

# PROGRAMME 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

## SERBIA AND MONTENEGRO/ KOSOVO

14 July 2005

Appeal No. 05AA065

Appeal Target: CHF 3,080,400 (USD 2.39 million or EUR 1.98 million)

Programme Update No. 1 <[Click here for Kosovo programme update](#)>

Period covered: January to June, 2005

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### In Brief

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#### Programme Summary:

The Serbia and Montenegro Red Cross Society (SMRCS) is in transition, following the transition the state union is going through. Even though it is as yet unclear whether Montenegro and Serbia will part ways in 2006, there is an obvious separation of policies, finances, markets etc. The national society is restructuring: the new statutes of SMRCS have been adopted transferring as many operational responsibilities to the republic organisations as possible while retaining policy issues at headquarters level. Recognition of the changing environment resulted in a new Organisational Development plan for the following three years. This document identifies priority areas and

general directions of the work, while the detailed plans of action are still being produced. Remaining activities of the previous Organisational Development programme are being finalised ensuring better communications and financial processing/ reporting between the levels of the organisation.

Simultaneously, the ongoing shift in operational priorities means the activities of the Red Cross are increasingly planned for the long term, built around recognised community needs and based on input and contributions from the community. Relief assistance is, sadly still needed with the largest refugee population in Europe (140,000 refugees and 226,000 Internally Displaced People), severe poverty (10% of the population below the poverty line of 4 USD per day) and ubiquitous unemployment (30-35%). The most vulnerable population is assisted through various programmes which are based on volunteer work and have long term goals. The Home Care Programme, Soup Kitchens Programme, Social Welfare Programme and Vocational Training for Refugees Programme cover some 26,000 beneficiaries assisting them in their daily activities, advocating for their rights, helping them with education or employment and providing food assistance where necessary. All of these activities are well designed to fit Poverty Reduction Strategies now beginning with implementation in both republics, with the Red Cross being part of relevant consultative bodies. Work in Disaster Preparedness has moved beyond equipping and training Red Cross teams to networking with other agencies at local level, helping to improve local disaster response coordination and lobbying for the creation of a national disaster preparedness body.

Legislation-wise, long and exhausting work was invested in both republics into ensuring that draft laws on the Red Cross are prepared. These laws, to be adopted during summer, recognise the Red Cross as an auxiliary to the government, define its public powers and ensure some steady government funding in future. As the organisation struggles to survive in the current environment of retreating donors, this will hopefully introduce some stable foundation on which the national society can build. Red Cross activities are also hampered by the recent introduction of 18% VAT which also applies to humanitarian work and donations.

## **Operational developments**

Over the past three and a half years the Federation has been supporting a shift in national society activities, moving from relief-focused towards community-based service delivery programmes. The presumption was that the changed political environment, the end of conflict and the new economic and social climate would mean improved political and economic stability at the end of the three year programming period, 2001-2004. This also coincided with the end of bulk food distribution, supported by UNHCR, covering 60,000 people in its latest phase at the end of 2003.

The end of large scale relief activities and the related steady funding has posed many challenges for the national society. With Federation support, the NS has simultaneously worked on restructuring itself and adapting to the new environment as well as on providing support to the still large vulnerable population of domicile people, refugees and internally displaced people. Current official statistics list 140,000 refugees (the largest refugee population in Europe) and 226,000 IDPs with 10% of the population living beneath the poverty line and the unemployment rate oscillating between 30 and 35 %. The national society continues to be forced to find ways to meet the needs of this population while at the same time seeking durable solutions for its own legal position, funding and structure.

Community based health and care programmes such as Home Care, Social Welfare, Participatory Community Development, and Soup Kitchens have all relied on local resources (municipal branches and their volunteers) to recognise specific needs of local population and meet them in an optimal way. An average of 9,300 beneficiaries were assisted in their daily activities in Home Care, an average of 1,400 beneficiaries in Social Welfare and approximately 16,000 beneficiaries in Soup Kitchens programme. At the same time, the initiation of HIV/ AIDS awareness projects in eight municipalities is part of the effort to disseminate knowledge and promote healthy lifestyles among population at risk.

The Disaster Preparedness programme, on the other hand aims to strengthen the communities to be prepared and able to respond to emergencies and disasters, using their own resources. While in the past, the Federation focused on training and equipping Red Cross disaster response teams, the new challenge is integration into existing structures. The focus of the Municipal Disaster Preparedness programme this year is helping to coordinate work of agencies acting in emergencies, with Red Cross being part of a consolidated effort. Tabletop disaster simulations

with participants of all relevant actors at municipal level help share information, identify overlaps, gaps and opportunities for improvement of local disaster response systems.

Advocacy and representation are two areas of action that have increasingly gained importance in the national society's (NS) work, be it through local level activities (advocating on behalf of Roma and disabled through Social Welfare programme) or through inter-agency networking (such as Elderly Advocacy Network, Poverty Reduction Strategy Advisory Group, refugee advocacy campaign). Part of the shift from relief-based work to community-based work, advocacy and representation are largely still areas where the national society needs support in the form of advice, training and examples of good practices.

At the same time, the national society keeps searching for ways to restructure itself internally and reposition itself externally in order to be more efficient and properly recognised as a partner by other actors. Ongoing Organisational Development activities aim to increase the efficiency, reliability and accountability of the NS, positioning it properly in the wider context of the country, region and world. The developments are slow, not least due to the fact that the national society on all levels is struggling to survive – lack of steady funding for its core activities being the most frequently cited problem. An understanding of the necessity to change the structure to accommodate to the new funding environment is emerging, but very slowly. A decade of steady relief-related funding has left its mark.

## 1. Health and care

**Goal:** The quality of life of particular vulnerable populations is increased. The general public awareness of at-risk behaviours is raised and as a result, the behaviour is changed.

**Objective:** The national society is recognised as a credible, influential actor within the sphere of health and care, delivering sustainable services for vulnerable people, representing and advocating for them and promoting healthy lifestyles.

### Home Care

**Expected results:** Empowered local communities working through Red Cross branches identify and provide services to up to 10,000 vulnerable elderly people, advocating for their rights and providing them with assistance and support to maintain the dignity of their lives in their own homes. The sustainability of the programme is increased; branches have more sustainable resources to deliver the service and there is a national framework for support.

