

PHOTOCOPY
PRESERVATION

Catholic Relief Services



United States Catholic Conference



CATHOLIC RELIEF SERVICES

Stenkovac I Refugee Camp at a Glance

Macedonia

Population: 18,000 to 30,000 (population fluctuates depending on arrivals and humanitarian evacuations)

Camp Management: Catholic Relief Services in cooperation with UNHCR

Food Logistics & Distribution: Catholic Relief Services and WFP

Departure Program: UNHCR and International Organization for Migration

Tracing of Separated Family Members:

The Red Cross Compound contains tents for the following services:

1. **Family Reunion for children and vulnerable people (ICRC)**
ICRC will trace separated family members in cases involving children (under 18) or vulnerable people (handicapped, severely ill, etc.). Reunifications take place between camps, within Macedonia and abroad.
2. **Red Cross Messages**
The Red Cross sends messages for refugees to people in other camps, within Macedonia or abroad.
3. **Macedonian Red Cross tracing**
The Macedonian Red Cross traces people and facilitates reunification within camps.

Health: Medecins Sans Frontieres, German Red Cross, Taiwanese Hospital, Doctors of the World (psycho-social)

Community Services: International Catholic Migration Commission, Catholic Relief Services, Mercy Corps International, Oxfam, Unicef, Israeli Youth Council

Water: Oxfam

Sanitation: International Rescue Committee

Security: Local authorities

Human Rights: OSCE

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The Overseas Relief and Development Agency of the United States Catholic Conference

Office of U.S. Foreign Disaster Assistance
Disaster Assistance Response Team



Humanitarian response stories: American NGOs, International Medical Corps, International Rescue Committee, Catholic Relief Services, and Mercy Corps International

General: All of the above agencies had emergency, humanitarian relief operations in Kosovo prior to the evacuation. They all quickly used their human and technical resources to the emergency needs in Macedonia.

International Medical Corps: HQ, Los Angeles

Border Response

IMC was the only agency with 24 hour coverage during the border crisis, at both the Blace border area and the Jaznice border crossing. This coverage continues. At Blace, during the height of the crisis when there were approximately 65,000 refugees blocked in "no-man's" land between the Macedonian and Serbian border, IMC was the only emergency medical response agency. During a 10-day period, IMC accessed "no-man's" land to evacuate and treat over 5,000 people for exhaustion, dehydration, and other critical medical issues. IMC maintained stretcher-bearer teams to evacuate these people to three IMC staffed emergency tented clinics. IMC established longer-term treatment facilities in tents at the border for elderly and vulnerable refugees to stabilize their condition prior to transport to camps.

Camps

IMC is in charge of vaccination services to all children 0-5 in the camps. This is a critical task given the extremely low coverage rates for children arriving from Kosovo and the heightened risk of epidemics due to the crowded conditions in refugee camps in Macedonia. IMC also provides primary health care services for over 20,000 refugees in Stankovac 2 camp and maintains 24 hour emergency coverage in the camp.

International Rescue Committee: HQ, New York

Border Response

At Blace, sanitation conditions were reaching critical dimensions due to the overcrowding and back up at the border. IRC rapidly responded by sending in construction teams to dig pit latrines, construct basic privacy booths and latrine plates, and organize refugee work teams to deal with the sanitation problems. IRC also arranged for water tankers to be trucked to the border and distributed water containers to families blocked in "no-man's land".

Camps

IRC was among the first NGOs to take a serious management role in camps in Macedonia. Their leadership in constructing latrines (over 1000 to date in both Stankovac 1 and 2 camps) has helped prevent serious public health threats in these

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crowded locations. IRC's emergency, flexible engineering interventions have been indispensable in both camps.

Catholic Relief Services: HQ, Baltimore, MD

Border Response

CRS established an emergency food distribution in cooperation with a local Muslim NGO, El Hilal for food distribution into "no-man's land". This was the only source of food for trapped, exhausted refugees, many of which traveled for 3-5 days prior to arriving at Blace where they also were trapped for up to 4 days. These distributions clearly saved lives.

