

Programme Update



International Federation
of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

Montenegro

Appeal No. MAAME001

31 August 2009

This report covers the period 01/01/2009 to 30/06/2009.



Roma kindergarten in Podgorica. Photo: Montenegro Red Cross

In brief

Programme purpose: The Red Cross of Montenegro has recently gained its independent status back after almost 90 years of being part of a larger National Society. Its main priorities are:

- strengthening its field network by improving the quality and quantity of staff and volunteers
- consolidating its programmes by focusing on priority areas and scaling up the appropriate capacity
- increasing the level of work with partners, national and international

The main programme areas of the National Society are aligned with the International Federation's Global Agenda Goals:

- disaster management aligned with Global Agenda goal one and four
- health and care aligned with Global Agenda goal two, three and four
- organizational development aligned with Global Agenda goal four and related to the ten areas for improvement

Programme summary: The severe lack of funding for Montenegro meant that the scope of activities was very limited. Apart from the activities within the humanitarian values programme dealing with Roma and young people living with disabilities, funded by the Swiss government through the Swiss Agency for Cooperation and Development, the only other activities supported through the International Federation were organizational development ones, partly funded by the Norwegian Red Cross and partly from the International Federation's own funds.

While the humanitarian values activities are part of the three year plan developed jointly between the Swiss Agency for Cooperation and Development, the Red Cross of Montenegro, Red Cross of Serbia, Spanish Red Cross, Danish Red Cross, the International Federation and other non-Movement partners (UNICEF, Pomoć Deci NGO), the organizational development activities were agreed between the International Federation and the National Society, through a process of prioritising. The process not only took into consideration the immediate organizational development priorities of the society (as defined through a Federation-lead organizational development workshop in July 2008) but also the current work with bilateral partners and the future focus of the organizational development as outlined in the application to the Federation's Intensified Capacity Building Fund.

The International Federation provided support to the National Society in planning the trajectory of its organizational development in the next three years and preparing the application to the ICB fund. The application was subsequently accepted and the funding for the organizational development work in the next three years granted.

Financial situation: The total 2009 budget is CHF 560,289 (USD 516,793 or EUR 369,560), of which 16 per cent covered. Expenditure versus received funding was 58 per cent. The low coverage is due to the near complete withdrawal of major donors from previous years.

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

No. of people we help:

Programme Update January-June 2009 – Montenegro		
Programme	Target groups	People reached
Humanitarian values		
Social welfare	Vulnerable Roma children, Children living with disabilities	235
Total number of people reached		235

Our partners: The Norwegian Red Cross and the governmental Swiss Agency for Cooperation and Development contributed as multilateral donors, while the Danish and Spanish Red Cross Societies were involved on a bilateral basis. The Austrian and Italian Red Cross Societies have been doing joint planning for bilateral activities as a result of the partnership meeting from late 2008.

Context

The political situation in Montenegro has been stable in the first six months of 2009 with elections bringing no significant changes. Economically, the country has managed to stabilise its employment situation. The rate of unemployment has been dropping since the beginning of the year and now it is 10.33 per cent (compared to almost 11 per cent in February). The real estate market has also stabilised with prices dropping as most of the large real estate acquisitions near the seaside are completed.

On the other hand, the humanitarian situation is largely unchanged, with the Roma-Ashkali-Egyptian (RAE) population, refugees and internally displaced persons remaining highly vulnerable.

The decrease of financial support through the International Federation means that the National Society has had to take hard decisions in prioritising topics in its plans. However, good positioning in relation to the government in some areas of work, notably disaster management where the National Society has a well-defined position and is in regular contact with the appropriate authorities, means more potential support but also more responsibility.

Progress towards outcomes

Disaster Management

Programme purpose: Reduce the number of deaths, injuries and impact from disasters

No funding for this activity means that the International Federation was only indirectly involved with the disaster management activities of the Red Cross of Montenegro. The National Society, partly as a result of Federation support, signed a bilateral agreement with the Austrian Red Cross in May 2009 after nearly a year of negotiations and the first activity supported through this agreement was training for three regional disaster response teams (RDRT). The Red Cross of Montenegro also hosted three separate international events in May: the workshop on climate change in South-East Europe, the International Federation shelter workshop and the annual disaster management coordinators meeting.

