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FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF YUGOSLAVIA: HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE FOR ENDURING EMERGENCIES

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Humanitarian needs continue to grow in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, and the Yugoslav Red Cross, supported by the International Federation, is responding to the situation as much as possible by continuing to implement the ongoing refugee relief programmes, as well as distributions of relief items to flood victims in Vojvodina village. Planned programme activities have been carried out this year largely with the availability of carryover funds from 1999. But with the low level of donor support experienced in 2000, the programme will encounter critical funding difficulties unless further cash as well as in-kind support is forthcoming.

The context

The humanitarian situation in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia continues unabated in its downward spiral. The difficult socio-economic and political situation is causing further hardship for all inhabitants, resulting not only in the refugee and internally displaced populations needing humanitarian assistance, but increasingly, the average citizen who has now become a Social Case.

Several indicators now show that the FR Yugoslavia is now one of the poorest countries in Europe. In addition to the deteriorating socio-economic and political situation, for the past decade the FR Yugoslavia has witnessed a succession of conflicts and natural disasters. The disintegration of the former Yugoslavia, many years of sanctions/international isolation, the largest number of refugees and IDPs of any European country, regular and severe flooding and environmental deprivation, have all added to this downward trend. A year ago yet another humanitarian catastrophe occurred, again bringing turmoil to the region. The Kosovo Crisis resulted in further loss of life, mass population movements and severe, long-lasting trauma for the majority of the population.

The whole of the FR Yugoslavia is still in a state of flux. Despite the National Society's struggle to operate under crisis conditions for ten years, it has managed to respond to the ever growing humanitarian needs, delivering aid to a staggering one tenth of the population.

The International Federation, having first established its delegation in 1992, has consistently supporting the Yugoslav Red Cross with its relief and non-relief programmes. The 2000-2001 strategy for FR Yugoslavia is twofold. Firstly, to assist, in cooperation and coordination with the YRC and the ICRC, the most vulnerable refugees, IDPs and Social Cases, with the Federation primarily focussing on the refugee category of beneficiaries in Serbia proper and Montenegro, providing extensive food and non-food items. Secondly, to support longer-term capacity building programmes in the whole of the FR Yugoslavia. The latter includes the following:

- Institutional development (including Kosovo);
- Disaster Preparedness;
- Social Welfare & Kosovo Psycho-Social Support;
- Preventative/educational health and voluntary blood donation;
- Repatriation/Reintegration;
- Youth.

Despite the immense relief effort, progress has also been made with the longer-term development programmes. The Federation will shortly be launching a Revised Appeal, which will reflect the new emphasis being placed on several programmes.

Latest events

Many people in the FR Yugoslavia have not only lost their jobs, but also family, friends and homes. They are tired and frustrated, having difficulties to continue with their daily struggle, some have psychologically given up. The months of April and May have not enhanced the situation, being tarnished with uncertainty. Further high ranking assassinations across the whole of the FR Yugoslavia and continued acts of violence, not only directed at non-ethnic Kosovo Albanians, but also between Kosovo Albanians, have occurred. As the June local elections in Herceg Novi and Podgorica approach, the issue of Montenegro's independence from the FR Yugoslavia becomes more heated. The four month internal trade blockade between Serbia and Montenegro, while easing somewhat, still caused problems. An increase in rhetoric between the Yugoslav Army and the Montenegrin government was noted, however tension remained low. Montenegro forged further economic ties with its neighbours, to include Albania, with which it signed a Memorandum of Understanding. Improved relations between Slovenia, Macedonia and Croatia were also achieved. The Montenegrin Government received financial pledges from international donors, with the same level of international funding interest for Serbia. The anticipated financial and trade agreements with Russia and China have been less easy to achieve. Although the flight ban imposed on Serbia has been lifted for a six-month period, sanctions and international isolation continue, creating further hardship to vulnerable people.

Over the past few months in Serbia, the independent media (often opposition backed), was increasingly targeted for operating without appropriate licences, non-payment of fines, and for inciting unrest. The government closed and fined many radio, television and newspapers, to include Studio B television, B2-92 and Radio Index. Further rallies in many Serbian cities followed, with the *Optor* student based group becoming more active. Several rallies resulted in clashes and the detainment of participants, with the most noted being held on 18 May in the Belgrade city centre.

