

29 June 1999

RED CROSS & RED CRESCENT INFORMATION

Report No. 47

This report is published twice-weekly as a general update on Red Cross Red Crescent activities during the Balkans crisis, targeting primarily the Movement's components and supporters. Today's text can also be found on the internet: www.ifrc.org and www.icrc.org

LATEST EVENTS

Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia)

The Kraljevo joint field office has reported the figure of 10,340 Kosovo Serb displaced living in private accommodation in the region, while 2,500 displaced are in collective accommodation. The Nis joint field office reports there are 12,887 displaced in that region. According to the Novi Sad joint field office there are some 1,500 displaced from Kosovo (registered by the Red Cross).

Relief distributions: On Friday, 25 June, four trucks delivered assistance (3,000 individual parcels, baby parcels and 150 mattresses) to Kraljevo. The Yugoslav Red Cross (YRC) received a total of 150,000 cans of tinned meat for 50,000 beneficiaries. Emergency assistance (sugar, oil, pasta, salt and yeast) for 2,000 beneficiaries was also delivered to the Red Cross Belgrade branch.

On Saturday, 26 June, a convoy of two trucks and two semi-trailers delivered food and non-food assistance (hygiene parcels, baby hygiene parcels, sugar, oil, pasta, salt and yeast) to towns in Serbia: Kragujevac (6,000 beneficiaries), Velika Plana (1,000), Smederevo (1,000), Paracin (800) and Jagodina (300).

A convoy of five trucks brought assistance (6,000 individual parcels, 6,000 kg of sugar, pasta, wheat flour and oil, 3,000 kg of salt and 600 kg of yeast) from Belgrade to the transit warehouse in Nis on 26 June. This assistance will be sent on to Pristina.

On Monday, 28 June, one fuel tanker with 3,000 litres of diesel left for Kraljevo and another with the same amount went to Nis. One landcruiser took medical/pharmacy assistance for the humanitarian pharmacy to Novi Sad.

Kosovo

Relief distributions: The Red Cross relief programme in Kosovo is concentrating on providing food to small villages which are not covered by other NGOs. In the past three days, 70 MT of food was delivered to villages in Srbica, Gnjilane, Komorane and Kosovska Mitrovica. Many

of the villages supplied are also acting as distribution centres for isolated communities with insecure access roads.

Health: Work has begun on a wells-cleaning programme. Four teams will be established (two will work in Glogovac, the third team in Srbica and the fourth will concentrate on special cases).

External relations, information and publicity: The release of prisoners received worldwide coverage in radio, television and printed media. An interview was also given to the BBC on the humanitarian situation of the Serbian population in Kosovo and to ABC on ICRC action in Kosovo.

Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Montenegro)

According to UNHCR figures 16,266 Kosovo Albanian displaced people returned to Kosovo last week. The exodus of Serbs and Montenegrins from Kosovo is ongoing. A total of 18,944 displaced have arrived in Montenegro since 9 June (8,771 proceeded to Serbia). According to UNHCR figures, the number of newly arrived displaced from 18 to 25 June is 1,329, of whom 376 proceeded to Serbia.

Relief distributions: Red Cross branches in the north and south continued to distribute individual and hygiene parcels as well as some other non-food items to newly arrived displaced. A convoy of five trucks/semi-trailers delivered assistance (4,800 individual parcels, 30 MT of sugar, pasta, 4.5 MT of yeast and 15 MT of white beans) to Podgorica on Friday, 25 June.

Shelter: All construction and facilities have been completed for the Pine Tree III camp with the exception of electrical power. The number of displaced registered at this camp is 370 (down from 563 on 23 June). A significant number of displaced are leaving Ulcinj to return to Kosovo, and some of them have removed tents from Pine Tree III camp.

Health: The overall health situation in Rozaje and Ulcinj remains stable. An assessment of the water/sanitation facilities of all camps and centres in Rozaje was undertaken on 22/23 June. In most cases, the conditions were satisfactory. The existing 20 latrines at Dekor II camp will be replaced with ten new ones. A health assessment was also made at Dekor I and II tent camps. The situation remains stable. The clinic has mainly seen cases of respiratory tract infections, hypertension and urinary tract infections.