Running from January 2002, Home care has grown into one of the biggest programmes of the national society. Currently covering 96 municipalities across the country, the programme continually provides much needed assistance in and around the house for more than 9,000 beneficiaries. The following table contains some essential data:

Month	Beneficiaries	Professionals	Volunteers	Prof. visits	Volunteer visits
January	9,099	149	1,760	6,880	23,441
February	9,032	161	1,659	7,199	22,851
March	9,156	156	1,723	7,131	23,507
April	9,212	151	1,610	7,194	22,872
May	9,148	158	1,660	7,123	22,979
June	9,016	157	1,588	7,593	22,579

Home care covers mostly elderly singles or couples with low social security and fragile health. Services range from help in and around the house, through referral to adequate public services/ information about the rights the beneficiaries are entitled to, to helping with socialising (Red Cross elderly clubs etc.)

The ongoing training of Home Care volunteers continued with 38 branches attending retraining seminars in January and February. These branches have been active in the programme for the last three years so the training covered advanced topics such as help to helpers, techniques for communication with persons suffering chronic illnesses, supporting independence, basics of evaluation and day care centres. Further training will take place by the end of the year, making sure the volunteers are properly skilled for the tasks they are undertaking, but also serving as an incentive for many of them to continue being involved with the programme.

The main focus recently in Home Care was efforts to ensure the long term sustainability of the activities and further development of the programme. Two external evaluations of the programme were done, in March and April, supported by and on behalf of British and Spanish Red Cross respectively. Both evaluations confirmed the general direction of the programme and offered a host of recommendations for further development over the next three years. [<click here for the BRC evaluation report>](#) Some of the important recommendations are:

- establishing a more refined assessment mechanism, using the participatory methodology
- refining the categories by which the support to implementing branches is divided to ensure equity
- developing a workable and realistic volunteer strategy, including specific task-based job descriptions for volunteers, schemes to show how volunteers can feed back on either the programme or their volunteering experience
- establishing mechanisms for branches to share experiences and expertise
- establishing a qualitative monitoring system and a pool of experts in the programme

The recommendations were carefully studied by the programme team and reflected in the plan of action outlining further work in 2005.

Looking to identify ways for branches to sustain the programme with reduced or no external funding, a market study was done in April. This study looked for the opportunities for branches implementing the Home Care programme to provide such services commercially, to paying customers, as a way of supporting the main activities in it. The results of the study [<click here for the BRC evaluation report>](#) show which type of the environment grants most success as well as give a set of guidelines for branches to start their commercially-based projects. It was recognised that commercially-based Home Care projects are only likely to be successful in an urban environment. The decision was made to start pilot-projects in two branches (Kragujevac and Novi Beograd), giving these branches limited initial support and having them set examples and procedures that can later be replicated in other similar branches. These two branches are preparing business plans and budgets and are to start their pilot-projects in autumn.

Elderly Advocacy Network, 'Humanitas', a network of non-governmental organisations (including the Red Cross of Serbia) dealing with the elderly population, has continued meeting and addressing the government on behalf of their beneficiaries. So far, a representative of the network was accepted into the government Elderly Council, ensuring an influence on subsequent policies. Negotiations with the government for funding a TV programme dealing with elderly issues are ongoing.

### **Impact**

The programme has provided constant care and assistance to more than 9,000 elderly, vulnerable beneficiaries. The pressure on the health and social welfare systems is enormous due to the situation in the country. Red Cross programmes such as this, based on the work of dedicated, trained volunteers, contribute to improved health, social situation and dignity of life of the most vulnerable individuals. The governments in Serbia and in Montenegro recognise the results of the programme and are acknowledging the work being done: in Montenegro, Home Care Programme is one of the public powers granted to the Red Cross in the draft Red Cross law; in Serbia, the Ministry of Labour, Employment and Social Affairs participates in many public advocacy and awareness raising events, alongside Red Cross and other sister organisations involved with the Elderly Advocacy Network.

Simultaneously, through evaluation and subsequent adjustment of plans/ activities, the programme is moving towards better efficiency and increased sustainability.

## Constraints

The political and economic situation in the country is still very difficult. Most branches do not have steady sources of income and are only slowly becoming aware of the need to structure themselves differently/ rethink their modus operandi. Most of the branches are good at implementation but need to improve their project design/ proposal/ reporting skills.

Moreover, the federal organisation, as well as the republic ones, has similar problems – staff structure that needs to be improved, constant shortage of funding and a need to update many management skills. The Red Cross laws in both republics will come as part blessing and part curse – providing some steady funding but demanding a level of business management the national society was not used to so far.

## Social Welfare

**Expected results:** The needs and rights of the socially marginalised are represented and advocated for through co-ordinated local community efforts focusing through Red Cross branches. The mental health and quality of life of some 3,000 Roma and disabled children and their families is improved and they become closer to being fully integrated into society.



*A Roma Kindergarten*

The Social Welfare programme (SWP) has entered 2005 with fifty fully operational local projects, its two main project branches targeting Roma preschool children and children with disabilities.

The Roma kindergarten project is being implemented by 30 RC branches of the NS. In total, this project encompasses 572 Roma preschool children and 375 parents. The project seeks to change the attitude of the Roma towards the school system, prepare children for school and enable them to realise their potential. Red Cross volunteers and professionals work with children and help them prepare for the mainstream school environment, get used to working with school equipment, and develop trust and a wish to enter primary education.

The Support to children with disabilities project is being implemented by 20 RC branches of the NS. In total, this project encompasses 285 children with disabilities and 201 parents. In many cases families keep disabled children indoors, out of the public eye and thus exclude them from day to day society. The volunteer-based workshops, supported by the Federation and bilaterally, in this project aim to encourage and facilitate the social integration of disabled children as well as their skills development.

