

9 October 1998

BOSNIA-HERZEGOVINA: EMERGENCY SERVICE, REHABILITATION AND DEVELOPMENT

appeal no. 01.35/98 (revised)

situation report no. 3

period covered: June-August 1998

Several decisions by the Office of the High Representative to Bosnia-Herzegovina came into effect during the reporting period which served to increase freedom of movement between the country's two entities and to improve economic stability. The International Federation donated vehicles to the local branch structures in both entities to facilitate hand-over of the Home Care and Mobile Technical Team programmes.

On 18 September the International Federation revised its Appeal for Bosnia-Herzegovina downwards from CHF 24,308,000 to CHF 14,568,000.

The context

The war in Bosnia and Herzegovina (B-H) between 1992 and 1995, which was ended by the Dayton/Paris Peace Accord in December 1995, left over 100,000 people dead and forced another 2.1 million to flee their homes. Due to local resistance and the complexity of the reconstruction and return process, implementation of the peace accords has proven to be exceedingly difficult and slow, despite international pressure for compliance. The International Federation began its work in B-H in 1995 and this year is assisting 350,000 beneficiaries through the 146 local Red Cross branches in the country (82 in the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina and 64 in the Republika Srpska).

Latest events

Bosnia and Herzegovina's economic situation continues to improve slowly, despite an unemployment rate which has remained well above 50%. Legislation passed in the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina established a minimum monthly wage of DEM 130 per month.

Freedom of movement between the two entities improved enormously with the introduction of the new uniform automobile license plates. Inter-entity traffic was reported to have doubled soon after the distribution of the plates. Another of the Office of the High Representative's (OHR) decisions took full effect during June when the new "convertible mark" became the official legal tender in B-H (even though the German mark, the Croatian kuna and the FR Yugoslav dinar will continue to be used in certain parts of the country). Another of OHR's initiatives was the issuing of new passports, which were put into circulation during July.

Ministries of the Interior from both entities signed three agreements on co-operation regarding a number of issues, such as the level and volume of security for persons under special protection, the delivery of currency, and the combined action against the illegal production of drugs.

Hostilities in neighbouring FR Yugoslavia created a small exodus of ethnic Albanians from the Kosovo province. By the end of September, approximately 6,000 had arrived in B-H seeking refuge or asylum.

Both entity-level Red Cross organisations were involved in the Strategic Planning Process, the end result being the Appeal for 1999 and the Visions for the Future, which detail the goals and expectations of the Red Cross for 2001, and the various capacities which the structures hope to attain by that time. Both structures (through their various commissions) used a two-day session, facilitated by the International Federation, to formulate steps for achieving their respective goals.

As part of the continuing hand-over process, the International Federation donated a total of 31 vehicles to the Red Cross structures in Bosnia-Herzegovina: 14 were given to the Red Cross of the Republika Srpska (RCRS) and 17 to the Red Cross of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina (RCFBH). The donation of vehicles from the Home Care and the Mobile Technical Teams programmes was valued at approximately CHF 640,000.

Red Cross/Red Crescent action

Home Care ●

Throughout the summer months the home care programme continued to function smoothly, as the 963 volunteers throughout the country (537 in the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina and 426 in the Republika Srpska), assisted an average of 12,500 beneficiaries each month.

Statistics for the Home Care Programme

	<i>June</i>		<i>July</i>		<i>August</i>		Totals
	FBH	RS	FBH	RS	FBH	RS	
Beneficiaries	5,386	7,106	5,365	7,161	5,273	7,267	---
Visits	27,172	27,494	25,884	30,709	24,816	31,134	167,209
Referrals	1,496	1,022	1,909	1,107	1,614	697	7,845

NB: *More than half of the beneficiaries are visited at least once per week.*

The Home Care Co-ordinators of the two entities met for the first time to discuss the future of the programme. More such meetings, involving all cantonal/regional co-ordinators, are expected.

