

CENTRAL AND SOUTHERN EUROPE: REGIONAL PROGRAMMES

26 October 1998

appeal no. 01.34/98

situation report no. 1

period covered: January - September 1998

The role of Regional Delegation in Budapest, Hungary has adapted as the emphasis of programmes in some of the countries of the former Yugoslavia has changed from relief to development. In addition, National Societies in the region of Central and Eastern Europe continue to receive varied support to ensure capacity building. More recently, tensions in the Serbian province of Kosovo have had an impact on the activities of the National Societies in Albania, Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, and Federal Republic of Yugoslavia.

The context

The role of the Budapest Regional Delegation (RD) in providing tailored developmental support not only to the National Societies in the region of Central and Eastern (C/E) Europe but also in working through the country delegations in former Yugoslavia has provided a focus for discussions over the year. Operational emphasis in Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina and FR Yugoslavia is continuing to shift from relief to support for the development of sustainable, long-term National Society programmes. The Regional Delegation's role in this process is expected to further evolve as the handover of Federation programmes to National Society management continues, with the closure of the Croatia delegation planned for the end of 1998, and the transition process continuing in the other two countries.

Latest events

The region has witnessed increasing divergence during the course of the year to date, with EU and NATO membership criteria setting priorities for those countries approached for the first round of expansions, whilst others to continue to struggle against increasing poverty, chaotic political and economic conditions and heightened security concerns. Fighting in the Serbian province of Kosovo and the subsequent population movements into Montenegro, Albania, FYR Macedonia and Bosnia and Herzegovina have underlined the fragile political, social and economic balance in the sub-region.

As a result of violent demonstrations against the Albanian government in September, the PM Fatos Nano was replaced by the former student activist leader Pandeli Majko. Elections in Bosnia and Herzegovina in September resulted in gains for nationalist parties at an entity level. The return process continues at a slow pace with sporadic violence against returnees reflecting continuing tensions between the ethnic groups.

Political uncertainty also reigned in Central Europe, which saw three elections during the reporting period and a change of government in the Czech Republic and Hungary. International concern continued

over political events in Slovakia. Following unsuccessful presidential elections earlier in the year which left the presidential post empty, Prime Minister Meciar took on additional powers. Parliamentary elections in September gave his ruling party a slight majority, but efforts continue by the opposition parties to form the next government thanks to their overall majority in Parliament. In Romania, disputes continued between the ruling coalition parties concerning the establishment of an independent Hungarian university.

In an October referendum, the citizens of Latvia voted their support for a new law reducing the strict criteria for the naturalisation of minority groups. This is expected to ease tensions between the Latvian and ethnic Russian populations in the country. The effect of the current turmoil in the Russian economy on the Baltic states in particular has been a cause for concern.

Floods were witnessed during the summer in Poland, the Czech Republic and Slovakia although on a scale much reduced from the disaster in July 1997. In Romania flooding earlier in the summer was followed by drought conditions later in the month, necessitating a dual response by the National Society.

Red Cross/Red Crescent action

Capacity Building

Disaster Preparedness ●

Following a lengthy disaster preparedness (DP) review process initiated by the RD in the aftermath of the summer 1997 floods in Central Europe, with support from the German Red Cross, the Czech, Polish and Slovak Red Cross Societies presented their finalised two year national DP programmes to the RD in July. Implementation of these programmes, which focus on developing the DP role of the NS in a national context and addressing a range of institutional, management and technical issues, is due to begin during the autumn, with the support of a Disaster Preparedness delegate from the German Red Cross. A discussion of implementation plans was held with the German Red Cross in September.

Institutional Development ●

During the first quarter of 1998, computer and English language training courses for staff of the Latvian, Lithuanian and Estonian Red Cross Societies completed the one year LIEN-funded capacity building project in the Baltics. The first quarter also saw a meeting of the Nordic-Baltic Secretaries General and agreement on a Work Plan focusing on mutual support to increase NS capacities in the fields of human and financial resource development and visiting nurse services. The Federation's development delegate based in Riga, Latvia is supporting the Baltic NS with implementation of this Work Plan. Status assessment phases of the three priority areas for co-operation have already begun.

A self-assessment process was initiated during the first half of the year at the Macedonian Red Cross, with funding support from the Swedish Red Cross. A Working Group has been set up by the National Society to lead the process and to build recommendations from an initial assessment meeting into the NS's strategic work plan. The process is being supported by the Federation's development delegate.