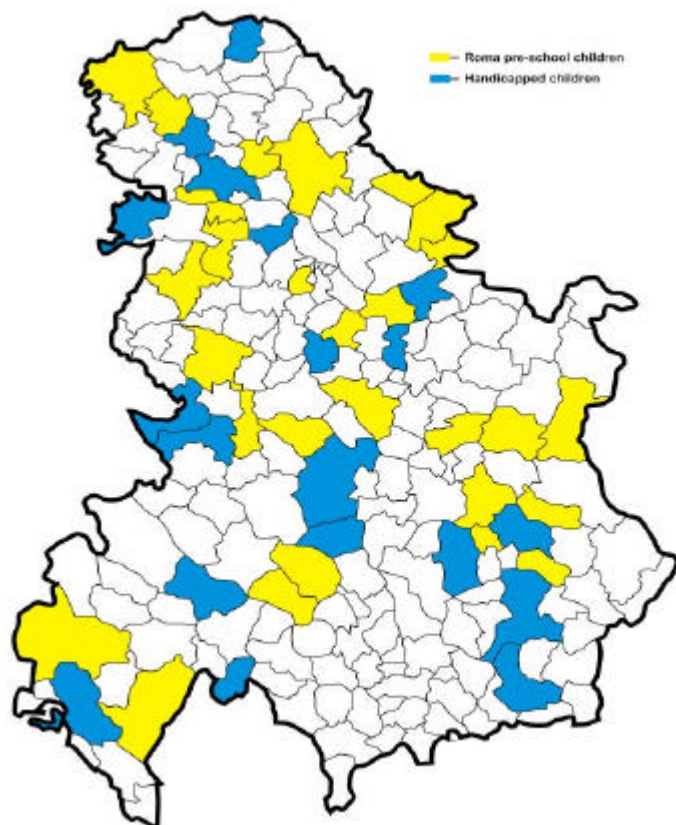
Project	Children	Adults	Total
<b>Roma Kindergarten</b>	572	375	947
<b>Children w/ disabilities</b>	285	201	486
<b>Overall</b>	857	576	1433

In 2005, manuals for both projects have been published and distributed to the implementing branches to support volunteers in service. In addition, all branches of the NS were supplied with the '303 learning activities' toolkits to improve the educational programmes in local projects. These toolkits contain 303 different educational games and animation techniques and are made for workshop facilitators. For the purpose of project promotion, the poster on Roma kindergartens has been published and distributed to branches.

Upon preliminary discussion with the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation, the main donor of the programme, the selection process started in April to expand the programme with 22 more branches. All branches of the NS have been invited to express an interest in local projects implementation targeting either Roma preschool children or children with disabilities and to adapt the project concept to local community needs. The important feature of this invitation was a detailed and transparent procedure, including standard project proposal

forms, dates and a commission making decisions transparently. In total, 51 RC branches have submitted 56 local project proposals. Selection was done according to the needs and capacities demonstrated in the local project documents.

The external evaluation of the Social welfare programme encompassing the Roma kindergarten project and Support to children living with disabilities project took place in March. [<Click here for Roma Kindergarten evaluation report>](#)



After evaluation, the SWP is entering a reprogramming phase to improve the programme set up and its effectiveness and to enable the NS to demonstrate overall impact of the programme to the relevant ministries and government.

## Impact

The implementation of local projects has ensured an access of Roma children to preschool education in 30 municipalities of Serbia and Montenegro. Knowledge, skills and abilities of some 572 Roma children have been brought to the level needed for the enrolment in the first grade of elementary school. Work and support to parents have contributed to improvement of learning conditions of Roma children enrolled in the kindergartens. The educational programmes in the Roma kindergartens have raised self confidence of Roma children while joint social activities with peers of non-Roma population have reduced prejudices towards Roma children in the communities where the projects are running. Up to 85% of children who attend Roma kindergartens end up enrolling in primary school which is significantly higher than the usual enrolment among Roma (anywhere between 5% and 50% depending on the region), but the true test will be the rate of drop outs over the next years.

The implementation of local projects has ensured the access of children with disabilities to community services in 20 municipalities of Serbia and Montenegro. In total, 285 children with disabilities have been supported to develop/ improve everyday skills resulting in improved self-confidence and reduced impairment. Family members, mainly parents, have acquired knowledge and skills needed to support the family member living with disabilities through participation in psychosocial support workshops. The implementing branches managed to initiate and encourage local associations of people living with disabilities and local governments to take an active

role and to carry out various actions for the benefit of the people with disabilities such as wheelchair ramps in public places and employment initiatives in the municipality of Vrbas.

### **Constraints**

The financial management and reporting in the branches need to be upgraded especially when dealing with a non-Movement donor on a large scale. SDC might demand tighter financial discipline in terms of transparency and reporting and the accountability of the programme and the Red Cross must not be jeopardised.

### **Health promotion**

**Expected results:** Public awareness of the benefits of healthy lifestyles is raised through health promotion activities which encourage a more strategic approach and position the national society as an auxiliary to government.

In 2004, a Branch capacity building fund was set up to support branches to implement projects on HIV/AIDS prevention. All branches of the NS were invited to an open competition jointly organized by the NS and Federation delegation. Strict procedures and a transparent selection process, including sharing guidelines and forms with interested branches, gave a total of eight projects to be supported.

The results of this open competition enable the national society to demonstrate the interest of the Red Cross in HIV/AIDS prevention to key stakeholders in Serbia and Montenegro, as well as to define the scope of activities branch volunteers are interested in regarding this issue. This will lead to the development of the NS strategy on HIV/AIDS, based on best practices. Moreover, the experiences gathered through this process (designed to be as transparent as possible), especially at branch level will serve as a basis for the improvement of the project design cycle in future.

In the first half of the year, the implementing branches went through detailed planning and budgeting of their projects and the actual implementation is ongoing. At the same time, their work is continually evaluated and analysed with a double aim: to create guidelines about project design/ management/ reporting for other branches, as well as to produce a concept paper on the national society's HIV/ AIDS strategy. Some activities in the programme that contribute to both aims are:

- Kovin branch has developed a training programme for educators and educational programme on HIV/AIDS for elementary and high school students.
- Sremska Mitrovica branch developed a training programme for educators and educational programme on HIV/AIDS for Roma population.
- Trstenik branch has started work to develop procedures on condom vending machine maintenance.
- Ruma branch theatric performance "Virus" and Šid branch theatric performance "What a cheerful day" were performed and screenplays were submitted to the HQ.

All of these developments are to be compiled into a unified strategy/ methodology of the national society. The branch projects are to be finished by October. Another cycle of projects, based on the evaluation of the current round is planned for later in the year.

There are ongoing discussions with the Youth of JAZAS (leading Serbian NGO in the area of youth peer education on HIV/AIDS) about possible partnership with the Red Cross of Serbia and future work in this field. Since both organizations implement youth peer education on HIV/AIDS, this partnership might avert possible competitive relationships and overlapping and reinforce the achievements of both organizations in their work. Furthermore, establishing such a partnership might be a good exercise for the Red Cross of Serbia in establishing the partnerships on the basis of signed Memorandum of Understanding with NGOs. A draft of the Memorandum of Understanding has been written.

