3
Tirana	102	958.4	10.6	411.9	1,198	34.4
Shkoder	64	228	28.1	101.7	285	35.7
Durres	46	705	6.5	269.9	881.3	30.6
Elbasan	69	185.9	37.1	0	232.4	0
Fier	23	226.9	10.1	43.1	283.6	15.2
Totals	486	3,024.8	16.1	1,333.6	3,781	35.3

"MT" refers to metric tonnage, "W/F" to wheat flour, and "FP" to food parcels (of various weights and contents, and from various donors). Dispatch figures are for the current month's rations. The "needs for region" refers to the monthly dispatch needs for the entire region. The "%" provides an at-a-glance update of the current situation; i.e. progress.

As a result of the time-consuming process of distribution (the first rotation* took almost 5 weeks in Tirana and Kruje), two (2) rotations are in progress simultaneously for Tirana. A high number of people have not come to the distribution points to receive their packages in the region. The possible reasons vary from refugee movements within the country, to false claims, to the possibility that refugees are not being informed of distributions on time. Leaders from the refugee community have been helping to monitor the lists resulting in a fairer distribution.

A division of the Tirana warehouse into three parts has taken place relief/Albanian Red Cross, main stock and Kukes shipments. Furthermore, the main store in Tirana will have only food parcels and wheat flour, while all non-food and emergency items are deposited at the Durres warehouse. The Durres port warehouse will be used for transit and for despatch within the region.

Spare parts and tools for the vehicle workshop arrived over the weekend. This will allow the Red Cross Red Crescent operation to keep its vehicle fleet fully maintained and on the roads. The six Scania heavy goods trucks and the three trailers left for Skopje.

Relief distribution figures from 11 to 13 June

Distribution Location	RHF	RHF families	HF	IDP	IDP families	Total Benef.	Wheat flour	Swedish parcels	French parcels	Hygiene Kits
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The Italian Red Cross field hospital, from 10 to 12 June, treated a total of 518 patients, of whom 202 were under 10 years old. They organised three medical evacuations on 11 June, one of which involved a young girl suffering from gunshot wounds.

The Finnish Red Cross basic health clinic has been operational since 16 April. It was established with a capacity of treating 20,000 patients over a three month period. As of 13 June, it has treated 16,665 patients. It also distributes preventative health posters and leaflets. The vaccination programme has been extremely successful: staff have vaccinated 7,318 children (4,582 polio/2,736 measles). The clinic now has 6 local doctors and an expatriate doctor, which brings it up to capacity. It also has 25 local nurses and 3 expatriate nurses. It now relies on medical stocks from the Tirana Red Cross Red Crescent Delegation. Over the weekend (11-13 June), the clinic treated 1,094 patients.

Shelter: As mentioned previously, the construction of new tented camps has stopped. Shelter activities are now focusing on the rehabilitation and the winterization of collective centres, in anticipation of a residual caseload of refugees remaining in Albania throughout the winter.

Social welfare: Meetings with the Albanian Red Cross have taken place in order to "sketch" plans for a future psycho-social programme in the country. In the preliminary step of this programme, refugees living with host families and requires psycho-social support need to be identified. An agreement was reached on a the need to recruit a regional co-ordinator. Youth will become important to the programme's success in that they will allow the programme to identify services for teenagers--a particularly "high risk" category. Specialised training for the youth will be necessary.

Tracing: Over the weekend the Protection/Tracing team has noted a large drop in the number of people requiring the radio message service. However, the demand for the satellite telephone service remained static.

Participating National Societies: Visitors have included the head of the International Department from the Bavarian Red Cross (German Red Cross), and the president and the head of the International Department from the French Red Cross.

The PNS health meeting took place in Tirana on 11 June with representatives from 11 PNSs and the ERU. Discussions took place on an information campaign for refugees. One conclusion was the need to establish a working group to address all health-related issues, to give focus and direction for the entire Red Cross Red Crescent operation in Albania.

External relations, information and publicity: A briefing with the Norwegian prime minister was done by the International Federation's Information Delegate.

More than 60 journalists are poised to go/have gone into Kosovo at the Morine border. Over the weekend media interest was focused on the refugees' return home and the issues of mines and unexploded ordinance. Interviews/coverage was gained from the following: a Finnish Red Cross-commissioned reporter visited the Finnish Red Cross basic health clinic, UAE hospital and tracing services. MTV (Korean TV), featured food distributions, focusing on the South Korean delegate; the *New York Times* also featured the Finnish Clinic; Knight Ridder (US press syndicate) featured mine awareness in connection with preparations for the refugees'

return and *Berliner Zeitung* (print) featured Red Cross Red Crescent future plans. Contacts were also made with the Evening Standard and Norwegian Press.

Bosnia and Herzegovina

Humanitarian organisations in Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH) are focusing their activities on host families. The Red Cross of Republika Srpska is anticipating a possible increase in the number of Serb refugees in this Bosnian entity. There are 60,100 refugees from the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (FRY) in Republika Srpska (RS) at the moment. They are mostly Serbs that left BiH or Croatia .

Relief distributions: The Belgian branch of “Medecins Sans Frontieres” plans to deliver 3,000 hygiene parcels to FRY refugees in RS. These parcels will then be distributed by the Red Cross of RS. The Red Cross of FBiH will begin distributing food items provided by the Japanese humanitarian organisation Association to Aid Refugee to FRY refugees staying with host families.

External relations, information and publicity: Starting Wednesday 16 June, the News Agency of BiH - BiH Press will feature the International Federation's activities on its internet site in both Bosnian and English language. The BiH Press web site is available on www.bihpress.com.

Outstanding Needs

In Bosnia and Herzegovina there is a need for specialized foods suitable for special health conditions that place dietary limitations on the individual.

Prevention of diarrhoeal diseases is a priority, hence proper sanitation equipment is needed in Albania. In order to retain the currently proposed distributions for the next month, the Kukes Sub-delegation needs to receive a further 377 MT of wheat flour, 26 MT of food parcels and 8,868 hygiene kits and additional telecommunication equipment. In addition, the Finnish Red Cross basic health clinic is in urgent need of drugs and medical supplies, to include oral antibiotics and syringes.

In the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia the Red Cross branch in Novi Pazar reports an urgent need for baby food.

Logistics cell contact names/numbers: Charles Bernimolin, Federation, and John Wert, ICRC, at:

Phone: +41 22 730 2143 or +41 22 730 2204;
Fax: +41 22 730 2876; **email:** fedircrbalkanlog.gva@icrc.org

For further information from the International Federation, please contact Mark Wilson for the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and Bosnia & Herzegovina; tel: +41 22 730 4439; email: wilson@ifrc.org and Penny Elghady for Albania and Macedonia; tel: +41 22 730 4319; email: elghady@ifrc.org

For further information from the ICRC, contact External Resources Department; tel: +41 22 734 6001 or Pierre Kraehenbuehl tel : 41 22 730 2256, email : pkraehenbuehl.gva@icrc.org.

Renny Nancholas
Director
Europe Department
International Federation of Red Cross
and Red Crescent Societies

Angelo Gnaedinger
Delegate General for Europe,
Middle East, and North America
ICRC