

# ALBANIA

CHF 5,846,000

Programme No. 01.39/2000

## *Co-ordination*

The International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement's Integrated Appeal and management structure for the Balkans Crisis will end on 31 December 1999. However, the International Federation and ICRC will maintain a co-ordinated approach with their respective operations in the region in 2000, ensuring coherent, comprehensive and mutually reinforcing programmes which will cover a vast range of the ongoing humanitarian needs in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, Albania, the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, and Bosnia and Herzegovina.

## *National Context*

As Albania enters the year 2000, it continues to face serious economic difficulties and political instability. With a population of 3.1 million, Albania remains one of the poorest countries in Europe, rated 100 in the global Human Development Index (Human Development Report 1999), with GDP per capita \$2,120, and high levels of endemic unemployment (official unemployment figure 236,821 in July 1999). 25% of the population are earning less than \$32 per month, and are therefore below the official poverty level.

The Balkans Crisis of 1999, which led to an influx of over 450,000 Kosovo refugees into Albania and their subsequent rapid exit, continues to have an impact on the country, and on the most vulnerable, whose situation has become more difficult, owing to the increase in prices of basic commodities. At the end of 1999, an estimated 4,500 refugees from Kosovo remain in Albania, with the possibility that more may return from Kosovo to Albania for the winter, if living conditions in Kosovo remain difficult.

## *Country Assistance Strategy*

The overall strategy of the Federation in Albania is to assist the Albanian Red Cross (ARC) to draw up and begin implementation of a new strategic development plan for the coming five years (2000-2004). In addition, the Federation will enable the ARC to maintain and improve its current programmes, in particular its services to the vulnerable groups served by its social welfare activities, and to improve and increase standardisation of the operational capacity of its network of 36 branches spread throughout the country. The ARC, with the support of the Federation, has focused relief activities on distributions to categories of beneficiaries including the remaining Kosovo refugees and their host families, social cases and war affected villagers.

## ***Programme Objectives***

### ***Disaster response***

The Albanian Red Cross, with the support of the Federation, will continue to distribute relief to remaining Kosovo refugees and their host families (up to about 5,000 people) and to over 30,000 of the most vulnerable social cases and those in villages most affected by the war in Kosovo.

### ***Disaster Preparedness***

The Federation will assist the ARC to procure and position emergency contingency stocks at central and regional levels, to enable the ARC to immediately and directly assist up to 5,000 beneficiaries in the event of an emergency. The Federation will also assist the ARC in the provision of disaster preparedness training for staff and volunteers, and also in strengthening its communications network for its branches throughout the country. A vulnerability and capacity assessment will be undertaken, with the aim of determining what geographically and socially targeted actions should be undertaken by the ARC in order to reduce the vulnerability of communities to natural disasters. In addition the ARC and the Federation will assist the Government and UNDP in the development of a National Disaster Plan, in which the role of the ARC in future disasters will be better defined.

### ***Health***

The Federation will assist the ARC in its Mother and Child Health programme, also in its health education programme and oral hygiene programme. A new training programme for volunteers is planned aimed at strengthening their capacity in relief health response. The Federation will also assist the ARC to improve and standardise its First Aid (FA) training courses, with a new module for learner drivers, to establish national standards in training and for FA equipment, and also to update and reprint its First Aid Manual. In addition, blood donor recruitment will continue to be an important activity for the ARC.

### ***Humanitarian Values***

The Federation, in close cooperation with the ICRC, will continue to assist the ARC in strengthening the capacity of its information department and in promoting humanitarian values, through its branch and volunteer network, and through the ARC Youth structure.

### ***Other Programmes***

Social Welfare programmes remain an important priority for the ARC, providing assistance to socially vulnerable groups such as the elderly, disabled, orphans, and low income families. Activities include soup kitchens, vocational training and the provision of equipment such as wheelchairs for the disabled.

## ***Capacity Building***

The Federation's Regional Delegation in Budapest and Country Delegation in Tirana will assist the Albanian RC to establish a strategic development plan for 2000 - 2004, based upon the results of the development plan review carried out in 1999 (retrospective for 5 years), and will assist the ARC to develop and/or update its mission statement, organigram, standards, and unit and position descriptions for all governance and management levels. A priority for ARC is the strengthening of its branches. In addition, the Federation will continue to support the ARC in the management of programmes and in finding ways to make selected programmes more sustainable.

The Federation will assist ARC to establish a resource development policy, in particular focusing on human resources at branch level, staffing and governance, enhancement of current fundraising actions, initiation of new pilot income generation projects, public awareness and fundraising campaigns. Activities in this area will take the form of training for volunteers, staff and governance at all levels of the Society. Technical training and increasing the level of staff and volunteer activity is a major priority, building upon the increased interest in volunteering, a reaction to the events in Albania of 1999.