Achievements: The main achievement has been the strengthening of disaster management related ties with other National Societies.

Constraints or Challenges: The National Society no longer has external funding for the disaster management programme activities.

Health and Care

Programme purpose: Reduce the number of deaths, illnesses and impact from diseases and public health emergencies.

There was no funding for this activity. Consequently all programme activities had to be cancelled.

Organisational Development/ Capacity Building

Programme purpose: Increase local community, civil society and Red Cross Red Crescent capacity to address the most urgent situations of vulnerability

The Red Cross of Montenegro has identified several priority areas for organisational development through its assessment of local branches done in late 2007 and through the national organizational development workshop in July 2008. Due to limited funding, the International Federation and the National Society agreed on a small number of activities to be supported in the first half of 2009:

- Reconstruction and refurbishment of the secretariat building. The Federation only partly supported this activity, focusing on establishing of the first-aid training cabinet to be primarily used as a reference centre and training capacity for local branches.
- Provision of first-aid training equipment (resuscitation dolls, other medical and non-medical equipment) for the cabinet, as well as support to the translation of the German Red Cross first-aid manual is supposed to be finalized by the end of August.
- Finance software HUBIE upgrade is finished. The Red Cross is considering purchasing the rights to the source code of the software in order to be able to do further development of the software independently. Other finance development activities included:
 - User training and salary support for the newly appointed head of finance.
 - Field implementation of the finance software HUBIE is still in progress. The software has been upgraded in four local branches. User training is planned by the end of August.

- The National Society web presentation redesign is in progress, to be finalised by the end of August.
- The three-stage training for project design, management and project proposal writing was successfully finished. It was implemented in three workshops over six months, with 13 branches taking part and doing extensive 'homework' in between the workshops. In the end, 15 fully designed proposals are completed and ready for implementation. Additional training was provided on topics of fund-raising and project monitoring.
- Support to the National Society in planning and preparing their application to the Intensified Capacity Building Fund was given. The application was subsequently approved and in the coming three years the Red Cross will be going through thorough developmental changes.

Achievements: The Red Cross of Montenegro has finalised one important phase in its financial development. The dedication to the use of HUBIE management software and the commitment to ensure local branches are comfortable with the software and the system that comes with it are reinforced through the planning for further development.

The investments being made in the first-aid training (cabinet, equipment, literature) are especially important considering that the National Society is on the brink of making this activity its main source of funding at all levels. Ensuring capacity to provide first aid training to drivers and other paying customers simultaneously with legal changes that will further open the market to the Red Cross is essential.

Project design and management training for local branches was an effort to ensure sustainability of local level activities and their independence from central funding. Even the distribution of funds obtained through lottery taxes is relying on the number of proposed or active projects at local level, so now there is a considerable capacity increase in the field to create and implement projects and fund-raise for them. This will not only diversify and enhance field-level activities but also lead to the stronger branches acting as tutors to weaker ones and helping them with their own project proposals, since they will not be competing for centralised funding all the time.

Constraints or Challenges: The level of acceptance of the HUBIE system and software in the field is still low with only four branches working with it. Reconsideration of the scope of HUBIE features that should be used by all branches (if any) is going to be necessary. At the same time, the eventual decision of the Red Cross of Montenegro to purchase the source code for HUBIE will mean either investing in new capacity or outsourcing the developmental work – in both cases the financial strain will be considerable and it is important to assess the potential losses and gains before acting.

Humanitarian Values

Programme purpose: Reduce intolerance, discrimination and social exclusion and promote respect for diversity and human dignity

Home Care

There was no funding for this activity. The Federation assisted in preparing a joint plan with the Austrian Red Cross for a three-year home care programme support and development. The plan is being turned into a project proposal that the Austrian Red Cross will be offering to the government this autumn. Hellenic Red Cross and Italian Red Cross are also expressing interest to support the home care programme.