Much work was put into preparation of a proposal for a two year programme of institutional development with 11 National Societies in the region to begin in 1999. The programme focuses on those NSs which have recognised a need and indicated a desire to do comprehensive capacity building work, but also includes follow up to ongoing programmes and promotion work to take place with those NS not yet involved in the process. The proposal has been presented to the British government Department for International Development for funding. A response is expected within the next few weeks.

Albania ●

The first quarter of 1998 saw the finalisation of the emergency operation in Albania and the completion of related branch rehabilitation projects following the civil unrest in 1997. However a new emergency operation was launched in June as an influx of refugees from the fighting in Kosovo crossed the border into northern Albania. This operation was extended through a revised Appeal in August seeking to

support 15,000 beneficiaries with food and non-food relief until the end of the year. Elements of training and volunteer support for the Albanian Red Cross have been incorporated into the Appeal. A tripartite contract was signed at the beginning of the year by the Albanian Red Cross, Swedish Red Cross and the Federation relating to implementation of the NS's social programme, and support for its disaster preparedness programme will be provided by the Norwegian Red Cross through the Federation.

English Language Training ●

English Language Training through the British Council for staff at six National Societies in the region is continuing, supported by the British Red Cross. As it is unlikely that this arrangement will be sustainable in the future, the RD is looking at alternative ways to extend the level of English language knowledge among personnel at both branch and headquarters levels. Following the production of an English Text and Workbook at the beginning of the year, based on material prepared for the Red Cross courses by a professional language teacher, a Trainers' Manual was produced in August. The Workbook and Manual package has been distributed to NS in the region as a tool to encourage the facilitation of courses within the NS by English speaking staff or volunteers. The RD is now looking at extending distribution of the Workbook to interested donor NS, to generate income for the continuation of the programme and to provide a fund to encourage local training initiatives.

Information ●

Publications, information and reporting activities, promoting the work of the Red Cross in the region and providing feedback for donors, continued during the reporting period - through the *Bridge* magazine, the monthly *Bridge Telegraph* newsletter, the fortnightly newsletter *Former Yugo Ops Update*, the annual *Regional Review 1997* of operations in former Yugoslavia and a number of regular Situation Reports and Final Reports. Support was also provided for other RD programme information and publication needs, including the *English Text and Workbook*, *Trainers' Manual* and Hungarian, Bulgarian and Albanian translations of the *Governance and Management Guidelines*. Within the frame of efforts to facilitate regional communications networking, a project proposal was prepared to develop NS email/internet linkage, including training for NS staff and presented to Canadian International Development Agency for funding. Although the proposal was turned down due to geographical priorities, the RD will continue to seek local solutions in opening up e-mail access for the NS.

Support was provided to the Hungarian Red Cross to implement a pilot Red Cross pin campaign to mark World Red Cross and Red Crescent Day in May. Implemented by Red Cross youth volunteers throughout Hungary and supported by an extensive media campaign organised by the headquarters, the project raised over CHF 15,000 and provided extensive media coverage and promotion opportunities for the National Society. Some 10% of the funds raised will be reinvested in a follow up campaign in 1999. Based on initial responses received over the summer, the Bulgarian, Czech, Hungarian, Slovak and Yugoslav Red Cross and the local Red Cross entities in Bosnia and Herzegovina have expressed an interest in implementing a Red Cross pin campaign in 1999. The Federation is currently exploring funding possibilities to support these NS. In addition to promotional work, the focus of information activities during the period has shifted towards developing training opportunities for NS headquarters and branch staff. In November a basic media training workshop for 20 Croatian Red Cross branch members will be held in Opatija, to be facilitated jointly by the Federation, ICRC and Croatian Red Cross with British Red Cross funding. At the end of November a joint Federation/ICRC regional communications workshop will bring together 30 participants from the 15 National Societies in the region to focus on communications strategy development, implementation and training issues.

Flood Rehabilitation Programme ●

Following completion of the emergency assistance and initial rehabilitation activities of the Polish, Czech, Slovak and Hungarian Red Cross Societies within the 1997 flood operation, a Final Report was issued to donors in June 1998. Donors to the initial emergency Appeal agreed to utilisation of remaining funds to support further rehabilitation activities in Poland and the Czech Republic. The on-going projects focus on providing technical and material assistance to vulnerable families to carry out essential building repair work on their homes. The projects are implemented by the branches of the two National Societies with headquarters support and in co-operation with local municipality authorities.

Support has also been provided through the project to build headquarters and branch capacity - through the purchase of administrative/computer equipment - and in Poland through an information and documentation programme to promote the continuing work of the National Society in the extensive rehabilitation phase.