Camps

CRS is the lead NGO at Stankovac 1 camp. This camp was rapidly constructed with the assistance of NATO. Within 2 days, over 20,000 refugees arrived, with no system of food distribution, medical care, and other essential services. CRS has staffed this camp full time, 24 hours a day since its inception in early April. The outputs of this effort was rapid registration of refugees, establishment of distribution systems, and internal order of the camp through the organization of volunteer refugee representatives and community leaders. CRS, as lead agency has provided the leadership for a coordinated response to the emergency needs of this population.

Mercy Corps International HQ, Portland, OR

Border Response

MCI is the lead agency for management of the Blace Transit Center, directly adjacent to the border crossing. This center is a critical area for providing emergency treatment and services for refugees who just crossed from Serbia. This center, which the government opened approximately 3 weeks ago, is within sight of Serbian border police approximately 800 yards away. As a transit center, MCI provides the essential organization and management of emergency refugee services, provides refugees information on the situation in Macedonia, and assists the UNHCR in organizing the transport of refugees off the border area.

Camps

MCI is the lead agency in charge of Senekos Camp. As such, MCI was able to pre-position food and essential supplies prior to the arrival of refugees, and to quickly provide reception and essential services to exhausted refugees. MCI has been incredibly pro-active in camp expansion issues. In cooperative with the UNHCR and the government of Macedonia, MCI surveyed adjacent land, contacted local land holders and government officials, and pushed ahead with creating more space to alleviate critical border crowding.

CRS Mission Statement

Catholic Relief Services was founded in 1943 by the Catholic Bishops of the United States to assist the poor and disadvantaged outside the country in the following ways:

- ◆ by responding to victims of natural and man-made disasters;
- ◆ by providing assistance to the poor to alleviate their immediate needs;
- ◆ by supporting self-help programs which involve people and communities in their own development;
- ◆ by helping those it serves to restore and preserve their dignity and to realize their potential;
- ◆ by collaborating with religious and non-sectarian persons and groups of goodwill in programs and projects which contribute to a more equitable society;
- ◆ by helping to educate the American people to fulfill their moral responsibilities in alleviating human suffering, removing its causes and promoting social justice.

Catholic Relief Services gives assistance based on need, not race or nationality.

CRS in the Balkans

CRS has been operating in the region for eight years and has developed an extensive network of primary and satellite offices.

1991- CRS Macedonia (Skopje)
1992- CRS Croatia* (Zagreb)
1993- CRS Kosovo (Pristina)
1993- CRS Bosnia and Hercegovina** (Sarajevo)
1994- CRS FRY (Belgrade)
1995- CRS Albania (Tirana)
1997- CRS Bulgaria (Sofia)
1998- CRS Montenegro (Podgorica)
1998- CRS Kosovo (Prizren)
1999- CRS Albania (Fier, Durrës, Elbasan, Kukes)

* satellite offices in Knin, Karlovac, Osijek

** satellite offices in Mostar, Zenica, Banja Luka

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CATHOLIC RELIEF SERVICES

CRS MACEDONIA

Established in 1991, CRS Macedonia has been an integral part of humanitarian response in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, Macedonia and Albania.

CRS Macedonia provided financial and administrative support to emergency and development programming in Kosovo until the evacuation in March 1999.

In response to the wave of refugees arriving from Kosovo, CRS, in collaboration with Caritas Internationalis (CI), was first involved with **border response**. Teams worked around the clock to bring water and food to the over 30,000 people waiting to enter Macedonia in the first wave of refugees.

Since 6 April, CRS/CI has been responsible for the management of the largest refugee camp in Macedonia, **Stenkovac I**. The population of the camp fluctuates from 18,000 to 30,000, depending upon arrivals and voluntary humanitarian evacuations.

CRS/CI is also providing food for the camp. With the help of hard-working volunteers from the camp, camp residents get three meals a day.