Open kindergarten for Roma and other children from marginalized families/ Work with young people living with disabilities

The implementation of the new phase of the previously called social welfare programme, under the name *Joint programme for inclusion of marginalized groups through education* started as planned in January. The new set up includes five entities of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement – the Red Cross of Serbia and the Montenegro Red Cross as operating societies,

Danish and Spanish Red Cross Societies as supporting, participating National societies and the International Federation with overall coordination role, and partnership with UNICEF, NGO 'Pomoc Deci' and the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation.

The programme itself includes three separate projects targeting vulnerable Roma children, their peers in school and children and young people with disabilities. The programme included 1,000 vulnerable Roma children in 32 municipalities in Serbia and 4 municipalities in Montenegro (and 504 parents), one of them being Camp Konik in Podgorica for internally displaced persons, mainly Roma, Ashkali and Egyptians, and 866 children and young people with disabilities in 30 municipalities of Serbia and 6 municipalities of Montenegro (and their 505 parents). The total number of people reached in Montenegro was 235.

The work in the first six months of implementation was focused on establishing the set-up and coordinative mechanisms, quite similar to the Operational Alliance model. A cooperation agreement for the Red Cross partners was developed outlining clear roles and responsibilities of each partner and working routines in regard to planning, follow-up, monitoring, reporting, evaluation and coordination. The detailed plan of action for the project team was developed in January and two project team meetings took place for the follow-up purposes. Progress in implementation of activities was recorded and the plan of action revised as necessary. Narrative and financial reporting system was developed and agreed.

Achievements

- The development of the proposal for advocacy framework for the project has started and will result in a comprehensive manual by the end of 2009.
- Revision of the programme documentation templates is in progress with the aim being standardisation and harmonisation.
- The participatory community development methodology was adapted and training of trainers completed in order to improve the cooperation of the implementing Red Cross branches and relevant local stakeholders by involving them in local project planning, implementation and monitoring.
- Preparations for the baseline study are in progress.
- Registration of beneficiaries for this implementation period was completed and data gathered from the field are now being analysed.
- A field monitoring plan was developed and monitoring visits are taking place accordingly. The field monitoring plan is revised as necessary.

Working in partnership

The Red Cross of Montenegro worked in partnership with the International Federation and received support from the Norwegian Red Cross and the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) through the Federation secretariat plan and bilaterally from the Danish Red Cross. Pomoc Deci NGO and UNICEF are partners contributing to the programme.

At the same time the National Society is developing deeper bilateral partnerships with the Austrian Red Cross (disaster management, home care) and the Italian Red Cross (home care) which is the result of International Federation brokering and assistance.

Contributing to longer-term impact

The work with vulnerable populations in Montenegro and efforts to ensure a community-wide response to needs is in line with the International Federation's Global Agenda and its emphasis on preventing deaths and illnesses as well as the building of communities' capacities to combat their own vulnerability.

All programme components are aligned with the Global Agenda and are compatible with local and regional initiatives such as the Decade of Roma Inclusion and the Poverty Reduction Strategies. Work towards disaster preparedness pursues the Global Agenda goal of reducing the number of deaths, injuries and impact from disasters, a much needed endeavour in the country as large-scale disasters, both natural and man-made, seem to become more frequent.

All programmes have gender as an integrated and important component. Within disaster preparedness the psychosocial component puts special emphasis on gender to ensure that the needs of each family member are adequately assessed and met.

Looking ahead

The current funding situation allows the International Federation to be directly involved only with the SDC funded activities from August on. It will continue providing indirect support and looking for alternative funding opportunities to support other priority areas from the country plan.

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.
Contact information	
<p>For further information specifically related to this report, please contact: (text in Arial 10)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In the Red Cross of Montenegro: Slobodan Kalezić, Secretary General;; +382 81 241 819; fax +382 81 241 613; email: ckcg@t-com.me • In the Country Representation for Montenegro: Olav Ofstad, Country Representative tel: +381 113282202; fax +381 113281791; email: : olav.ofstad@ifrc.org • In the Regional Representation for Central Europe and Southern Caucasus: Elias Ghanem, Regional Representative, Budapest, phone: + 36 1 888 4502; fax: +36 1 336 1516; email: elias.ghanem@ifrc.org 	