In Kosovo, while the general downward trend in security incidents continued, peoples' memory of events a year ago and the planned UN Security Council Meeting, resulted in concern that an escalation of atrocities committed against non-ethnic Albanians could occur at the beginning of June. In the latest bout of violence, three Serbs were killed in Cernica village, including a four-year-old boy over the last weekend of May. This, and other similar acts of violence were heavily condemned by high level members of the international community and Kosovo Albanian members of the IAC. Further, but generally less serious, clashes between the various ethnic groups and KFOR were also noted in the

northern city of Mitrovica and several other "hot spot" areas. Although there were some outbreaks of tension in the southern Serbia region of Bujanovac and Presevo, the situation generally stabilised, resulting in a reduction in the number of displaced persons entering Kosovo. As the spring weather arrived, the number of mine injuries increased. KFOR recently stated that since June last year, 100 people have been killed and 387 injured by mines. Indeed, during the last weekend of May, one child lost his life and two other children were seriously injured in two separate incidents. In addition, the outbreak of the potentially fatal Tularaemia disease, was confirmed by laboratory tests, with the number of suspected cases in Kosovo being around 500.

At the Pristina central administrative level, some positive developments were achieved, with Serbian representatives being put forward as Observers in the Joint Interim Administrative Structures. Other more localised initiatives were also realised in Pristina City and in several towns like Istog/Istok. The IAC once again appealed to countries hosting Kosovo refugees, to ensure that their return to Kosovo was carried out in a phased and coordinated manner, while underlining the serious housing shortages facing returnees. Preparations for the June launch of UNMIK's new programme to provide social assistance to the most vulnerable families in Kosovo was underway, in conjunction with the phasing-down of humanitarian assistance. This new programme will ensure the continued support to those families most in need, providing cash and food assistance packages to the most vulnerable households. Once trained, the Local Red Cross representatives will participate in implementing UNMIK's Social Welfare System, advising people on the application process.

While there is uncertainty regarding the accuracy of statistical data, nearly all reports reiterates the downward trend in the humanitarian situation in the FR Yugoslavia. According to Economic Intelligence Unit (EIU) Quarterly Country Report, the percentage of the population considered to be living in poverty reached 63% in September 1999 alone, with the Belgrade Institute for Market Research, claiming just 5-10% of the population in Serbia can afford anything more than food and the bare necessities, with the rest of the population moving increasingly closer to the threshold, where the struggle for basic survival begins. The EIU report also noted the increasing shortage of goods in state-owned stores, and ever-longer queues for staples, as well as the strengthening of the grey economy. The list, according to EIU, of products in short supply is lengthening, and includes cooking oil, sugar and numerous medicines. The Federation Field Officers reiterated these shortages, while also noting shortages in fresh milk (almost impossible to buy) flour and even bread. According to the same EIU report, given the estimated GDP per head, (whether based on purchasing power parity or a weighted average of the official/unofficial exchange rates) the FR Yugoslavia is now only marginally better off than Albanian, and placed behind all other countries in the region.

Responding to the ever growing humanitarian needs, the YRC and Federation continued to implement the ongoing refugee relief programmes, while Disaster Preparedness items were also incoming and distributions to flood victims at the Vojvodina village level were achieved. All Federation and YRC trucks managed to successfully gain access into Montenegro. While the first phase of the external ECHO Audit was carried out in the FR Yugoslavia, the Delegation worked on future funding proposals, to ensure that refugee beneficiary needs continue to be met. Indeed, extensive Movement Vulnerability Assessments were near completion in FRY and Montenegro, providing the basis for Federation programme planning. Eleven YRC Branches also benefited from the reconstruction of their offices/warehouses. The Social Welfare Programme, in addition to making over 174,000 beneficiary contacts in the two-month period, organised an extensive seminar attended by all YRC Branch Secretaries involved in SWP activities and their Co-workers, while the Kosovo Psycho-Social Programmes' five Centres and five Mobile Outreach Team ran just under 6,000 sessions within the same period, and conducted an assessment in Istok/Istog, under the planned expansion of the programme. A 10-day Federation Assessment Mission was also carried out in Croatia, facilitating the planning process for the newly proposed Repatriation Programme and initial project planning was conducted for the newly proposed Home Care pilot project, in Vojvodina. The YRC, with Federation support, successfully launched its month-long Blood Safety Campaign on World Health Day, while in Kosovo the Federation and Local Red Cross were also involved in the Hygiene Campaign.

Red Cross/Red Crescent action

General Operations

The YRC was in the process of collecting data from the extensive Branch Beneficiary Questionnaire to ascertain the exact number of current beneficiaries under the three categories (refugees, IDPs and Social Cases), ensuring that the figures adopted by the YRC's central level Humanitarian Bureau, correspond with the exact beneficiary numbers in the 181 YRC Branches. The final results are expected in early June, with the findings contributing to the YRC and Federation's 2000 planning process.