Youth ●

A new regional youth delegate joined the RD in mid-February and embarked on a series of introduction, assessment and training visits to National Societies in the region. Based on the outcome of the assessment process, a work plan has been produced focusing on providing support to NS Youth sections in the development and implementation of youth programme action plans, leadership training and fund-raising issues. The youth delegate has facilitated a number of self-assessment and training sessions for NS Youth section meetings in the region looking at youth structures, SWOT analysis, and other development issues which have emerged during assessment visits. The delegate also provides a focal point for the co-ordination of opportunities for networking and the exchange of information between youth representatives.

Invitation letters were sent out in September for a regional youth conference to be held in Budapest in November with funding support from the British Red Cross. The conference will focus on developing networking and information/material exchange opportunities for NS youth representatives and building on the recommendations of the assessment completed this summer.

Regional Population Movement ●

Following the launch of the Regional Population Movement Programme at the end of 1997, an introductory training workshop was held in Tallinn, Estonia in February for the newly appointed National Society population movement co-ordinators, focusing on needs assessment, liaison with relevant national and international organisations and the planning of future programme activities. Following on from the workshop, the NS co-ordinators have been involved in assessment phases, developing programme proposals and following up with donors. The main activities proposed focus on increasing awareness of the needs of asylum seekers and refugees among branches, local municipalities and the governments through training and programmes promoting integration between communities. By September 1998 there were co-ordinators active in the National Societies of Lithuania, Estonia, Russia and Belarus.

A donation of USD 249,000 was confirmed by the US State Department in September, ensuring the continuation and further expansion of programme activities in the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) and the Baltics. The grant will provide support for the work of the three population movement delegates, for local small-scale NS projects and for international networking for the NS co-ordinators. From mid-November 1998, the regional population movement delegate presently based in Budapest, will be working from the Federation delegation in Minsk, but will continue to cover programme activities with the Baltic National Societies.

Logistics ●

Logistical support continued to Federation delegations in the region with the registration of vehicles and with the purchase and customs clearance of spare parts. The department also provided support to the Regional Logistics Centre in the organisation of a regional Logistics Workshop for delegation and National Society staff.

Significant progress has been made during the first three quarters of the year in reducing the number of Hungarian-registered vehicles in use by delegations in former Yugoslavia. Vehicles have been transferred to the relevant country registration where possible, particularly in those cases of handover to the National Society or local Red Cross entity. This process is expected to continue in 1999.

Social Welfare Programme for Refugees - FYR Macedonia ●

Support continued through the Macedonian Red Cross to refugees from Bosnia currently accommodated in collective centres or with host families. Although the programme was due to end in June 1998, an

extension was agreed due to the slow pace of return for refugees in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The programme covers essential psycho-social support, education, information centre running costs, hygiene and medical needs.

Resource Development ●

Although a lack of funding has delayed implementation of this programme, the RD hopes to be able to initiate the assessment phase during the autumn/winter 1998, leading into a project to provide regular, tailored, needs-based technical assistance to enable the NSs to make measurable progress towards financial self-reliance.

Measles/Rubella Vaccination ●

The Federation is supporting the Romanian Red Cross with the implementation of a social mobilisation campaign to accompany a national measles/rubella vaccination programme for children aged 7-18 to be carried out by the Ministry of Health. The mobilisation campaign will pay special attention to reaching those children outside the school environment - those in Romany communities, isolated areas and street children. Information kits, posters and a TV video spot were prepared by the NS and distributed to branches for the launch of the campaign at the beginning of October. In addition to support for the mobilisation campaign, the Federation is also supplying some 578,000 doses of the measles/rubella vaccine. Following an initial impact evaluation planned for October, elements of the social mobilisation campaign may be adjusted accordingly. A final evaluation of the programme will be carried out early in 1999 in co-operation with other partners active in the health sector.

Regional Delegate Recruitment and Training Programme ●

Following a visit from Ewa Eriksson from Field Personnel in Geneva earlier in the year, the RD has embarked on a regional delegate recruitment and training programme, which is also being promoted through other Federation RDs world-wide in an effort to increase the diversity of sources for recruiting delegates. Following an introductory letter and information pack sent out to the NS in the region during the summer, three workshops are planned to introduce the programme to NS in the region (as well as Belarus, Moldova, Russia and Ukraine) and to provide training in selection, interview and assessment procedures and discussion of related NS human resource procedural issues. An administrative co-ordinator at the RD attended a Team Training Workshop in Geneva in September, together with the two facilitators for the regional programme. The first workshop will be held in Budapest in October, followed by workshops in Bratislava in November and Warsaw in January.