Representatives from the Centres for Social Work attended Home Care seminars, thereby strengthening the relationship between the various centres and the local RCs.

Mobile Technical Teams (MTTs) ●

A total of 29 MTTs were responsible for 4,336 interventions throughout B-H during the three reporting months, making minor repairs such as putting plastic sheeting and/or glass panes in windows, replacing damaged roofing with plastic sheeting and/or roof tiles, hanging doors, cutting and storing firewood, plumbing and other repairs, as necessary to the homes of vulnerable elderly people referred by the Home Care volunteers.

Along with the regular work, some of the MTTs also carried out repairs on collective centres, Red Cross premises, Red Cross soup kitchens and Red Cross summer camps. For the most part, the teams continue to function at maximum efficiency, the only drawback being that the teams do not cover all of the municipalities in the country.

Beneficiary Numbers for the MTT Programme

June	July	August	Total
1,256	1,545	1,535	4,336

NB: The numbers represent the sum of reports provided. For June, not all MTT reports arrived from the field for inclusion in the totals.

Field trips were made to many of the FBH area teams to introduce the RCFBH's MTT co-ordinator to the MTT staff around the entity, including visits to Mostar, Tesanj, Gorazde, Bihac and Tuzla. With the changes taking place in the programme, the entity-level MTT co-ordinators will assume the primary responsibility for managing the programmes in future.

Relief ●

The following goods from the Banja Luka warehouse were distributed during the reporting period:

Item	Donor	Quantity
Diapers	ECHO	127,230
Aprons	ECHO	1,000
Elderly Aid Parcels	ECHO	7,854
Hygiene Parcels	ECHO	21,176
Clothing/Footwear	Swedish RC	945
Washing Powder	Norwegian RC/Govt.	2,000
Disinfectant	Norwegian RC/Govt.	500
Soap	Norwegian RC/Govt.	1,000
Diapers	Austrian RC	1,280
Elderly Aid Parcels	ECHO	3,307
Mother/Child Parcels	ECHO	1,049
Kitchen Set	ECHO	586
First Aid Bags	Austrian RC	225
T-shirts		14
TV, VCR, Projector		1/1/1
Duvets	Danish RC	853
Pillows	Danish RC	878

NB: Quantity is either in units, litres or in bales (depending on the item).

Institutional Development ●

Branch Support/Reconstruction

Monthly cash allowances were made as follows: 146 local branches received DEM 300; 17 cantonal/regional offices were provided with DEM 500; and the two headquarters received DEM 1,200.

Priority cantonal/regional and municipal branch reconstruction projects were submitted by the headquarters of each of the Red Cross structures, with the Red Cross regional office in Banja Luka receiving top priority.

Traditional Red Cross Activities

The first compulsory immunisation programme was launched by the Red Cross of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina. This programme aims to inform parents of the need to immunise their children against diseases, as well as other measures to ensure their children's health. Brochures for AIDS and Sexually Transmitted Diseases were finalised as part of the RCFBH's Public Health Education campaign. Both were published in early September and were immediately made available to the public at an international symposium in Neum on 14-17 September.

A First Aid competition for the Red Cross of Republika Srpska took place, with teams from all seven regions taking part. In the on-going distribution of First Aid Bags to the Red Cross structures, another 84 were provided, bringing the overall number to 281. A process of standardisation for blood donor recruitment in the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina was agreed between the entity's Red Cross and transfusiology departments.

National Society Development

A setback occurred in late August when the working draft statutes for a National Society were rejected by the Republika Srpska Red Cross. However, the Assembly re-committed its executive officers to continue work on the statutes.

An inter-entity Red Cross Working Group for Buildings was established and facilitated by the International Federation. The purpose of the group is to guide the process of launching a special appeal with the intention of rebuilding and refurbishing buildings of the cantonal/regional Red Cross branches in addition to the entity and national headquarters of the Red Cross (once the national society is established). The members of the Working Group have met twice. A launch date for the Appeal was provisionally scheduled for early in 1999.