## **Impact**

The projects in branches are due to be finished and fully evaluated in September. This is when the full impact will be identified. In the meantime, the programme has an important organisational development undercurrent to it. The standardisation of project proposals, management, reporting and other procedures is an important step forward for the national society as improvements in this area are desperately needed. Refining these procedures through this project and then replicating them at all levels of the national society is an important activity in its own right.

## **Constraints**

The uncertainty of future funding. The programme needs more time for the best ideas to crystallise and then be replicated/ expanded into a national society strategy.

## **2. Disaster Management**

**Goal:** The country's most vulnerable refugees, IDPs and socially vulnerable people maintain their dignity, their minimum living standards and are well nourished. The effects of local and national disasters are mitigated by a rapid, well-resourced and coordinated response mechanism.

**Objective:** The national society continues to provide cost effective relief assistance (food and non-food) to beneficiaries in need, while strengthening its capacity to be prepared for, and respond to emergency situations.

### **Disaster preparedness**

**Expected Results:** A well-integrated disaster management system is further developed with a network of disaster response teams who receive higher training, are equipped and able to provide rapid assistance and host international relief teams and emergency response units. The role of the national society within a national and regional disaster management plan is clearly defined. A legal framework for disaster response is continually addressed and reshaped to bring further clarity to roles, commitments and duties within the national disaster preparedness system. 36 municipalities particularly vulnerable to disaster will undergo Municipal Emergency Management Improvement (MEMI) Methodology exercises in order to strengthen co-ordination of preparedness, mitigation and response between agencies at local level.

Tabletop disaster simulation exercises were organised in municipalities of Zajecar, Vranje and Raska.. All the simulations were organised by the Red Cross and involved representatives from each public service (Medical Emergency service, Fire brigade, Police department, Civil protection, Local government, in addition to the RC branch secretary and disaster preparedness, DP, team leader) to an average of 16 participants per simulation. The project objectives and the previous experience were presented to the participants along with the DP capacities of the national society, the Red Cross of Serbia as well as the local branch, explaining the role and strengths of Red Cross in local, regional and global context. The present situation in the municipality, the communication and co-ordination level were discussed and a majority of participants agreed that it was essential to establish a municipal Disaster Management team managed by the municipality authorities with representatives from all key services including Red Cross.

For each of the simulation exercises a scenario was developed according to risks analysis and disaster history, thus rooting the simulated events in reality and getting realistic reactions from the participants. Preparations for follow-up meetings in the municipalities that had already completed simulations begun, and these should be completed by the end of August. These meetings should gather all participants of the simulations, to discuss the progress against action plans resulting from the simulation exercises. The results will be used for updating the methodology of future simulations, as well as the project itself. Two branches in Montenegro have been identified and the preparatory work on the actual simulation and their implementation will start in September.

## Impact

Red Cross is no longer an isolated disaster preparedness actor. In municipalities where the simulations were completed there is a far deeper understanding of roles and responsibilities of each interested party with a place for and expectation from the Red Cross to make its contribution. Moreover, the republic authorities take an active role in this project, participating in local meetings and simulations. This ensures a good position for the Red Cross in the future republic disaster preparedness bodies and legislation. It is hoped that this pilot project will ultimately serve as blueprint for structuring a government endorsed programme for the improvement of disaster management coordination.

## Constraints

Besides uncertain future funding, political instability is another potentially dangerous factor. Change of administration often leads to change of many of the key staff in the services relevant for this programme, as well as policies and procedures.

## Soup Kitchens

**Expected results:** The Federation assists the national society to ensure the effective management, monitoring and reporting for the soup kitchen project, which delivers hot meals to 16,000 soup kitchen beneficiaries per month with support from bilateral National Societies, government and other donors.

This year's Soup Kitchens programme was the continuation of the winter programme started in December 2004. It was successfully completed in May 2005. Covering five regions with the biggest food assistance need (Vojvodina, Sabac, Pozarevac, Kraljevo and Nis), the programme was active in 58 municipalities, providing over 350,000 meals for over 16,000 beneficiaries every month. Beneficiaries received one hot meal per day, five to six days a week (an average of 23 days per month). As an accompaniment, beneficiaries also received half a loaf of bread per day. All meals were prepared either at Red Cross kitchens or in contracted facilities. Municipal level commissions, consisting of Red Cross, local government and Social Welfare Centre representatives, were in charge of beneficiary selection (according to the criteria set by the government) and reviewed the beneficiary lists each month to ensure only the most vulnerable are covered.



*A Soup Kitchen in Vojvodina*

Following the excellent results of the last winter's programme, the government of Serbia has decided to assist the current programme with the provision of six food items and a fixed amount of funds to cover distribution costs. This was an encouraging gesture and as a result, the need for external assistance was reduced and the sustainability of the programme increased – around 60% of the branches participating in the programme have continued with the programme and will be going on during summer using the remaining stocks of food and available financial support from the municipal governments and other external donors.

The Red Cross of Serbia is optimistic that the programme will continue and have made it clear to the Federation that they regard the Soup kitchen programme as a priority for the future. The Red Cross of Serbia is also strongly counting on further Government support.

## Impact

The Soup Kitchens programme was designed to meet the needs of vulnerable people in regions recognised as socially depressed (especially true for the southern part of Serbia). The beneficiaries, most of them poor Roma

families were assisted with one hot meal per day, which alleviated the effect of high winter food prices (compared to their income) and ensured a minimum calorific intake needed for this season. The idea to link the activities in the Soup Kitchens programme with the activities of Home care and Social Welfare programmes is still valid. However, at the moment the government seems to be keen on supporting the “pure” Soup Kitchen activities. Further discussions will hopefully convey the advantages of crossover between programmes.

### Constraints

No funding has been officially confirmed for the next winter cycle.

## Vocational Training for Refugees

**Expected results:** The Federation assists the national society to provide 150 beneficiaries - unemployed refugees and social cases - with vocational training, as a result increasing their chances of permanent employment. Networking with local partners (Red Cross branches, National Employment Agency, Adult Education College) will ensure the appropriate direction of the training, the proper follow up as well as the proper level of advocacy.

