

Programme Update



International Federation
of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

Central Europe (Focus on Kosovo)

Appeal No. MAA66001

31 August 2008

This report covers the period 01/01/2008 to 30/06/2008.



May 2008, training of health education instructors in Kosovo. Photo: International Federation

In brief

Programme purpose: The main emphasis of the International Federation's work in Kosovo has been to support the two Red Cross organizations in strengthening their organizational and operational capacities to better respond to the basic needs of the most vulnerable populations in Kosovo. Support has been provided in the following core programme areas: health and care, disaster management, and organizational development including youth development. All activities of the International Federation are aligned with the International Federation's Global Agenda Goals. The two Red Cross organizations, in close cooperation and through consultation with the Federation office, adjusted their programmes and activities planned for 2008 due to insufficient funding. Thus the new revised plans for the latter half of 2008 put stronger focus on key sectors and are better adapted to the existing capacities of both Red Cross organizations.

Programme(s) summary: The major issue determining the level of programme implementation in the first half of 2008 has been an invariable and significant lack of funding. At the end of June the coverage of the appeal for 2008 was still only at 42 per cent. The Federation office, in close coordination with the local Red Cross organizations, applied a strict prioritization scheme to determine which of the activities needed to be given precedence, thus making the most efficient and effective use of the limited funding available. Most of the funding received so far was used to assist the Red Cross organizations in building their capacity through trainings in the different programme areas. The two Red Cross organizations conducted activities in the following areas:

- Health and care: training of health instructor volunteers for health in the field
- Disaster management: risk reduction and disaster response capacity building
- Organizational development: capacity development and youth development

Financial situation: Total 2008 budget for Central Europe (MAA66001) was initially 6,404,721 Swiss francs (USD 5,822,474 or EUR 3,965,772). The revised budget is 6,229,682 Swiss francs (USD 5,663,347 or EUR 3,857,388), out of which 59 per cent covered. The revision of the appeal budget is due to a slight decrease in the budget of the Federation office in Kosovo from 868,055 to 693,006 Swiss francs. Other programmes under this appeal are run by the regional representation in Budapest, the country representation in Belgrade and the Federation office in Bosnia and Herzegovina and are reported on in separate programme updates.

[Click here to go directly to the attached financial report.](#)

No. of people we help: During the last years the International Federation has completed the shift from an operational role to a clear assistance role providing technical, guidance, mentoring and coaching support. With support from the International Federation the two Red Cross organizations have so far provided direct or indirect support to more than 1,639 beneficiaries through the implementation of core programme activities

Our partners: The Federation office in Kosovo works and coordinates its activities with a number of community-based, local, government-based, non-governmental-based, international, the United Nations (UN), other development organizations and agencies as well as partners within the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement.

Context

Kosovo has been under direct United Nations administration since 1999. However, on 17 February 2008, the Kosovo Assembly declared its independence from Serbia. Unrest and confrontations followed the declaration. However, no major population movements have been observed and the situation seems to have stabilized, although the Kosovo question remains a sensitive issue internationally. Kosovo as an independent state has been recognized by some 46 countries.

Despite large investments from the international community since 2000, Kosovo and its population still faces numerous challenges and needs. Kosovo continues to face a vicious cycle of low growth, significant trade imbalance and fiscal constraints. According to the CIA fact book there is a 43 per cent high unemployment rate and 37 per cent of the population is living in poverty, resulting in an extremely high degree of structural socio-economic vulnerability. Thus increasing poverty remains a major issue of concern.

Although a large part of the population experience hardship due to difficult socio-economic conditions, only a small percentage receives social allowances, which are also very limited. Throughout 2007 and in the first half of 2008 the vulnerability of the population in Kosovo further increased due to the significant rise in world prices for basic commodities. Combined with weak institutions which are not in a position to cover the population's basic health and social welfare needs, the abovementioned elements put large parts of the population in a highly vulnerable situation. Consequently, the Red Cross organizations in Kosovo are required not only to continue, but to increase their roles and efforts as humanitarian actors in targeting the needs of the most vulnerable. The Red Cross organizations are, however, experiencing insufficient funding to carry out this work.

