

OPERATIONS 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

BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA: FLOODS

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The Federation's mission is to improve the lives of vulnerable people by mobilizing the power of humanity. It is the world's largest humanitarian organization and its millions of volunteers are active in over 181 countries.

In Brief

Appeal No. 11/2004; Operations Update no. 2; Period covered: 20 May to 22 June 2004; Appeal coverage: 61.9 %; ([click here to go directly to the Contributions List](#))

Appeal history:

- Launched on 20 April 2004 for CHF 333,000 (USD 266,200 or EUR 219,110) for three months to assist 8,412 beneficiaries.
- Disaster Relief Emergency Funds (DREF) allocated: CHF 50,000.

Related Emergency or Annual Appeals: Bosnia and Herzegovina Floods Emergency Appeal (Appeal no. 11/04). For details, please see the website at http://www.ifrc.org/cgi/pdf_appeals.pl?04/1104.pdf

Bosnia and Herzegovina Annual Appeal 2004. For details, please see the website at http://www.ifrc.org/cgi/pdf_appeals.pl?annual04/017304.pdf

Operational Summary: The heavy rains in mid-April 2004 resulted in the rapid rise of the water level of rivers in Bosnia & Herzegovina. The last estimations indicate that the floods, which occurred due to the rise of the rivers' water level, have: affected 300,000 people; flooded 5,000 houses; and caused several hundred families to evacuate their homes. In addition, the floods also severely affected 20,000 hectares of land with crops and flooded water- wells, which resulted in the water being polluted. In order to alleviate the suffering of the most vulnerable flood victims, the Federation, with its emergency appeal, aimed to provide assistance for 8,412 of the poorest and most- affected flood victims. The relief distribution has been a great help, as eighty percent of the population in the affected areas lives on agricultural proceeds and their crops were damaged with the floods.

For further information specifically related to this operation please contact:

- In Bosnia and Herzegovina: Mr. Brano Dursun, Chair person, e-mail: rksbh@dckbh.org , phone: + 397 33 200 151, fax: +387 33 200 148
- In Bosnia and Herzegovina: Mr. Frans Lommers, Federation Representative, e-mail: ifrcbih02@ifrc.org ,phone: +387 33 666 009, fax: +387 33 666 010
- In Geneva: Erja Reinikainen, Federation Regional Officer, e-mail: erja.reinikainen@ifrc.org ,phone: +41 22 730 4319, fax: +41 22 730 0395

For longer-term programmes, please refer to the Federation's Annual Appeal

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>

Background

Due to heavy rains between the 6th and 14th April 2004, the water level of the rivers Pliva, Vrbas, Bosna, Sana, Vrbanja, Josavka, Una, Lasva, Zdena, Drina and Sava rose rapidly. As a consequence, the water spilled over the river banks; flooding large areas of the regions Banja Luka, Prijedor, Mrkonjic-Grad and Dobojski regions, as well as the Una-Sana, Zenica-Dobojski, Srednja Bosna and Posavina cantons.

Forty-eight municipalities were flooded. The most affected municipalities declared a state of emergency at the height of the floods. The respective regions and cantons consequently declared a state of elemental disaster. According to the last estimations, these floods have affected 300,000 people. Around 5,000 houses were flooded and several hundred families had to be evacuated from their homes. The floods have damaged 20,000 hectares of crop land and washed away several bridges. The traffic was temporarily broken, due to landslides and water that partially flooded the main roads. The water flooded water-wells and broke into the water network system, which has resulted in the water being polluted and unsuitable for drinking. The sewage overflows contaminated wells which inhabitants of the affected areas rely on for their water supply. There is a great concern that land mines laid during the war may have been washed away by the floods and appear in previously land mine-clean areas.

Operational developments

The Red Cross Society of Bosnia and Herzegovina (RCSBiH) undertook immediate action to save lives and property. Around 360 Red Cross volunteers helped with the evacuation and distribution of food and water to the affected population. The RCSBiH mobilised all available human and material resources. Local Red Cross branches released and distributed the limited emergency stocks of basic relief items to the most vulnerable.

The Red Cross, in co-operation with Civil Protection and the authorities, was involved in all field activities, and was responsible for the organization and realization of care for the affected population. Disaster Preparedness (DP) coordinators in the affected regions and cantons were coordinating work with Civil Protection at the municipal level.

Entity Red Cross Secretary Generals, DP co-ordinators and RCSBiH Regional Disaster Response Team (RDRT) members carried out field assessments, together with Civil Protection. Based on the findings in the field, the team defined selection criteria for beneficiaries and the Red Cross branches used the criteria to identify 8,412 beneficiaries in the affected Regions and Cantons. RCSBiH Plan of action has been finalised on 22 April 2004.

Contributions of Swedish Red Cross and Belgian Red Cross-Flanders enabled the RCSBiH to start the response operation. The International Federation office in Sarajevo supported the National Society's DP coordinators in choosing the best supplier and procurement of 1,800 food parcels, 8,412 hygiene parcels and 2,200 litres of disinfectants. The distribution of disinfectants, food and hygiene parcels started immediately after the Regional/Cantonal Red Cross branches received the goods. The first distribution was completed on 23 May 2004.

Distribution of 1,000 food parcels (donation of Republika Srpska Government), 24,389 litres of juice and 42,444 litres of mineral water and milk (donation of Slovenia Government) was completed in May 2004 as well.

A target group of 2,500 beneficiaries, for second and third distribution, was identified in the course of the first distribution.

Funds have been pledged by the Swedish Red Cross (CHF 67,600), Belgian Red Cross-Flanders (CHF 77,975) Austrian Red Cross (CHF 31,190), Japanese Red Cross (CHF 10,594) and Norwegian Red Cross (CHF 18,900).