Outstanding needs

A number of priority programmes set out in the Emergency Appeal 1998 have not been implemented due to a lack of funding. Needs within the field of resource development are huge and an intensive, systematic programme of support is urgently required if National Societies are to continue to provide relevant, essential support to increasing numbers of vulnerable groups in a more competitive environment. The Regional Health and Social Welfare Programme as set out in the appeal has also been a victim of funding limitations. Despite continuing needs in Bulgaria, reduced donor interest brought the emergency Appeal programmes to an end in June 1998. Elements of the programme will continue through a number of partnerships developed during implementation of the Appeal since October 1998, although drastic cuts in beneficiary figures have been made. CHF 10,000 is needed to cover the expenses of a regional communication workshop in November for 15 NS participants. Also, CHF 5,000 is needed to cover a meeting of 5 NS Youth representatives involved in preparing regional youth programmes focusing on leadership training and training for trainers.

External relations - Government/UN/NGOs/Media

Co-operation and the co-ordination of activities with the Regional Delegation of the ICRC in Budapest has increased during the year. Regular briefing sessions take place between delegates and a number of joint initiatives have been organised. Development of the RD's co-ordinating role vis-à-vis donor interest in the region and in generating support from outside the region for NS activities continues.

Contributions

See Annex 1 for details.

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NAME: CENTRAL AND SOUTHERN EUROPE REGIONAL

ANNEX 1

APPEAL No. 01.34/98

PLEDGES RECEIVED

26/10/98

DO DONOR	CATEGORY	QUANTITY	UNIT	VALUE CHF	DATE	COMMENT	CASH
REQUESTED IN APPEAL----->							3,127,000

AUS	AUSTRIAN - RC			990	15/04/98	BOSNIA BLOOD DONOR	
GB	BRITISH - RC/GOVT			33,917	11/06/98	REG ID ACTIVITES	
OT	CYPRUS - RC			115	15/01/98		
DEN	DANISH - RC	250,000	DKK	54,250	31/07/98	DELEGATION SUPPORT	
GER	GERMAN - RC	10,000	DEM	8,418	24/08/98	VISITOR SERVICE	
ICE	ICELANDIC - RC	500,000	ISK	10,078	11/03/98		
ICE	ICELANDIC - RC			10,000	03/07/98	POPULATION MOVEMENTS	
ITA	ITALIAN - RC	900,000	ITL	751	11/05/98		
NET	NETHERLANDS - RC	55,863	NLG	40,445	19/03/98	DEL BUSTRAAN	
NOR	NORWEGIAN - RC	1,500,000	NOK	297,687	28/03/00	DISASTER PREPAREDNESS	
NZD	NEW ZEALAND - RC	78	CHF	78	07/07/98	REGIONAL DELEGATION	
SWE	SWEDEN - RC	234,000	SEK	42,143	24/03/98	ALBANIAN RC SOCIAL PROG.	
SWE	SWEDEN - RC			5,156	31/05/98	BALTIC CONFERENCE	
SWE	SWEDEN - RC	5,324	USD	7,906	30/04/98	LITHUANIA DEVELOPMENT	
SWE	SWEDEN - RC	5,324	USD	7,906	30/04/98	ESTONIA	
SWE	SWEDEN - RC			5,157	31/05/98	LATVIA	
SWI	SWITZERLAND - RC			10,000	09/09/98	FINANCIAL SELF RELIANCE	
USA	PRM	50,000	USD	74,875	31/01/98		
USA	PRM			160,000	30/06/98		
SUB/TOTAL RECEIVED IN CASH				769,872	CHF		

KIND AND SERVICES (INCL. PERSONNEL)

DO	DONOR	CATEGORY	QUANTITY	UNIT	VALUE CHF	DATE	COMMENT
Den	Denmark	Delegates	60,955	30/06/98	Estimated contribution		
Fra	France	Delegates	1,169	30/06/98	Estimated contribution		
GB	United Kingdom	Delegates	54,275	30/06/98	Estimated contribution		
Ger	Germany	Delegates	55,955	30/06/98	Estimated contribution		
Net	Netherlands	Delegates	53,440	30/06/98	Estimated contribution		
Swe	Sweden	Delegates	30,227	30/06/98	Estimated contribution		
Swe	Sweden	Delegates	42,752	30/06/98	Estimated contribution		

SUB/TOTAL RECEIVED IN KIND/SERVICES **298,773** **CHF**

NOT REQUESTED IN APPEAL

DO	DONOR	CATEGORY	QUANTITY	UNIT	VALUE CHF	DATE	COMMENT
SUB/TOTAL RECEIVED			0		CHF		