Progress towards outcomes

Disaster management

Outcome/expected result: The disaster response capacity of the local Red Cross organizations is strengthened through the development and building up of their disaster preparedness and

response capacity and the development of a disaster management strategy and plan, including detailed risk mapping and contingency plans.

Risk reduction

With the support from the International Federation's regional representation, and with funds from the European Commission Humanitarian Aid Office (ECHO), the Federation **contingency planning guidelines and disaster response team guidelines** were initially introduced to the members of both Red Cross organizations' presidencies so they can make presentations to the authorities, UN and other stakeholders afterwards. Furthermore, equipment and uniforms to the Red Cross of Kosovo and Metohija disaster response teams were procured.

A UNDP contingency plan workshop was conducted in Pristina. The workshop aimed to initiate joint efforts for the preparation of a **Kosovo contingency plan** in case of disaster. All international agencies present in Kosovo, including the International Federation, participated in the workshop. The disaster management coordinator from Kosova Red Cross also participated.

Disaster response capacity building

Disaster management capacity building has been supported by the Federation office in Kosovo and by the German Red Cross. The support from the German Red Cross has been provided through a bilateral one-year agreement on a capacity building project, a process which was facilitated by the International Federation. Thus several trainings have been conducted to build disaster response capacity, including: two risk assessment trainings of trainers in 13 branches; risk assessment training for disaster programme volunteers at branch level; one first-aid disaster training of trainers; two basic first-aid trainings for staff and volunteers; training on tools for first-aid disaster response; and one disaster simulation. Local expertise from the emergency department contributed as a facilitator during disaster-related trainings.

Regular meetings, especially focusing on partners' roles and responsibilities, have been organized between the Red Cross of Kosova and emergency department staff at local level. The International Federation has frequently been invited to participate in the meetings to provide guidance to the Red Cross organization and local authorities based on International Federation disaster management tools and guidelines. The meetings are considered as a valuable contribution to the current drafting of a memorandum of understanding between the Red Cross of Kosova and the emergency department.

Regional disaster response teams (RDRTs), each composed of members with considerable expertise and knowledge in multiple fields, have been established and will contribute to more efficient responses to disasters. In this regard the International Federation continued to facilitate the strengthening of the regional disaster response network through capacity building trainings for staff and volunteers. One representative from each of the two Red Cross organizations participated in a RDRT training facilitated by the International Federation representation office in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Constraints or Challenges

No constraints or challenges occurred.

Health and Care

Outcome/expected result: The capacity of the local Red Cross organizations' health and care programme to identify and effectively respond to the basic health and care needs has been strengthened in order to contribute to improving the general health of the population.

General health and care with a special emphasis on women

With support from the Canadian and the Norwegian Red Cross, the International Federation office in Kosovo assisted both Red Cross organizations in conducting **training of trainers courses for**

voluntary health instructors. Topics such as prenatal and natal care, family planning and sexually transmitted diseases (STIs), good parenting and safe motherhood were covered. In addition to the Red Cross organizations, UNICEF and the Kosovo Institute for Public Health contributed in the trainings. In the Kosova Red Cross 106 trained health instructors participated, while the number of instructors attending in Kosovo and Metohija were 30. In total 90 per cent of the instructors were female and the target beneficiaries were women. Participants were certified by the Institute for Public Health allowing them to conduct health awareness trainings in the field. The health instructor project is considered one of the most effective projects within the two Red Cross organizations. It is also considered as an increasingly important sustainable component of the health and care programmes in the organizations. Furthermore the training of health instructors contributes to and strengthens the already existing network of trained volunteer health instructors. The network reaches the most rural areas which lack sufficient public health services, and health courses have already been conducted in communities.



Trained volunteer health instructors in Kosovo. Photo: International Federation.