To enable refugees who have opted for local integration to compete on the labour market (increasing their self-sufficiency), the Federation supports the National Society in implementing a programme of vocational training to refugees. The choice of actual skills is made in co-operation with National Employment Agency branches, based on their statistics of skills currently sought. The Red Cross is co-ordinating the training, the selection of beneficiaries and, most important of all, the follow-up. Project agreement has been signed and the training courses started in January 2005. The first round was finished in April and here are the results

RC branch	Courses organised	Number of beneficiaries participated	Training provider
<b>Cukarica</b>	Driving courses C/D level	10	CeKa - Car school
<b>Zvezdara</b>	Driving courses C/D level	10	CeKa - Car school
<b>Sombor</b>	Mason	10	School for adult education Sombor
<b>Stara Pazova</b>	Computer training	24	BB Soft
<b>Ruma</b>	Computer training	10	Alfa Soft

A total of 64 beneficiaries were trained by the end of the first round of courses. So far, 38 of these have been able to find permanent or temporary employment with their newly acquired certificates, with another four starting their own private business, which makes for 65% in the first two months after training completion. The second training cycle started in June after a reassessment of the job market situation in the five implementing municipalities (involving the National Employment Agency).

### Impact

So far the success has been encouraging, taking into account the general level of unemployment in the country. 65% of all the trained beneficiaries have been able to find employment within sixty days of completing training.

### Constraints

The situation with employment in general is not improving, which naturally means difficulties for the beneficiaries of this project as well.

## Asylum seekers

**Expected results:** The Federation assists the national society in providing assistance to and advocating for asylum seekers in the country, integrating with European initiatives and co-operating closely with the authorities on a legal framework.

The national society has conducted regular visits to the 'Shelter for Aliens', namely, the Centre for irregular foreign migrants in Padinska Skela, near Belgrade, once a month since March 2004 when the Memorandum of Understanding was signed with the Serbian Ministry of Interior. During these visits, representatives of the national society have been able to speak with the occupants of the shelter in privacy in order to find out their needs and review their treatment by detention authorities. Some humanitarian assistance has also been distributed such as hygienic products and phone cards (to help restore family links).

In cooperation with the Ministry of Human and Minority Rights of Serbia and Montenegro, the national society organized a Conference on Readmission addressing the issue of rejected asylum seekers/ returnees from European countries. Participants were from diplomatic, NGO and political circles in Belgrade and Podgorica. Coordination of activities with responsible authorities has been conducted through SMRCS Working Group on Migrations, consisting of representatives of the Red Cross of Serbia, the Red Cross of Montenegro, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Serbia and Montenegro and Ministry of Human and Minority Rights of Serbia and Montenegro. After the invitation of the Serbian Ministry of Interior, SMRCS became a member of the national Anti-Trafficking Team, which put together prominent governmental and non-governmental partners involved in the prevention of human trafficking. As an outcome of all this, the national society is considering the introduction of two more categories of migrants within its plan of action, namely former refugees/ returnees from European countries and victims of human trafficking. Bilateral contacts with Danish and Swedish Red Cross Societies have already started in order to create suitable projects addressing these target groups. Concerns and intentions in this regard have been shared with the ECRE and PERCO members during their mid-term meetings held in Hungary and Brussels, respectively.

### Impact

The difficult period of detention for asylum seekers has been somewhat alleviated. The Red Cross helped decrease psychological tension through reestablishment of family links. Additionally there was successful prevention of diseases spreading among the detainees through provision of hygienic products and clothes.

Mass media have been regularly briefed about the abovementioned activities. The general public, aware of the long-lasting Red Cross activities with refugees from the sub-region (Bosnia-Herzegovina and Croatia), has been gradually introduced to other categories of migrants. Some NGOs have commenced information campaigns in order to raise awareness on the issue of human trafficking and its victims. Recently adopted federal Law on Asylum contributed progressively to the broader understanding of the problem of asylum, migrations and European standards in the treatment of these persons. As an auxiliary to the authorities, SMRCS offered its services to address some of the needs of these categories. In addition, by advocating for rights of detained irregular migrants and promoting humanitarian standards, the national society is now one step closer to fully working with all relevant actors to improve their accommodation and treatment.

### Constraints

All of the enlisted activities have been conducted from the federal level of the national society. Precisely, it has been done from the International Department by one employee, assisted by another employee from the Red Cross of Serbia and volunteers from the SMRCS Working Group on Migrations. A new Statutes of SMRCS, adopted in June puts future engagement on migrations issues at the HQ level, too. However, a slight increase of capacities might come as a result of the new intentions to respond to the needs of returnees (readmission procedure) and victims in human trafficking. In general, there have been increasing efforts of the authorities to accelerate the process of harmonization of national legal instruments with the EU legislations, which will affect further Red Cross activities with foreign migrants positively.

### 3. Humanitarian values

The International Decade of Roma Inclusion (a regional initiative) was officially launched in Belgrade, in April. With a focus on education, corresponding well with the Roma Open Kindergarten programme, the Red Cross is well placed to be a key player in this important initiative. It fits well with the Poverty Reduction Strategy (see section 5. of this report) and the Roma Strategy and could be a significant opportunity for the whole region. The SMRCS and the Federation hosted a Roma programming planning meeting, involving the representatives of neighbouring national societies, regional and Geneva Federation representatives, as well as the representatives of the important partner and donor national societies. Ideas and plans were shared. Further activities will probably have to wait for September and the official start of the implementation of the Decade of Roma inclusion.

### 4. Organisational Development

The three-year work in the Organisational development programme of the national society in Serbia and Montenegro was evaluated in mid-2004. The results of the evaluation, presented through a series of recommendations for the development of the national society have served as a basis for planning the new cycle of the Organisational development programme. During autumn 2004 Serbia and Montenegro Red Cross Society has, with support of the delegation of the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, organised a series of workshops devoted to the planning process. Representatives from all levels of the national society participating in these workshops have through methodical work analysed the current position of the organisation, looked over the results of activities so far and identified the priority areas of organisational development in the next three years period.

The five identified priority areas over the next three years are based in these recommendations but they also reflect the ideas of the members of the national society about the continuing development of the organisation. The five identified priority areas of development are: human resources, legal base, financing, programme focus and public relations. Coordinated work in these five areas should at the end of the three year period bring forth significant, important changes for the national society. Concentrated efforts of Red Cross people from all levels will bring forth the following results:

- Modern new structure of the organisation
- Staff being more skilled and more motivated
- Well defined role in the society and flawless public image
- Stable financial basis
- Efficiently managed programmes targeting the most vulnerable population with optimal resource utilisation and maximum impact

After identifying five priority areas and setting general goals for each of them the workshop participants have been hard at work finding out ways to achieve these goals. The final product of the last workshop was the draft plans of action for each of the priority areas. These drafts were afterwards systematised and formatted and as such presented to the Federal Board of Serbia and Montenegro Red Cross Society. At the moment the planning process is nearing its end: selected staff members are creating the final versions of plans that will contain lists of activities, specified expected results, precise timeframe and defined budgets. The delegation of the International Federation will invest its efforts into presenting these finalised project proposals to all potential donors and thus assist the national society in financing and implementing the plans.