An operational Movement Vulnerability Assessment, entitled *IDPs and Refugee Living Conditions*, carried out by a well respected independent Belgrade based research company, was conducted in early June. The Belgrade Strategic Marketing and Media Research Institute carried out the three-month assessment, using data collected from 1,200 refugees, 800 IDPs and a sample group of 500 people. The findings in the assessment will enable the Montenegrin Red Cross, operating in the FR Yugoslavia, to further tailor their operations towards the most vulnerable categories of beneficiaries and will facilitate the Federation's Revised Appeal process. In addition, the Montenegrin Red Cross, with Federation support, conducted its first comprehensive Vulnerability Assessment, which was, in part, designed as an institutional develop tool. This Norwegian Red Cross funded Assessment, based on secondary sources, has not only proved to be successful but also a very good learning experience for the MRC.

The Joint Red Cross Task Force, while focussing on the co-ordinating of general operational issues, was heavily involved in supporting a revision of the YRC's flat rate in April and May. The flat rate was established to enable the YRC to claim back expenses incurred when delivering and distributed relief items to beneficiaries on behalf of humanitarian organisations. At the end of the reporting period, the three Red Cross components were satisfied with the outcome of the revised flat rate and breakdown of expenses. The flat rate calculation will be reviewed on a quarterly basis, with the YRC being strengthened to enable it to better handle the immense workload related to the distribution of humanitarian aid. Indeed, the tonnage channelled through the pipeline system is now four times higher than the average distributed over the past couple of years.

An independent ECHO funded Audit Team visited the RCM partners operating in the FR Yugoslavia for five days in May. The Audit was initiated due to the fact that some ten YRC Branches in the Belgrade region had been distributing ECHO funded humanitarian aid to non-authorized beneficiaries in 1999 (Social Cases and IPDs, rather than refugees). The Audit team was facilitated in the field by Federation delegates, holding meetings with relevant bodies and visiting YRC Branches. The preliminary results of their assessment are expected during the second week in June, with the Team expected back in FR Yugoslavia in late June/early July for completion of the Audit.

Relief Programmes

The Federation has placed a priority on supporting and strengthening the YRC's distribution system to enable the smooth delivery and distribution of humanitarian assistance to those most in need. Despite the socio-economic and political crisis in the country, the YRC is the main vehicle for humanitarian assistance, with its extensive distribution system being shared by the majority of agencies operating in the region. By the end of March 2000, the YRC was assisting some one million beneficiaries (representing some one tenth of the population, excluding Kosovo) and handling 17,892 metric tonnes of food and non food items during the month for refugees, IDPs and Social Cases. During April, 15,618 metric tonnes of items were delivered/distributed by the YRC. Items are channelled from the Central, Regional and Municipal levels, through its extensive distribution system, consisting of 181 Branches and over 500 distribution points (not including Kosovo).

Discussions were also underway between the YRC/Federation, WFP and ECHO regarding future relief programmes for the year 2000. Emphasis was placed on the continued co-ordination with other agencies providing relief to refugee beneficiaries, to ensure that all of the basic needs are met, and that no duplication of assistance occurs.

Relief to Refugee Beneficiaries •

The FR Yugoslavia hosts the highest number of refugees and IDPs of any country in Europe, with 498,400 refugees alone register by UNHCR (25 May). They have little means of supporting themselves and find it difficult to integrate into society. Despite positive developments in Croatia, few have managed to return to their homes in either Croatia or Bosnia and Herzegovina. Many still live in Collective Centres or with friends or relatives in often desperate conditions, with the most vulnerable being reliant on humanitarian aid. Over the past eight years, the YRC and Federation has been one of the few consistent providers of humanitarian assistance for this largely forgotten sector of society.

Basic Food Programme •

The ongoing ECHO-funded Basic Food Programme of cooking oil, beans and sugar is aimed at 125,000 most vulnerable refugees and complements the WFP items distributed under the overall basic food assistance programme. During May and June the last items under this programme are expected to arrived in Belgrade, with incoming May items as follows: 170.22 metric tonnes of beans and 105.57 metric litres of oil. The entire consignment of sugar arrived during 1999. At the end of April, over 86% of the beans and 90% of the oil and sugar had been directly distributed to beneficiaries.

Supplementary Food Programme •

The jointly funded and ongoing ECHO and Swedish Red Cross Supplementary Food Programme of canned meat, yeast and milk powder is aimed at 350,000 vulnerable refugees. All the canned meat (chicken, pork, beef) and milk powder has arrived at the Central level. However, some delays have been encountered with the local procurement/delivery of yeast, which is still incoming. During May, 92.48 metric tonnes of yeast arrived, with future shipments expected to be directly dispatched to the Regional and Municipal levels to speed-up distributions at the beneficiary level. The delays resulted in no yeast arriving in the regions of Kragujevac, Nis and Podgorica for distribution during April, as such the overall distribution of yeast was 16% of the total. The canned meat has proved to be particularly in demand by beneficiaries, who have greatly appreciated this component of the programme. As of the end of April, 72% of meat and 53% of the milk powder was distributed directly to beneficiaries.