Voluntary non-remunerated blood donor motivation

The Red Cross of Kosova and the German Red Cross, with the assistance of the International Federation office, signed a bilateral agreement on a one-year **voluntary blood donation** project. Furthermore, in order to reach an agreement on volunteer non-remunerated blood donation, including the definition of partners' roles, meetings was conducted between the Red Cross of Kosova, the Ministry of Health and the Blood Transfusion Centre with the assistance of the International Federation office. It is expected that a memorandum of

understanding will be signed in the near future.

Organizational Development

Outcome/expected result: The Red Cross organizations are better functioning with improved performance to meet the basic needs of vulnerable people including more responsive Red Cross organizations with good image, finance management, planning and more sustainable programmes with appropriate organizational structure with more supportive governance.

Capacity development

The International Federation supported a **project management cycle workshop** for Red Cross of Kosovo and Metohija staff at headquarters and branch level. The workshop aimed at enhancing the capacity of key staff in needs assessment, planning, monitoring and evaluation as well as budgeting.

Volunteer development

Supported by the Norwegian Red Cross through the International Federation office, both Red Cross organizations observed **the Red Cross Red Crescent Day** and conducted activities for a period of one week. The International Federation, the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) as well as UN representatives and local authorities participated in the event. The day started with a rally followed by an open day in the city park of Pristina with greetings to the work of the Red Cross in Kosovo. Various activities followed throughout the day such as chess games for elderly people; membership drive corner for the public; volunteer blood donation; a drawing competition for children; games for youth; and activities for people with disabilities. Also with support from the International Federation office, both organizations organized basic volunteer training for new youth volunteer leaders. The support provided for youth volunteer development helps the local Red Cross organizations recruit and retain new volunteers in order to further strengthen the volunteer

management system. Some 60 new youth volunteers are now trained and contribute to the overall youth development work. This programme is also being supported bilaterally by the Finnish Red Cross which has been present in Kosovo for one year.



Red Cross Red Crescent Day.
Photo: International Federation.

Participatory Community Development and Principles and Values

Outcome/expected result: The behaviour in local communities through the promotion of humanitarian values has been changed and local communities have been empowered with strengthened capacity to cope with the vulnerabilities and their root causes through participation and community action.

Increased capacity of the Red Cross and the local community to address vulnerabilities

Achievements

Activities planned to be implemented under this programme will be implemented in the second half of the year through support from the regional representation of the International Federation.

Promotion of Fundamental Principles and humanitarian values by youth and volunteers with an emphasis on combating discrimination, intolerance and violence

The **promotion of the fundamental principles and humanitarian values** are an integrated part of all programmes in the two Red Cross organizations in Kosovo and thus a natural element in all trainings conducted by the Red Cross. The focus on the principles and values contributes towards influencing the behaviour of people by reducing discrimination, intolerance and social exclusion. Subsequently these efforts are aligned with Global Agenda Goal four and are considered as particularly important in the Kosovo context where deep rifts between different ethnic communities still exist. This work thus increases the prospects for a peaceful development of civil society.

Working in partnership

The International Federation's office in Kosovo and the two Red Cross organizations continued to work to strengthen partnerships. Furthermore it sought and coordinated the support from other National Societies, the government, UN and international donor agencies, diplomatic missions and non-governmental organizations for humanitarian emergency operations and capacity building. Moreover the Red Cross organizations increased their participation in coordination and planning meetings with existing and new partners and stakeholders. Intensive networking activities were reinitiated to improve working relationships with external partners. Relationships with UNDP, UNICEF, WHO, the Institute of Public Health, the Ministry of Health, the department of youth, the department of disaster response as well as Kosovo liaison offices of various potential donor countries were instigated and further developed.