Tracing: Displaced in Montenegro used the telephone services provided by the ICRC to make 2,233 calls, while nine persons gave their names to be broadcast on world services.

Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia

According to UNHCR there are an estimated 59,000 refugees living in Macedonia. On Monday 25 June the first convoy of UNHCR busses carried about 350 refugees from the Stankovec camp in Macedonia back home to the Pristina area of Kosovo. Refugees have been rapidly moving out of the camps. Stankovec II is empty, while Stankovec I and Cegrane have broad areas of vacant tent sites. Refugees have been leaving Macedonia at the rate of 9,000 to 15,000 per day, about 75% from host families.

Relief distributions: The current pipeline was designed to provide 117,000 hygiene parcels per month, to build a three months stock for relief distribution to refugees in host families and social cases. With the rapid repatriation of refugees to Kosovo, there will be a temporary surplus while the planning figures are adjusted to the need. Branch by branch assessments are

underway to make the transition from distribution to refugees in host families to a programme for social cases.

<u>Logistics/Relief Distribution (24-27 June)</u>	<u>Received:</u>	<u>Distributed to:</u>	<u>Distributed to:</u>
RELIEF SUPPLIES		<u>Refugees</u>	<u>Social Cases</u>
Mattresses	-	156	-
Mattresses (German RC)	-	1,843	-
Blankets	9,990	-	-
Hygiene parcels (Netherlands)	2,074	1,222	5,658
Hygiene parcels (American RC)	4,928	4,032	2,896
Hygiene parcels (French RC)	4,346	-	-
Cooking sets	-	1,100	-
Baby parcels (Swedish RC)	-	775	-

The Macedonian Red Cross is distributing the ICRC's emergency stock of 1.5 litre water bottles and high protein biscuits to refugees as they pass border points; 11,802 bottles of water and 960 high protein biscuits were dispatched to Blace and Jazinec.

Health: The ICRC has adapted mine awareness materials prepared for Bosnia and translated them into Albanian in Tirana. The first printing (in Albanian) of 20,000 brochures is available today, with a printing of 5,000 in the Serbian language available by the end of the week. The ICRC in Pristina has prepared a one-page mine awareness information sheet in Albanian and Serbian, 25,000 will be printed in Skopje (20,000 in Albanian and 5,000 in the Serbian language). The Macedonian Red Cross will distribute all of these materials to refugees as they return. An ICRC delegate will review these materials with MRC volunteers on the spot at the main border points.

External relations, information and publicity: International Red Cross and Red Crescent delegates conducted interviews or briefings with National Geographic and the British Red Cross over the weekend.

Albania

According to estimates provided by the government of Albania and the UNHCR, the number of people leaving have been around 20,000 per day--the highest cumulative daily totals of returns were registered in the latter half of last week. The latest figure available was 218,298. With organised returns having started on 28 June, the return process is expected to increase its rate (with a possible lull after the initial rush). The Emergency Management Group expects that 280,000 will have returned in the first 2-3 weeks--which might be conservative. Small, but nonetheless, increasing numbers of refugees are transiting overnight at the main square and in the refugee camps in Kukes.

With the UNHCR beginning the organised repatriation programme, it is likely that the refugee population will fall to less than 200,000 by the end of the week--with expectations that approximately 150,000 will remain on 1 August. The spontaneous repatriation has occurred much faster than was expected. People in host families are expected to leave before the end of the month. This fast-paced return process is being matched by the Red Cross Red Crescent in re-focussing its efforts in Albania. Overheads are being brought down: satellite and mobile telephones taken back, and the number of vehicles reduced.

Relief distributions: On 25 June, the relief delegates from across the country met to discuss the upcoming bulk food distribution and the ever-changing situation (including the lack of security) in Albania.

The six warehouses in Kukes are now sufficiently stocked with food and non-food items. During the last week a major review has been carried out, with some relief items being delivered to the Krume warehouse, ready for the forthcoming distribution.

Last week, the Red Cross Red Crescent operation dispatched 535.2 MT of goods. Some 34,161 Swedish Red Cross food parcels were delivered to the region, a combined 142.6 MT of wheat flour (17,820 rations) was dispatched to three regions. Additionally, 9,850 litres of oil, 7,000 kg of sugar, 600 mattresses, 9,534 hygiene kits and five tents were forwarded to the field.