Essential Hygiene Parcels •

The ongoing and jointly funded-ECHO, Swedish and German Red Cross Hygiene Parcel Programme is aimed at 225,500 most vulnerable refugees. Under this programme, beneficiaries are entitled to one hygiene parcel every three months. During May, over 60,000 Hygiene Parcels arrived into Belgrade for deliveries to the Regional and Municipal levels. Distributions were ongoing at the beneficiary level, with a total of 71,313 parcels being directly distributed in April.

Ten Belgrade Branches, however, which were involved in distributing hygiene parcels to Social Cases/IDPs rather than refugees in 1999, were not involved in the distribution of these items during this period. During May they were visited by an external Audit team, with the ten Branch Secretaries waiting for information on the status of the remaining ECHO hygiene parcel stock in their respective warehouses.

Baby Parcels •

The German Red Cross-funded baby parcel programme, aimed at 8,100 vulnerable refugee mothers with babies of one year old or under, have all been dispatched to the Regional levels, with deliveries to the Municipal level ongoing. At the end of April, 22% of the total consignment was distributed directly to beneficiaries.

Jackets and Shoes for child refugees •

The British Red Cross funded jackets and shoes programme, aimed at vulnerable child refugees of up to 14 years old, has proved to be very popular, with the child refugee beneficiaries finding the quality of items good. Indeed, other beneficiaries not fitting the criteria have mentioned that they would also benefit from such distributions in future. While YRC Branch Secretaries have strictly adhered to the criteria, some have noted that they have encountered difficulties matching the size of jackets and shoes

with the exact size of their child beneficiaries, which has resulted in the distribution process being slow and fairly complicated. At the end of April, 60% of shoes and 55% of the jackets were directly distributed to child beneficiaries.

Underclothes for elderly refugees •

The jointly funded ECHO, Norwegian and German Red Cross underclothes programme is designed to provide refugees of 65 years or older, living in private accommodation with no means of support, with thermal underwear. In total, 61,173 sets arrived in FR Yugoslavia, with the final consignment of items being custom cleared by mid-February. According to the YRC Branch Secretaries and Federation Field Offices, the Underwear Set Programme have been extremely popular, with these items being in exceptionally high demand. Indeed, if this programme is to be repeated in future, it has been suggested that the criteria should be reviewed, decreasing the age eligibility to 55 years old. As of the end of April, 60% of all Underclothes for elderly refugees was distributed.

YRC/Federation accumulative distribution data to refugees from 1 January to 30 April, 2000

Items & Monthly Ration	No. of Beneficiaries	Belgrade	Kragujevac	Kraljevo	Nis	Novi Sad	Podgorica	Total distribution
Oil 1L/mth	125,000	149,518	42,814	19,189	32,875	53,473	8,426	306,295
Sugar 1kg/mth	125,000	114,512	44,881	21,409	37,586	66,488	31,330	316,206
Beans 1 kg/mth	125,000	114,917	47,303	21,121	37,314	56,509	5,816	282,980
Yeast (1pack) 77gr/mth	350,000	217,079	0	20,293	0	105,827	0	343,199
Milk(1pack) 500gr/mth	350,000	396,571	89,102	81,807	44,107	458,216	38,637	1,108,440
Meat(1can) 550gr/mth	350,000	613,883	91,642	98,418	66,034	603,612	37,257	1,510,846
Hygiene Parcel 1HP/3mth	225,500	71,469	23,732	24,432	14,837	80,075	9,777	224,322
Underwear 1/winter	55,369	16,399	1,873	1,016	312	15,851	1,000	36,451
Jackets 1/winter	82,000	14,277	2,297	2,409	2,357	21,365	2,058	44,763
Shoes 1/winter	82,000	16,033	3,952	3,099	1,647	21,865	2,058	48,654

Montenegro Relief •

Difficulties encountered, due to the internal trade blockade, with the delivery of items to Montenegro were overcome in April. Indeed, positive diplomatic discussions resulted in the resumption and regular passage of Federation and YRC items from Belgrade since the first week of April.

The establishment of the Montenegro Joint Monitoring System is ongoing, with the agencies involved in bulk food distributions agreeing on the monitoring format. Several hundred questionnaires have already been collected, with the data to be analysed and shared with all agencies.

Floods in Vojvodina •

During the month of April, the Secanj municipality was heavily affected by floods. Based on the assessment by the Novi Sad Field Office, the Federation supported three of the most affected villages in the area with the following items: 300 blankets; 230 Hygiene Parcels; 50 Baby Parcels; 100 Cooking Sets and 1000 cans of Meat. These items were shared between 758 of the most vulnerable people affected by the floods.