Meanwhile, the remaining activities from the previous programme cycle are being finalised.

**The Finance development project** is finished in Serbia. The unified accounting software package has finally been completed and approved by testers in the Red Cross of Serbia. This tool is installed and has been successfully tested at 17 pilot locations. The replication to 100 branches is going on at the moment. At the same time, financial staff of these hundred branches underwent the training for the use of the new financial procedures as well as the software package, with the final training session in April. This marks a new era in the financial processing and management in the Red Cross of Serbia, ensuring greater levels of transparency and accountability.

In Montenegro, this project has finally started. Having experiences from Serbia, it all goes faster this time around. The software was developed by the same company that did it for Serbia, the software training was finished in one session and the installation in all the branches is going on at the moment. Financial procedures developed for the Red Cross of Serbia and SMRCS last year have been shared with the Red Cross of Montenegro and will be adapted to fit the legislation there. This will be followed by another cycle of training for the use of procedures.

**The IT and Communications project** is practically finished in the Red Cross of Serbia with the equipping and establishment of Internet/ e-mail accounts in more than one hundred branches. The activities in the reporting period were mostly aimed at refining the work of the communications system in the Red Cross of Serbia (LAN revision, recommended software packages and maintenance procedures, hiring the new IT manager for the secretariat, improving LAN security) and the plans for the rest of the year include redesign of the RCS website, as well as standardisation of business software in all the branches.

In Montenegro, this project was simultaneous with the Finance Development one. All branches in Montenegro have been equipped with appropriate equipment and the staff underwent appropriate training. At the moment, implementation of Internet connections is taking place.

**Youth and Volunteering project** activities included further work on the eight pilot modules to be the seed of the future Unified Training System for volunteers. Branch volunteers have worked on the production of these modules and a workshop was held to discuss the results and consolidate the formats/ contents of these modules. Three of the modules have been finalised and are in preparation for printing.

**Funding & Fundraising: Commercial First Aid** project made little progress as the national society is still working on finalising the federal First Aid manual. The Red Cross of Montenegro has prepared its training programme aimed at learner drivers. Possible invitation to the Red Cross in both republics to participate in competition for the provision of First Aid training depends on the revision of several laws.

Belgian Red Cross (Flemish section) will support the project in the second part of the year. A visit of the Belgian Red Cross First Aid expert is tentatively agreed for September.

## **5. Coordination, Cooperation, and Strategic Partnerships. Effective Representation and Advocacy**

**Goal:** In partnership with civil society and the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, the national society is able to deliver appropriate, needs-led, volunteer delivered assistance to persons in need, in a cost-effective and transparent manner.

**Objective:** To develop a set of clearly defined national society operational priorities that accurately reflect national society capacity and added value and that are understood, respected and supported by a diverse range of partner organisations.

**Expected Result:** Restated national society priorities serve as the platform for improving cooperation within the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, with government and with other partners

The presence of different national societies in the country has diminished over the years after the end of conflicts in the region. However, several long-time partners have remained present and active, namely Spanish Red Cross, working closely with the Federation on the Home care programme. Norwegian Red Cross have returned for another phase of their Emergency Medical Services programme and Luxembourg Red Cross has renewed its service agreement with the Federation and continued its micro-credits programme for failed asylum seekers returnees to Serbia and Montenegro. Austrian Red Cross have agreed bilateral co-operation with Red Cross of Vojvodina for the third phase of construction at the Vrsacki Breg children's home. Danish Red Cross have worked with the Red Cross of Montenegro on preparing a project proposal for the European Agency for Reconstruction, targeting Roma population in Konik camp.

The partnership between the national society, Federation and Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation in the Roma Kindergarten project has continued in 2005. SDC expressed their dedication to fund the project over the next three years period as it fits their strategic plans on Roma community. However, with the expiration of the Programme Agreement in March this year, the renewed document was not signed, due to the delegation waiting for the results of the project evaluation, prior to applying for further funding. The application was submitted in June, along with the evaluation results. The project is currently on hold until SDC Geneva officially approves further funding. It is expected that the continuation of funding and therefore the official continuation of programme activities starts in September.

One of the most important events in Serbia has been the official launch of Poverty Reduction Strategy, an initiative taken by the previous government, supported by numerous international partners and kept on hold for a year by the current government. Finally, in February 2005, implementation officially started with the current government taking the responsibility. The actual activities will only be a part of the 2006 government budget, but 2005 is being used for devising detailed plans of activities. The Federation participated in discussions as part of the International Development Partners Advisory Committee, while Red Cross of Serbia is part of the Civil Society Advisory Committee. The Federation also took part in several meetings of the International NGOs group, producing and sharing a set of recommendations with the PRS focal point in the government. Through its work in programmes targeting the poor (Soup Kitchens, Social Welfare, Home Care), Red Cross of Serbia has vast experience and is counted as one of the most reliable partners in future implementation of PRS activities.

Significant work was invested by the Federation in both republics on advocating for the laws on Red Cross. In Montenegro, the Federation Head of Delegation was part of the working group producing the draft law documents and in Serbia several meetings with the officials responsible for this document were held. The final drafts of both laws clearly define roles of the Red Cross organisations as auxiliary agencies to the government, particularly in areas related to the Poverty Reduction Strategy. Both laws are expected to be adopted by republican parliaments during summer, granting to both republic an Red Cross organisations clear legal base for their work, a defined set of public powers and some steady funding.

# ***KOSOVO PROGRAMME***

## **In Brief**

**Appeal No: 05AA065; Programme Update no. 1:**

**Period covered: 1 January to 30 June 2005**

**Appeal target for Kosovo (as part of Serbia & Montenegro appeal): CHF 857,138**

### **Summary**

The Federation Kosovo Office, consisting of one delegate and four local staff members in Pristina and one in Mitrovica North to cover all Serb municipalities, supports the two Red Cross organizations in Kosovo, the Red Cross of Kosova (RCK) and the Red Cross of Kosovo and Metohija (RCKM). Both Red Cross organizations are assisting the most vulnerable people in Kosovo through different activities.