Shelter: In effect, Kukes has two operational refugee camps remaining: Kukes I (Italian Red Cross) and the UAE camp. Due mainly to security problems, Kukes II will only accommodate a very small number of refugees, and will be used as a logistical base for vehicles transporting refugees back to the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. The majority of the original caseload of refugees in the two camps have moved back across the border. As such, most of the camp population now consists of refugees in transit. The Italian Red Cross camp on the night of 27 June, accommodated 70 refugees, of whom 50 were only staying overnight, on their way back home.

Health: The UAE and Italian camp hospitals are still operational, albeit with few patients. The UAE hospital cares for vulnerable patients in the various wards, who are unable to travel back to the Federal Republic. During the past week, the Finnish Red Cross Basic Health Clinic treated a total of 124 patients and is currently making preparations for closure. Once this happens, the structure and team will be on standby in Skopje. The Italian Red Cross field hospital treated 40 patients between 24 and 26 June. It now has an ambulance service near the border, assisting refugees returning to Kosovo. The Red Cross Red Crescent helicopter transported a landmine survivor on Friday from the Kukes Hospital to Tirana. Implementation of the co-ordinated Red Cross Red Crescent health operation for returnees has begun. The French Red Cross opened a first aid post in Mjede on 25 June, the Japanese Red Cross's ambulances are in the areas of Kukes and Mjede and other parts of the plan (detailed in report No 46) were put into action. The Shkoder-based ERU has become fully integrated into operation.

Psycho social programme: The programme's first progress report (1-25 June) states that many of the refugees who fled into Albania experienced multiple events that could be classified as traumatic. Other factors combined with these traumatic events resulted in an accumulation of stress. While most of the efforts of the Albanian Red Cross have been directed towards the delivery of relief aid, the Society has also provided informational and referral services, and linking special cases with organisations that can provide assistance. In part, because of the capacity of the ARC and the rapidly changing events, the original plan to institute a new psycho-social department has been changed. Instead elements of psycho-social support will be incorporated into existing programmes: youth, disaster preparedness, social welfare, and health education.

The psycho-social programme plans to provide the community with a multi-purpose Red Cross service centre in Tirana that can incorporate activities for youth, social welfare activities and services, psycho-social support, and disaster preparedness services. It will initially focus on psycho-social services for refugees/host families but evolve into a community service centre. Incorporated will be income generating activities to cover maintenance and staffing. There are also plans for various community service programmes.

Tracing: The ICRC Protection/Tracing Team, based at the Kukes sub-delegation, has registered/re-registered 26 vulnerable people at the UAE and Kukes hospital, who have been unable to make successful links with family members in either Kosovo or other countries. Photographs were also taken of the patients, who include elderly people, handicapped, the mentally ill, etc. The files will be transferred to the ICRC Protection/Tracing team in Pristina, where staff will hopefully be able to trace their family members by visiting their former villages.

The Kukes team is still systematically contacting people formerly registered for tracing requests, to determine whether or not people are still living in Kukes and to find out if they have made contact with their relatives. They are also dealing with family reunion requests, with such requests only being registered if the enquirer intends to remain in Albania for some time. A family reunification occurred on Friday, between a 17 year old boy, who was transported from Tirana and reunited with his family, who are currently in the UAE Camp. The demand for the satellite telephones has diminished in conjunction with the departing refugee population, with only 553 calls being made during the past four days at the Red Cross Red Crescent telephone office and along the Morini border road.

In the period between 24-26 June, the ICRC's tracing department had 124 visits. The main office reports that 445 telephone calls were placed, 362 radio messages were made, 6 tracing cases were opened (and 2 were closed), and 5 family reunion cases were opened (and 1 was closed). These numbers represent a further decrease in the averages for all of the categories which the service tracks. Overall, there have now been 6,219 visits, 33,274 telephone calls, 28,788 radio messages, 281 cases of unaccompanied vulnerable, 49 tracing cases have been opened and 17 closed, 149 cases of parents having lost children have been registered, 202 cases of unaccompanied children, 480 family reunion cases have been opened and 80 have been closed. Finally, 58 Red Cross messages have come in and 17 have gone out.