Non-relief Programmes

The YRC's Branches are still very much focused on the emergency relief operations in their respective areas of operation. The priority on emergency programmes have resulted in a lack of capacity to run additional programmes (such as non-relief programmes) which are often behind schedule, and several 1999 programmes still being implemented at the Branch level. The Federation has requested extensions on the implementation of some 1999 and 2000 programmes.

Social Welfare Programme (SWP) •

This well established programme, currently funded by the Swedish Red Cross, will continue to expand psycho-social support projects designed to meet the needs of vulnerable people and strengthen the YRC's capacity to cope with disasters, by organising a larger network of trained professionals, volunteers and co-workers. It will also strengthen vulnerable persons own coping mechanism, thereby preserving mental health, by running Help Lines, community-based youth, elderly and family clubs, SWP Mobile Teams, Libraries and Cinemas. Psychological support will also be given to Red Cross staff and volunteers to reinforce their own coping mechanisms.

In April and May, 174,208 Social Welfare contacts were made with beneficiaries, bringing total contacts in 2000 to a staggering 397,301, demonstrating the need for such assistance, coupled with the YRC and Federation's ability to meet the growing needs. All SWP Branch activities were enhanced by the support given from the YRC/SRC/MRC Management Team, which continued to visits branches across the region. In Montenegro, the Tivat SWP Club was formally opened, as were the two Childrens' Clubs in Mojkovac and Kosasin, resulting in an expansion of SWP activities and staff/volunteer members. Children from five different YRC Red Cross Youth Clubs also spent one week in Zitni Potok Art seminar.

A large SWP Seminar was organised for all Red Cross Secretaries and SWP co-workers, where ideas and experiences were shared, and the strategic planning process was discussed. The Zajecar region also benefited from the annual SWP Regional Meeting, and in Montenegro three SWP Seminars were also held in May, being attended by 31 Co-workers and 85 SWP Volunteers. In addition, information sharing meetings were held between PSP Kosovo/SWP Belgrade based staff and the Serbian Red Cross in both Belgrade and Zvecan, Kosovo. This maximised coordination and cooperation between the two closely linked programmes, with additional support for the Kosovo Methokija Red Cross Branch operations in Kosovo, being a particular focal point.

Approval for the Danish Red Cross/Federation Delegated Children Affected by Armed Conflict (CABAC) project was gained by the Ministry of Education. This project will be based in the Kraljevo region, with a Danish Red Cross delegate expected to arrive in June to commence the full planning and implementation process.

Due to delays in the procurement/delivery process in FR Yugoslavia, the SWP planned Mobile Teams/Cinemas were not operational. However, it was hoped that the situation would be overcome in June. Finally, a Stress Management Workshop for Federation staff (excluding Kosovo staff, who are supported by the PSP team) was held in Palic, in an attempt to address some of the accumulative related stress issues suffered by staff.

Kosovo Psycho-Social Programme •

The Kosovo Psycho-Social Programme (PSP) aims to strengthen individual, family and community development by reducing the likelihood of debilitating psychological disorders through the provision of traumatic stress interventions, psychological support and therapeutic social activities. The programme

will also be used as a vehicle to develop the Local Red Cross (LRC), with PSP Centres and Mobile Outreach Teams (MOTs) integrated into the branch structures.

The PSP programme, supported by the American, Swedish, Belgian and Japanese Red Cross, ran just under 6,000 sessions, for over 2,000 beneficiaries during April and May. All five MOTs and five PSP Centres were fully operational, with an expansion in beneficiary numbers noted in especially April and May, due to these months falling over the first anniversary of the Kosovo Crisis. In addition, with the onset of spring, further investigations into mass graves have resulted in people re-experiencing loss and tramatisation. Some families affected by the exhumation of graves were already receiving support and as time allows, additional support will be given to new beneficiaries. Increasing numbers of ex-detainees are also attended special PSP Centre sessions.

Planning is underway to expand the PSP to three additional Red Cross Branches in Kosovo. A preliminary fact finding mission was completed in the Istog/Istok region, where it was discovered that no psycho-social support programmes currently exist, apart from limited visits by the Peja PSP MOT Team. This area suffered greatly from the conflict, with the addition of the PSP complimenting other Movement non psycho-social programmes operating in the area. The PSP and the LRC are facilitating the distributed of Swedish Red Cross donated bales of used clothes and American Red Cross school chests and quilts.

Finally, the PSP benefited from a very generous donation of a Pristina based house by an Albanian-American Psychiatrist. This has enabled relief items to be safely stored/easily accessible, and has already provided training space for first aid training. It will also accommodate special support groups and activities, such as sewing classes. Ultimately it is hoped that it will become an Income Generating Programme.