Youth Summer Camps

The Federation provided significant financial support to the two entity Red Crosses to allow them to run seven Red Cross Youth Summer Camps in - Tjentiste, Balkana, Modrica, Una-Sana, Gorazde, Tuzla and Mostar. More than 3,400 children took part in the camps.

Population Movement ●

A paper entitled "*Population Movement Monitoring and Response: 1998 Projects*" was prepared and forwarded to the Desk Officers of various Participating National Societies and to members of the Repatriation Contact Group with a request for funds. Unfortunately, no National Societies responded with either comments or financial assistance and therefore the International Federation reluctantly decided to abandon its work in this area. The Population Movement Delegate was also not replaced when her mission ended in August. However, the delegation's work commitment to the vital work of the Social Policy Task Force continues, though the International Federation is urgently seeking CHF 21,000 to fund its share of this initiative.

The International Federation was one of the initiators of this project -- which is working with Bosnia and Herzegovina's government on ways of improving the social state of the country's populace as the welfare system is moved back to the responsibility of the national and entity governments -- and has maintained that the Task Force is an increasingly important endeavour, citing the desperate situation of some vulnerable groups in the country.

Children Affected by Armed Conflict (CABAC) ●

This programme's activities coincide with the school year, and as such, CABAC closed for the summer in June, though its instructors were included in psychological (i.e. stress and trauma), workshops.

Public Awareness ●

Translations of the *1998 World Disasters Report* were undertaken, as was the publication of the fourth edition of *Crossroads*, the International Federation's country-wide newsletter about Red Cross activities in the country and internationally.

Outstanding needs

A Revised Appeal for the Federation's programmes in Bosnia and Herzegovina was launched on 18 September and sought CHF 1,625,000 to cover outstanding programme needs for 1998.

A number of MTTs (specifically those based in Olovo, Gorazde, Zepce, Tesanj, Banja Luka and Zvornik) have been operating without sponsorship for the last six months. Funding for these teams, up until the end the year--and retroactive to April--is needed.

Development funding is still lacking. Over the last year, much progress has been witnessed in the overall development of strong Red Cross structures, but this momentum needs to be maintained. In the wake of the excellent co-operation between the Red Cross structures seen during the Strategic Planning Process, the International Federation must be able to show that assistance can be still be provided. Furthermore, programmes such as the Income Generation and Fund-Raising initiatives require initial capital and these projects are central to the long-term sustainability of Red Cross efforts in B-H.

External relations - Government/UN/NGOs/Media

In July, the UNHCR called together various international organisations to discuss the issue of collective centres, but other organisations were reluctant to embrace UNHCR's approach aimed at assisting only those people leaving the collective centres and returning to their pre-war homes.

An initial meeting with UNICEF was held in mid-August. The purpose of the meeting was to share information on health programmes and to discuss possible co-operation between UNICEF and the local RC. High level meetings were also held with the Office of the High Representative, OSCE, WHO, UNHCR, USAID, the British Refugee Council and several embassies in Sarajevo.

A team of British journalists from the British Red Cross, ITV and the Daily Express filmed the assistance being offered to land-mine victims in the country, as well as the elderly beneficiaries of the Home Care and the MTT programmes. Press and television media were present for the handover of home care and technical team vehicles in Pale and in Sarajevo.

Contributions

See Annex 1 for details.

Conclusion

Beneficiary targets were met and the aid provided was greatly appreciated by both the Red Cross structures and, more importantly, the people receiving the assistance.

The International Federation's operations in B-H are well established and highly efficient. Beneficiary targets continue to be met, though the process of re-registering vehicles which were handed over to the entity Red Cross organisations, temporarily affected the beneficiary figures of the Home Care and MTT programmes. The shortfall in operational and developmental funding is, however, a major threat to the International Federation's objectives in Bosnia and Herzegovina and it is hoped that additional support from international donors will be offered in the last quarter of 1998.

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