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*This Programme Update reflects activities to be implemented over a one-year period. This forms part of, and is based on, longer-term, multi-year planning (refer below to access the detailed logframe documents). All International Federation assistance seeks to adhere to the [Code of Conduct](#) and is committed to the [Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Disaster Response](#) in delivering assistance to the most vulnerable. For support to or for further information concerning Federation programmes or operations in this or other countries, or for a full description of the national society profile, please access the Federation's website at <http://www.ifrc.org>*

## **Operational developments**

The Federation Office provided support to the Red Cross of Kosova (RCK) in organizing their second post-war Assembly, in March 2005. The new Presidency was elected for a 4-year mandate. The Assembly also adopted new Statutes, Mission and Vision statements. In addition, a framework was accepted as a basis for finalising a three-year Strategy Plan.

From March through April, the British Red Cross, supported by the International Federation undertook Participatory Action Research (PAR) with the RCK. The research was conducted in two branches, Gjakova and Kacanik, with the full support and participation of RCK headquarters. The purpose of the research was to identify ways to improve the current RCK Social Welfare Programme by listening to vulnerable groups and employing alternative research methods to identify their strengths and capacities.

The research targeted the following groups identified by the RCK: social cases, single female-headed households, elderly, families of the missing, youth and disabled.

After over three weeks of identifying the strengths, capacities, weaknesses and challenges of these targeted groups, the PAR research team prioritized the following three groups for the social welfare programme, based on a multi-

step ranking process over the research period: youth; single female-headed households; and the elderly. Activities will be supported by the British Red Cross over next three years.

Both the Federation and RCK key staff worked on a 2-year planning programme feeding into the Appeal 2006/07. As part of this process, a planning meeting was held in Red Cross of Macedonia Education Centre in Struga. The planning work was done in a participatory way with the involvement of all RCK programme coordinators.

The assessment for the Home Care programme is underway in both Red Cross organizations. So far the branches are identifying elderly who will be included and volunteers who will be engaged in activities.

Several meetings were held with the KFOR Civil and Military Cooperation (CIMIC) and Liaison and Monitoring Teams (LMT) and other stakeholders for their possible involvement in the programme. For example, it was agreed that in emergency cases the Red Cross organisations can ask for helicopter support to provide assistance. The programme will require cooperation and support from the Ministry of Social Welfare.

The Federation office was visited by the British Red Cross, Head of Budapest Regional Delegation, Western and Central Europe Department Regional Officer from Geneva and Budapest Regional Health Coordinator. Additionally two meetings were held with the Finnish Liaison Office in Kosovo to discuss future cooperation.

## **Update existing 2005 Appeal programme Health and Care**

### **Goal:**

The general health and the well-being of the population are improved.



*Staying fresh: health education instructors keep up their skills at a refresher training.*

### **Objective:**

Red Cross health programmes in Kosovo have contributed to improved general health of the population.

### **Achievements, impact & constraints.**

- Red Cross health programme has improved awareness on HIV/AIDS and sexually transmitted diseases as well as danger of various addictions (drug abuse, alcohol and smoking).

**Projects to achieve this expected result are still being designed by the branches. Once proposals are submitted both RCK and Federation will choose the best projects to be implemented.**

- The branches are organizing health education courses and the awareness of the women and children participating in the courses on health topics is improved significantly.

The refreshment training for Family Health Education (FHE) instructors was completed in the beginning of May. Altogether 87 RCK FHE instructors, including Serbian and Roma, participated in seven trainings facilitated by the National Institute for Public Health and the Ministry of Health.

At the same time both the Federation and RCK are working with the National Institute for Public Health to finalize the health education training manual for the instructors. Manuals will be printed in both Albanian and Serbian languages.

In addition, three meetings were held with the Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Health (MoH) to discuss their involvement in the project. A draft Memorandum of Understanding was finalized by the RCK and Federation and sent to the MoH for review. It is assumed that the Memorandum between the RCK and MoH will be signed in July.

In June, 720 women participated in 60 courses organized by the FHE instructors. The existing training modules for courses include; personal hygiene, family planning, prenatal care, pregnancy and delivery, HIV/AIDS and STDs, nutrition and baby care.

Month	Courses held	Participants
<i>June</i>	<i>60</i>	<i>720</i>

**Table:** Number of courses and participants in FHE courses

- Branches have offered a better volunteer-based social welfare service that improves the wellbeing of vulnerable communities.

No activities were organized in SW due to involvement in the Participatory Action Research with the British Red Cross.

However, the HQ identified two branches for implementation of moral support groups for the family of missing persons. The groups will start in early September.

#### Traditional activities

Federation provided support to RCK in organizing the 'hygiene month' and celebration for RC/RC Day. The main celebration for the day was organized in Prishtina with the participation of volunteers and other guests from all branches.

- A defined social welfare policy is developed and implemented.

#### **Nothing to date.**

- Red Cross branches have provided first aid courses for children and youth involving all ethnic groups.



*Spreading the word;  
Children have fun at an  
RCK exhibition to mark  
8 May.*

A project proposal for first aid courses has been submitted by the RCK to the Federation. The project aims to provide first aid (FA) courses to school children of all communities (Albanian, Serbian and Roma). It is planned that the courses start in September and will be organized by the FA instructors using previously developed manual for children and youth. The manual is printed both in Albanian and Serbian.

## **Disaster Management**

*See expected results 10 and 11 under OD related to Disaster Management*

## **Organizational Development**

### **Goal**

Better functioning Red Cross organisations that have provided more support to vulnerable communities

### **Objective**

Support Red Cross organisations in their organizational and resource development including restructuring process with stronger and younger staff and volunteers

### **RCK statutes, mission, vision and other legal documents will have been revised and adopted.**

Technical support has been provided to RCK in amending their Statutes based on the Federation Guidelines for national statutes (NS) Statutes. The new revised Statutes, Mission and Vision statements were adopted by the General Assembly (GA), in Pristina on 12 March 2005. (The Federation, ICRC and partner national societies (PNS) participated in the event at the Grand Hotel in Prishtina. The Federation Head of Office (HoO) greeted the GA with a short speech.

The new Central Presidency of RCK was elected. The Presidency 2005 is composed of 15 members including one Kosovar Serb, one Bosnian, one Turkish and one Ashkali. The new elected President of RCK is Prof. Dr. Xhevat Shkodra from Prishtina and the vice-President is Dr. Ilaz Poroshtica from Gjilan.