Five PSP Centres and MOTs in Kosovo: April/May Beneficiary Data

PSP	Glogovac/ Glogoc	Gjakove/ Djakovica	Peja/Pec	Podujevo/ Podujeve	Pristina/ Pristine	TOTAL
Sessions:	975	1,466	1,627	911	905	5,884
Beneficiaries:	503	827	468	333	305	2,346

Health Education and Preventive Health Programme •

This programme aims to provide support to the YRC's Health Education and Preventative Health Programme, by training Red Cross volunteers, professionals, Branch Secretaries and staff involved in running Red Cross health actions in FRY. An Aids and Drugs Campaign will also be supported during 2000. In Montenegro, volunteers will be trained in First Aid, the prevention of addictive and contaminated diseases, the preservation of the environment and VBD. Health camps and mass health education campaigns will also target 20,000 people living in Montenegro and support will be given to all health-related branch activities, with a particular focus on first aid training for young people.

The YRC, with the Federation's support, is redefining its overall Health Strategy and related human resource network, which will ultimately provide for a more co-ordinated and realistic operational approach, encompassing the Central, Regional and Municipal Red Cross levels. Some of the planned 2000 programmes have therefore being rescheduled. However, training and promotional material for the YRC's AIDS Campaign are currently being developed, with a phrased approach being adopted, with some seminars now planned to be run in the autumn/winter period.

First Aid

Federation funded, First Aid equipment and training materials were incoming/being distributed. Numerous First Aid Training Workshops and linked Competitions were held, to include the YRC Kragujevac Branch, with 400 children attending, involving 29 First Aid Teams. In Montenegro, 20 Red Cross Branches, with a 1,000 Red Cross Youth Members, were involved in the training and

competitions. In addition, the MRC's campaign for Addictive Diseases continued, with some 1,700 young people attending lectures from previously educated Volunteers. The YRC also ran its first commercial Basic First Aid training session for Federation and ICRC staff.

Home Care

Further planning was undertaken for the newly proposed YRC Home Care Programme during April and May. In Vojvodina, the YRC finalised a beneficiary needs assessment, while also ascertaining the capacity of Branches in the region. Seven cities, with a total of 400 beneficiaries were selected for the pilot project, with plans underway for the extensive selection, training and co-ordination of staff and volunteers, who will work out of five Mobile Teams. The Federation is currently preparing a detailed Project Fact Sheet, with the Norwegian and Canadian National Societies expressing initial interest in this pilot project.

Voluntary Blood Donation Programme •

The YRC Voluntary Blood Donation (VBD) Programme aims to introduce additional initiatives during 2000 to attract new VBD and retain existing VBD. It will achieve this aim by using a range of communication methods, targeted towards health workers, mass media representatives and Red Cross volunteers.

April and May were busy months, covering World Health Day, which was marked on 7 April, with the YRC/Federation across the region playing an integral role. Indeed, the YRC's Blood Safety Campaign ran from 7 April to 11 May. The YRC, with Federation support, produced 10,000 posters, 200,000 leaflets, 3,000 brochures as well as page dividers, balloons, T-shirts, pencils, key rings, mouse pads, using the captions, *Safe Blood Starts With Me* and *Blood Saves Lives* for public distribution the various YRC promotional events. Additional promotional materials were also produced in conjunction with WHO, to include television clips and news adds. The YRC promoted its Line of Life School for Blood Donation, at a Central Conference, where the School presented itself, alone side the Ministry for Health. The MRC also organised a formal Blood Safety session, with WHO and the Federation, attended by 100 participants, included the relevant government bodies, with various lectures being held in Montenegro throughout the promotional month. The 11 May Voluntary Blood Day was also marked by regional Awards, to include a large ceremony in Sutomore, which was attended by some 100 VBDs, where prizes were given to the *best voluntary blood donor*, the *best transfusion doctor*, the *best medical technician* and the *best VBD Association*.

Disaster Preparedness Programme (DPP) •

This programmes aims at implementing the YRC's DPP by putting in place resources and mechanisms to be activated when a natural or man-made disaster strikes the country. It will initially focus on the Vojvodina region, which has previously suffered from extensive flooding and is currently at risk of drought. According to preliminary assessments, the underground water flooding may reduce the harvest by some 70% this year in Vojvodina, which is the main agricultural production area for the FR Yugoslavia. Relief items were distributed to flood victims in April (see Relief Section).

The DPP, with donor support from the Swedish, Danish and German Red Cross (Assessment) is making good progress. Extensive disaster preparedness equipment for 85 six member Municipal Red Cross field teams and collective equipment for 24 Red Cross Municipal Branches arrived in Belgrade. Phase II of the programme will involve the training of trainers workshop, at which time the distribution of DPP equipment will commence. In addition, the up-to-date Disaster Preparedness Programme Paper will be submitted for adoption at the YRC Executive Board, which meets in June. While the Delegation is still in need of a DPP delegate, initial contact has been made with the Regional Delegation in Budapest.