Albanian Red Cross: New plans for smaller distributions in Kukes town, to include a reduction in the number of distribution points, are being made by the Albanian Red Cross. Furthermore, the Society is preparing for the forthcoming large Krume Town distribution exercise. Its staff are also working closely with the local authorities to verify the beneficiary list in the Kukes and Has districts--a challenging exercise, as the numbers of refugees departing increases daily. Volunteers are heavily involved in the distribution of the Red Cross Red Crescent mine awareness leaflets at the various different information points in Kukes, and refugees staying overnight in Kukes.

Participating National Societies: The Secretary-General of the Australian Red Cross arrived over the weekend and will be visiting the joint delegation. A Memorandum of Understanding was drafted with the Albanian Red Cross, the Swiss Red Cross and the International Federation, regarding relief distribution.

The Vice President of the Japanese Red Cross, the Director of the International Department and the Japanese Red Cross representative in Tirana visited Kukes on 24 June, and met with the Finnish Red Cross delegates and discussed issues concerning the establishment of ERU medical units. They also discussed at length the Red Cross Red Crescent relief programme and visited the Italian and UAE camp hospitals.

Several Red Cross/Red Crescent National Societies (NS) are providing psycho-social programmes or social welfare programmes for specific populations while others have links with support programmes through NGOs, UNICEF and local organisations.

Belgium (Fl) - Netherlands Red Cross camp in Vlore: psycho-social (1 psychologist)

Belgium (Fr) Red Cross camp and in Durres town: psycho-social (2 psychologists)
Danish Red Cross camp in Lezhe: psycho-social (1 nurse)
UAE Red Crescent in Kukes: unaccompanied elderly and youth

A meeting of all NS providing psycho-social or social welfare services is being held today (29 June) to exchange information about methodologies, discuss difficult cases, ensure a co-ordinated approach by the Movement. It will also provide a forum for mutual support for these caregivers, who are on the receiving end of horrific reports.

*(French Red Cross Refugee Monitoring Programme)*The French Red Cross Society (FRCS), in conjunction with the ARC, UNHCR, Relief International, SCF and MSF, concluded their survey on 13 June, completing questionnaires for 7.2% of the refugee population living in host families in Kukes Town.

Nearly half of the randomly selected lodgings were occupied by refugees, most of whom were from Prizren, Dragash or Suhareke. The average family size was found to be 9.7, and most had at least one family member still in Kosovo. Nearly all of the families had access to good water/sanitation facilities and electricity, with 93% of refugees finding their living conditions satisfactory. However, for the other 7% interviewed, living conditions were inadequate, with people living in outhouses, garages or in their tractors in people's gardens. Water/sanitation and cooking facilities were identified as needing improvements. Some, 97% of refugees claimed that they had received food assistance and the majority felt that food assistance was a priority. One of the major problems identified in the survey was the lack of information given to refugees: 20% of refugees in host families did not know where to go to find medical assistance and 42.5% said that they had noticed psychological changes in the behaviour of at least one member of their family.

Delegation: The ICRC has assigned a mine awareness officer from Croatia.

Bosnia-Herzegovina

According to the UNHCR, some Moslems from the Sandzak region of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia are leaving Bosnia and Herzegovina and returning home, but only a slight decrease has been registered so far. Ethnic Albanians from Kosovo are also trying to return to their homes, but some of them have had problems passing the Montenegrin border.

Logistics cell contact names/numbers: Charles Bernimolin, Federation, and John Wert, ICRC, at:

Phone: +41 22 730 2143 or +41 22 730 2204;
Fax: +41 22 730 2876; **email:** fedicrcbalkanlog.gva@icrc.org

For further information from the International Federation, please contact Mark Wilson for the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and Bosnia & Herzegovina; tel: +41 22 730 4439; email: wilson@ifrc.org and Penny Elghady for Albania and Macedonia; tel: +41 22 730 4319; email: elghady@ifrc.org

For further information from the ICRC, contact External Resources Department; tel: +41 22 734 6001 or Pierre Kraehenbuehl tel : 41 22 730 2256, email pkraehenbuehl.gva@icrc.org.

Renny Nancholas

Angelo Gnaedinger

Europe Department Middle East, and North America
International Federation of Red Cross ICRC
and Red Crescent Societies