Several agreements have been signed between National Societies and the Red Cross of Kosova including two one-year bilateral agreements with the German Red Cross on a voluntary blood donation project and a disaster management capacity building project. Furthermore a one-year bilateral agreement between the British Red Cross and the Red Cross of Kosova to continue the implementation of already ongoing social welfare activities in two Red Cross Kosova branches has been signed. Eventually a six-month bilateral agreement between the Bavarian Red Cross and the

Red Cross of Kosova on a project targeting Roma children and mothers in one Red Cross branch has been signed. The British Red Cross also responded to support the International Federation 2008-2009 appeal. The Federation office contributed as a facilitator in all the abovementioned agreements. Although several agreements exist, there is still a need and room for partners to provide assistance to the local Red Cross organizations in order to build their operational capacity to meet the needs of the most vulnerable. Regular information and coordination meetings have been and are still taking place in Pristina between all Red Cross Movement partners present in Kosovo including ICRC, the Spanish and the Finnish Red Cross Societies, the Saudi Red Crescent and the Swiss Red Cross who closed their office at the end of February 2008.

Contributing to longer-term impact

All programmes supported by the International Federation in Kosovo are aligned with and contribute to the International Federations' four Global Agenda Goals. The work of the two Red Cross organizations, with the support of the International Federation, thus contributes to longer-term objectives through the building up of capacity to reduce the impact of disasters; improving the general health situation among the population; contributing to beneficiaries' ability to effectively meet their basic socio-economic needs; increasing the support capacity of local Red Cross branches to vulnerable groups and communities to become more resilient; building youth volunteer capacity to better support vulnerable groups. Furthermore, several of the programmes have a strong focus on gender issues including the health instructor project. The International Federation, together with the Red Cross organizations in Kosovo, contributes towards the Istanbul Commitments made at the VII European Regional Red Cross Red Crescent Conference, especially in the areas of health and social care and in strengthening capacities and cooperation.

Looking ahead

In the coming years the International Federation's support to the two Red Cross organizations in Kosovo intends to put special emphasis on health and care, disaster management and a further strengthening of organizational capacities.

Within disaster management the Red Cross organizations aims to decrease the population's vulnerability to and the impact of disasters through risk reduction activities as well as increasing the response and support to people affected by disasters through better trained and equipped disaster response teams.

Since 2007 the vulnerability of the population in Kosovo increased further due to a significant rise in the prices for basic commodities such as bread and cereals, cooking oils, fat and vegetables. The International Federation will closely monitor the situation on the ongoing food shortage, particularly the significant price rise of food commodities and its impact on the most vulnerable population.

Health gaps will be targeted by assisting the Red Cross organizations in: providing education on family health, reproductive health and family planning with a special focus on women; advocating for and encouraging the population to donate blood through the recruitment of voluntary blood donors; and reducing the HIV infection rate as well as other infectious diseases through an increase in awareness-raising activities especially targeting youth. The Global Alliance on HIV offers an additional opportunity for scaling up and enhancing the quality of the work in this respect with Federation support if required. Operational alliances will be encouraged and pursued in order to combine capabilities to make an even greater impact within communities. The National Society with its two organizations already has multiple set of partners and will continue these efforts along operational lines.

The organizational capacities of the two Red Cross organizations will be further strengthened by: ensuring an efficient and effective use of all available resources for the greater benefit of vulnerable populations; enhancing the capacity and skills of management and governance structures;

increasing the number of trained volunteers actively contributing to the work of the Red Cross through improved volunteer training and management; increasing the number of partnerships through enhanced transparency, a strong positive public image and better relationship management capacity.

Special emphasis will be given to ensure the promotion and practice of humanitarian values through the inclusion of humanitarian values components into all programme activities.

How we work	
<p>The International Federation's activities are aligned with its Global Agenda, which sets out four broad goals to meet the Federation's mission to "improve the lives of vulnerable people by mobilizing the power of humanity".</p>	<p>Global Agenda Goals:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduce the numbers of deaths, injuries and impact from disasters. • Reduce the number of deaths, illnesses and impact from diseases and public health emergencies. • Increase local community, civil society and Red Cross Red Crescent capacity to address the most urgent situations of vulnerability. • Reduce intolerance, discrimination and social exclusion and promote respect for diversity and human dignity.
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