Youth Development Programme •

The YRC's Youth Development Programme aims at strengthening the position of the Youth Department to enable it to become one of the National Society's priority programmes. It envisages the creation of a Youth Strategy, recruitment policy and development of core youth programme activities.

While full cooperation and an effective strategic planning process is suffering from constraints at the YRC headquarters level, field initiative and activities have been developed in the majority of YRC Branches. Two YRC representatives also benefited from attending the Regional Delegation's Preparatory meeting for the Youth Self-Assessment and CAPI process, which should facilitate the YRC in producing a detailed Plan of Action. In addition, the newly revised Youth Sutomore and Baosici Summer Schools Projects attracted donor interest from the German Red Cross. Previously trained YRC Youth Leaders will be the facilitators at these summer schools, where 600 Youth Members from the FR Yugoslavia, will attend, thus enabling the new participants to disseminate their knowledge in their respective regions.

Institutional Development and Implementation of Plan of Action •

This programme aims to support the YRC in implementing an Institutional Development Plan of Action, with the ultimate challenge of adapting the structures of the National Society in order to strengthen its capacity to respond to needs. This will be provided through training, technical expertise and material inputs particularly in the areas identified by the ID self-analysis conducted by the YRC in 1997.

The YRC ID Team made presentations at three Branch General Assemblies and at the Serbian Red Cross' Republican Board, with much interest for the ID Programme implementation being noted from many YRC Branches. While several delays have been encountered at the headquarters level, the YRC Revised ID Plan of Action will be presented at the YRC's June Executive Board, for adoption. The Revision includes recommendations made during the February *ID/RD in Emergencies* Workshop. In addition, the YRC Human Resource ID Co-ordination Group held a successful meeting regarding the draft YRC Volunteer Development Strategy, with this Strategy also be presented at the Executive Board.

Almost 50% of YRC do not have adequate office/warehouse space. The Swedish Red Cross funded Branch strengthening project, in which 11 Branches benefiting from the construction/reconstruction of their office/warehouse space, proved to be extremely successful. While all activities related to the construction aspect of this project were implemented, the proposed pilot twinning element of the project, could not be implemented within the tight operating time-frame.

Distribution of YRC office equipment was also ongoing. Indeed, 80 computers, 102 faxes and 30 photocopiers, purchased under the Integrated Appeal, have been distributed in all but Vojvodina region. The Montenegrin Sub-delegation's Computerisation Programme was ongoing, with the Computer Officer working hand-in-hand with the Herceg Novi Secretary, where the pilot project is being tested. The Herceg Novi Secretary found the new system efficient, reducing the workload in the Branch. Once an evaluation of the pilot programme is completed, it is hoped that this training programme will be adopted by all MRC Branches.

Kosovo Institutional Development Programme •

The long-term aim of this programme is to promote a strong and sustainable Red Cross structure within the political realities of Kosovo. It also aims to strengthen the Red Cross' operations capacity, which will enable the Local Red Cross (LRC) to provide humanitarian assistance to the most vulnerable people. Discussions continued with the Red Cross of Kosova (RCKA) headquarters regarding the ID Plan of Action objectives and activities and with the Kosovo Methokija Red Cross (KMRC) regarding more regular contacts and the organisation of a one-day ID Assessment Workshop in Zvecan, in cooperation with the YRC.

A total of 23 out of 26 RCKA Branches have undergone dissemination training, with two of the Branches already running their own dissemination seminars, to include Prizren Branch, which ran three 2 day dissemination seminars focussing on different ages groups over the reporting period. Five representatives will be selected from the RCKA to attend ICRC run intensive training sessions, which will enable them to become dissemination experts.

The RCKA Branch Secretaries have attended three Social Welfare System UNMIK seminars, whereby UNMIK introduced the new system and explained their necessary input into the overall programme.

Indeed the RCKA will provide information to potential beneficiaries, assist beneficiaries in filling-in application forms and to submit the correct accompanying documentation. On occasions they will also be requested to sign a Letter of Recommendation, which will accompany each application form. If the respective Serb Community leaders decide to accept UNMIK's Social Welfare Programme, then the KMRC will not only be responsible for assisting the beneficiaries with the application process, but will also be involved in the distribution of the relief items funding under this new scheme.

Depending on the Serb community leadership's decision on whether they wish to accept the proposed UNMIK system, the KMRC will not only assist beneficiaries with the application process, but will also provide the relief component in their areas of operation.

On 7 April, for World Health Day, the KRCA launched a successful Hygiene Campaign, involving the local branches, other organisations and the local population in many areas of Kosovo, with the aim of cleaning-up the habitat. This Red Cross action, mainly supported by the German Red Cross, was very successful and obtained good participation from the public. It also heightened awareness regarding individuals ability to take control of their environment, which is especially important with the outbreak of tularaemia.