Red Cross and Red Crescent action - objectives, progress, impact

Emergency relief (food and basic non-food items)

Objective: Provide assistance for 8,412 of the poorest and most-affected flood victims, consisting of food and hygiene parcels, jerry cans and disinfectants.

Progress/Achievements

The branches of the RCSBiH identified 2,500 beneficiaries for a second distribution in Regions and Cantons according to the defined selection criteria. Food parcels and disinfectants were procured and distributed for a total amount of CHF 88,031. Purchasing and pre-positioning of 2,500 individual food parcels in two warehouses started on 2 June 2004 and was completed on 6 June 2004. Pre-positioning of the relief items was conducted as shown below:

Destination	Number of food parcels
Novi Travnik warehouse	1.250
Gradiska warehouse	1.250
TOTAL	2.500

204 litres of disinfectants were distributed in the village of Celic, Tuzla Canton.

The second distribution of 2,500 individual food parcels to selected beneficiaries started on 07 June 2004 and was completed on 22 June 2004, in accordance with the Plan of Distribution indicated below:

Region/Canton/Municipality	Food parcels
SREDNJE-BOSANSKI CANTON	
Gornji Vakuf	60
Bugojno	65
Donji Vakuf	60
Jajce	40
Travnik	40
UNA-SANA CANTON	
Bihac	55
Kljuc	55
Bosanska Krupa	50
Buzim	50
Sanski Most	55
Velika Kladusa	25
POSAVSKI CANTON	
Orasje	35
Domaljevac-Samac	35
Odzak	35
SARAJEVO CANTON	
Ilidza	50
RCSBiH warehouse	125
TUZLA CANTON	
Tuzla	20
Srebrenik	30
Zivinice	50
Lukavac	30
Doboj-istok	40
Gracanica	30
ZENICA-DOBOJ CANTON	
Doboj jug	40
Usora	40
Maglaj	45
Zenica	40

HERCEGOVINA-NERETVA CANTON	
Ravno	50
MRKONJIC GRAD REGION	
Sipovo	0
Jezero	0
PRIJEDOR REGION	
Prijedor	218
Kostajnica	40
Novi Grad	40
K. Dubica	40
BANJA LUKA REGION	
Banja Luka	80
Celinac	60
Kotor Varos	60
Laktasi	70
Gradiska	72
Srbac	120
DOBOJ REGION	
Derventa	70
Srpski Brod	300
Modrica	0
Vukosavlje	0
BIJELJINA REGION	
Bijeljina	40
Samac	40
TOTAL	2500

Depending on the available funds, the National Society should purchase additional 6,112 food parcels and 3,900 jerry cans for one more distribution.

Impact:

Bosnia and Herzegovina is still recovering from years of war during which the economy was totally ruined. Eighty percent of the population in the affected areas lives on agricultural proceeds. Having in mind that the loss of the crops will affect food availability and prices of food at the market in the medium and long-term, it could be said that this relief distribution will be of great help to the poorest and most affected whose property and crops were damaged by the floods.

Constraints:

RCSBiH has sufficient human resources while lacking material resources, which has rather negative implications on disaster response.

Objective: Promotion of activities of the Red Cross and strengthening of the RCSBiH image.

Progress/Achievements

RCSBiH's DP co-ordinators have prepared the guidelines for the local Red Cross organisations on how to involve the local media and co-operate with them to ensure the visibility of the Red Cross during the distribution of relief items to the beneficiaries. Most of the local Red Cross branches in the affected areas already have well established relations with the media in their regions and cantons, therefore, the response from the media was good.

The emblem of the National Society and donors was used on food and hygiene parcels, which maximized the visibility of the Red Cross in the field.

An RCSBiH-appointed monitoring team is responsible for verifying the validity of beneficiary lists through random checks. Based on the reports from the monitoring, 70% of beneficiaries are dependent on agricultural proceeds which are destroyed by floods, 15% of beneficiaries were evacuated during the floods while 85% decided to stay in their houses despite the fact that the ground floors were flooded. The beneficiaries expressed gratitude to donors and the Red Cross for the efforts made in order to alleviate the consequences of floods.

Impact:

Distribution of parcels with the National Society emblem and visits to beneficiaries by Red Cross volunteers made the presence of the Red Cross in the field visible and strengthened the image of the RCSBiH.

The goal of monitoring and evaluation is to show what should be improved and developed in the Disaster Management programme in order to make RCSBiH much more efficient in similar situations in the future. A meeting with all the people engaged in this operation is scheduled for September 2004. The goal of the meeting is to analyse the response activities in the field and the organisation of the whole operation.

Constraints:

Although there were no major problems in the field, the management and coordination at the RCSBiH headquarters level were identified as areas which need to be improved.

Federation Coordination

The International Federation, assisted by the two RCSBiH DP coordinators, coordinated the international support to the National Society for the people affected by floods. It was in charge of quotations and tendering procedures, signing of the contracts, and financial administration.

Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement -- Principles and initiatives

This operation improved the cooperation between Red Cross branches and authorities on the municipal level and the cooperation between the Entities' Red Cross branches. It will also define roles and responsibilities of the different actors (communities, local authorities, national and international organizations) in case of disaster. The capacity of the RCSBiH in disaster management will be strengthened.

National Society Capacity Building

RCSBiH was to hold a Presidency meeting on 24 June 2004. One of the topics of the meeting was to be the Disaster Management programme in RCSBiH. The Presidency was also due to analyse and discuss the National Society's response to the floods and, based on the outcome, identify necessary steps in the development of Disaster Management strategies on national level.

The next evaluation meeting will take place at the beginning of September 2004.

Communications – Advocacy and Public Information

RCSBiH representatives in the field gave interviews to the media. The public was informed through the press conferences about the roles and responsibilities of the Red Cross and the measures which were taken.

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