The diversity of the professions of Presidency members as well as the gender balance were improved in comparison with the Presidency 2001.

The Federation supported the initiative of RCK to have a three-day workshop on Strategy Planning. A local external expert was hired to facilitate this process. The session was an excellent capacity building experience for the RCK.



*Strategy: RCK staff sharpen their planning skills.*

During the workshop, held on 20-22 May 2005, a general framework for the three-year Strategic Plan (2006-2008) was developed that determines the major orientations of Red Cross of Kosova activities. Participants in this workshop were the three Presidency members, one of them from Department for Emergency of the Ministry of Public Services, the RCK Secretary General, HQ programme coordinators, two youth volunteers and one doctor from the Institute for Public Health.

A Strategic Planning Working Group continues to work on developing the 3-year Strategy Plan with related Plan of Action before submitting it to the Central Presidency for review and approval. The approved Strategy and related Plan of Action will be translated and printed in Albanian and Serbian and its dissemination will be organized during the second phase of the branch board member training.

**Relevant training has been provided to newly elected board members in governance and management issues.**

*Increased understanding: new board members and branch secretaries go through their paces on governance.*



The first phase of Local Governance Training by the Federation Office in cooperation with RCK HQ has been organized for the newly elected board members and branch secretaries. The training programme included basic

knowledge of RC Movement, roles and responsibilities of governance and management at the branch level. The seven training events were organized between 20 and 28 June 2005 in different areas of Kosovo. 24 out of 26 branches participated actively with their board members and branch secretaries. The total number of participants was 189. Training of new board members was welcomed by the HQ and participants themselves. The new President of RCK and/or vice-president was present in all trainings. After the training the board members and staff have better understanding of their practical responsibilities. Training for two remaining branches and all RCK HQ staff will be organized in the near future. The programme and schedule of the next part of board member training in the late autumn is being planned.

	<b>Branches</b>	<b>Number of presidency members</b>	<b>Number of members participated</b>
1	Deçan	9	7
2	Dragash	9	6
3	Drenas	9	5
4	Ferizaj	11	10
5	Fushë Kosovë	-	-
6	Gjakovë	13	11
7	Gjilan	11	10
8	Istog	9	3
9	Kamenicë	11	6
10	Kaçanik	9	6
11	Klinë	11	3
12	Lipjan	9	7
13	Malishevë	7	6
14	Mitrovicë	11	11
15	Novo Bërdë	7	3
16	Obiliq	9	1
17	Peja	11	9
18	Podujevë	9	6
19	Prishtinë	13	8
20	Prizren	15	10
21	Rahovec	9	7
22	Shtime	7	6
23	Skenderaj	9	4
24	Suharreke	9	7
25	Viti	9	7
26	Vushtri	9	5
	Branch secretaries	26	25
	<b>Total</b>	<b>271</b>	<b>189</b>

### **The new regional structure has been designed and is functional.**

The Federation provided RCK with a draft new, more sustainable structure as well as better dividing roles and responsibilities of different levels (HQ – Regions – Branches). The RCK reacted positively, but in practice no concrete action has been taken yet.

### **An efficient financial management system is implemented at regional and HQ level.**

The training programme and needed material are designed in cooperation with the RCK Finance Coordinator. At least part of the material will be utilized in the branch board member training in the autumn. An opportunity for more comprehensive training for finance staff at all levels of the RCK organization will be looked at.

**The volunteer policy has been designed and the process of establishing the volunteer management data base is underway.**

Nothing to date.

**Youth policy and strategy has been designed and adopted.**

On 12 April, RCK Central Presidency nominated a Youth Commission with five members. The President of the Youth Commission is Saranda Iberdemaj, female youth volunteer and member of Peja branch Presidency.

The Youth Commission met several times to draft youth policy. The Federation and RCK HQ Youth Coordinator regularly participate in the meetings. The next meeting between the Youth Commission, the Federation, RCK HQ Youth Coordinator and youth volunteers from 26 branches was to be organized on 11 July at the Federation office, Prishtina. The meeting will discuss youth policy and strategy.

**Youth training modules has been designed and relevant trainings are organized for current and future youth volunteers.**

Due to the lack of youth strategy and training modules, relevant trainings were not accomplished.

The RCK youth was invited by the Bavarian RC Youth to participate in the First International Youth Center "Media and Communication: Qualify Yourself!" in Munich, from 21 until 29 May 2005. Five RCK youth volunteers and HQ Youth Programme Coordinator, with the support of British RC through the Federation, participated.

A variety of workshops was offered by Bavarian RC youth with regard to media and communication, including web design, radio broadcasting, print media, war journalism, violence portrayed in the media and media competence among many others. A report on the workshops will be published on the Bavarian RC web page.

**Engagement of youth in other programme areas as an important planning and implementing component is increased.**

Youth remain the key to volunteer implementation of RCK programs. Being members of all branch presidencies, the youth has more opportunities to be part of the planning process as well.

**The process of creating one Red Cross organization in Kosovo is ongoing and joint activities are being implemented when possible.**

Although one Red Cross society can not be achieved before the final status of Kosovo has been determined, the Federation and ICRC have been continuing to support the joint working group (JWG) initiatives for cooperation. Possible joint activities will contribute not to the creation of one RC organization as well as a better reach of all areas of Kosovo. Two JWG meetings were held in May and June 2005 after a break of almost a year. The meetings were convened after written requests of the JWG members.

The only joint project, a mobile clinic, is still pending agreement of all JWG members on some minor issues.

**A Disaster Management plan has been designed and the role of the Red Cross within the Government is defined.**

The Department for Emergency within the Ministry of Public Services has defined a leading role for RCK in water and sanitation as well as an assistance role in first aid and shelter in a Kosovo-wide DM Plan. The law on disaster preparedness and response has been drafted by the Department for Emergency and was sent to the Kosovo parliament commission for review. Based on this defined role, the Federation has assisted the RCK in developing their disaster management plan. Several meetings were held with the RCK disaster management working group and the ICRC in order to work and define the roles and responsibilities between the RCK and the other partners included in the Kosovo-wide disaster management plan.

**Improved organizational capacity of both Red Cross organizations to coordinate safe access during the time of disasters/conflicts.**

A questionnaire was developed by the Federation on mapping of the RCK disaster response resources. After the RCK HQ approval they were sent to the branches to collect all needed information about available, trained human resources and material in their storerooms. All filled questionnaires were returned to HQ with information that will form a database of DM for the RCK.