The World Red Cross/Red Crescent Day was celebrated by the RCKA in Pristina and the LRC Branches in Istog/Istok, Prizren and Gjilani/Gnjilane. The main event in Pristina was attended by some 300 people, included the Federation, ICRC and PNS delegates. Istog/Istok Branch, in co-operation with the Austrian Red Cross, raised some DEM 1,500 from the local population and businessmen during the Red Cross Crescent Week, which will be channelled towards programmes to assist orphans. The Prizren LRC also successfully fundraised during the week.

Income Generating Projects •

The Income Generating Projects (IGP) aims to bridge the branch funding gap by assisting local Red Cross branches to establish small-scale businesses, which will enable them to increase their independence, provide employment opportunities for refugees and social cases and generate income to fund Red Cross traditional activities. To date over 100 IGPs have being implemented, with a new Agreement on IGPs being annexed to the revised operational Memorandum of Understanding between the YRC and Federation. Once the MoU is signed in June, the implementation of a further 19 projects can commence. The last of the IGP Branch Questionnaires were incoming, with full evaluation results expected in June.

Promotion of Humanitarian Values and Public Awareness Programme •

This project seeks to support the promotion of Humanitarian Values and the rebuilding of trust within the FR Yugoslavia, the promotion of Red Cross Principles and a positive change in the YRC's in-country image, through assistance to the YRC's Information Department and the Humanitarian Bureau.

Good co-operation with YRC counterparts continued, with the follows achievements: finalising and performing the Movement celebration of the World Red Cross Red Crescent Day; preparing an image survey on the public perception of the National Society/Movement; finalising an ECHO funded visibility project.

The first anniversary of the signing of the peace agreement refocused journalists' attention on the FR Yugoslavia. In addition to national media coverage, the Delegation and YRC briefed and facilitated access to Red Cross operations to journalists from various European countries, to include BBC Newsround and Panorama Weekly Italian Newspaper. The delegation highlighted the efforts of the Red Cross Red Crescent Movement in the whole region and the impartial and neutral approach motivated only by the degree of vulnerability of the beneficiaries.

The Information Delegate attended the annual Movement's Communication Forum, which brought together information officers from every continent. Participants attending the workshop, hosted by the British Red Cross, discussed major communication trends for the Movement and were briefed about the situation in the respective regions.

Repatriation/Reintegration Support Programme •

The Federation will continue to advocate for voluntary and gradual repatriation and reintegration based on well-informed decision-making by individual refugees during 2000. This will be achieved through the provision of pre-departure information and a counselling service to those refugees planning to repatriate to their country of origin, and to those still considering their options to allow them to make an informed choice about their future.

This programme is currently being expanded. Indeed, the recent political developments in Croatia should provide the basis for improved conditions for refugee returns from the FR Yugoslavia to their homes in Croatia. UNCHR and the FR Yugoslavia Government initiated a media campaign to promote repatriation to Croatia. Based on these positive developments, the Belgrade based Programme Co-ordinator and the Caucuses Population Movement Delegate conducted a 10-day assessment mission in Croatia at the beginning of May. Planning was underway for a Repatriation meeting in Zagreb between the YRC/CRC respective Secretary Generals and the Federation for the beginning of June. An initial Project Factsheet is currently being developed by the Federation, in conjunction with the two National Societies, to optimise pre-departure support for refugees in FR Yugoslavia and arrival assistance once refugees return to Croatia. During the two-month period, ongoing support was also given to the refugee information publications *Odgovor*, *Vrela*, *Sunflower* and *Return*.

Outstanding Needs

Planned programme activities have been carried out this year largely with the availability of carryover funds from 1999. But with the low level of donor support experienced in 2000, the programme will encounter critical funding difficulties unless further cash as well as in-kind support is forthcoming. The Delegation is also in need of the following new or replacement delegates: Disaster Preparedness, Belgrade; Logistics Co-ordinator, Belgrade; Psycho-Social, Kosovo; Finance and Administration, Kosovo and Youth, Kosovo. A new Belgrade based Relief Co-ordinator is due to arrive in June and a YRC Fleet Consultant is due to visit the Delegation for an assessment in late July.

External relations - Government/UN/NGOs/Media

During April and May the Delegation, Sub-delegations and Field Office staff actively participated in regular interagency co-ordination, sector, and regional co-ordination meetings. A full range of media contacts were maintained, including print, radio, and TV journalists (see Promotion of Humanitarian Values and Public Awareness Section).

Contributions

See Annex 1 for details.

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This and other reports on Federation operations are available on the Federation's website: <http://www.ifrc.org>