CRS/CI is also responding to the needs of refugees living with **host families**. Monthly rations of flour, beans and oil are distributed to over 90,000 individuals throughout the country. Aware of the economic burden placed on the host families themselves, CRS is distributing monthly rations to at least 15,000 host families as well as the refugees.

CRS and Caritas Germany are contributing \$1 million towards a **Parent School Partnership Project (PSP)**. PSP is working to build an understanding of civil society. This project will target communities with high numbers of refugee children and host families. Isolated Macedonian communities will also be included.

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International Rescue Committee (IRC)

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Mission

Founded in 1933, the International Rescue Committee is the leading nonsectarian, voluntary organization providing relief, protection and resettlement services for refugees and victims of oppression or violent conflict. IRC is committed to freedom, human dignity, and self-reliance. This commitment is reflected in well-planned resettlement assistance, global emergency relief, rehabilitation, and advocacy for refugees.

IRC has provided assistance to refugees and the internally displaced in the region since 1992, as well as helped rebuild its war-affected communities. The areas IRC has and is working in include Bosnia, Croatia, Serbia, Albania Montenegro and Kosovo. In February of 1997, IRC arrived in Kosovo and since March 1998 it has provided emergency assistance in the province. In March of 1999, the IRC had to evacuate as the conflict escalated and hundreds of thousands of people fled from Kosovo into neighboring countries. IRC staff from the Kosovo program relocated to Macedonia and continued to provide assistance to the Kosovar population, now turned refugees. To date it is estimated that close to 750,000 men, women and children have left Kosovo, fleeing violence and destruction in their communities. Thousands more are believed to be trapped within Kosovo.

Project Purpose

IRC's objectives in Macedonia are to ensure the health and well-being of refugees from Kosovo as well as to assist Macedonia in coping with the additional burden of hosting hundreds of thousands of refugees, through public health, water and sanitation and, community health programs.

Beneficiaries

As of May 12, a total of 231,200 refugees lingered in refugee camps or lived with host families within Macedonia. IRC's beneficiaries include a total of 49,200 refugees in three camps. As new projects are approved, the beneficiaries are expected to include an additional 80,000 refugees

staying with host families in Macedonia as well as up to 250,000 Macedonians living in the communities that accommodate the refugees. IRC works with refugees in the following camps: Neprosteni (pop. 7,500 as of 5/11/99), Stenkovec I (pop. 22,200 as of 5/11/99), Stenkovec II (pop. 19,500 as of 5/11/99) and will likely begin working in the newly-established Cegranë refugee camp (pop. 30,600 as of 5/11/99).

Horrible stories of rape, murder and violence abound and the destruction of homes, public and civic infrastructure in Kosovo indicate that the people of Kosovo will need the help of the international community for months perhaps even years to come. The host communities in Macedonia, an economically troubled country, will also need foreign assistance to cope with the effect of such a large influx of people.

Project Activities

IRC provides emergency public health assistance in three refugee camps. In Neprosteni, IRC is responsible for camp management, distribution of food and other essential supplies such as blanket, toiletries and basic household items. To prevent the outbreak of epidemics, IRC is responsible for public health programs including installing and maintaining latrines and water storage tanks as well as setting up water taps in Neprosteni. In Stankovec I and II IRC carries out public health education and sanitation work.

In addition, IRC is preparing to establish two community health centers that provide comprehensive health services to refugees as well as the host community. This will include a psycho-social program to help refugees deal with their trauma as well as a mobile public health education outreach program. In addition, IRC hopes to receive funding for the development of a procurement cell, a project that will improve the capacity of humanitarian agencies to provide much needed assistance to refugees from Kosovo as well as to strengthen the Macedonian economy by concentrating on local procurement and providing technical assistance to local manufacturers.

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Summary of Mercy Corps' Relief Efforts in Macedonia

A Brief History

Mercy Corps International has been involved in Kosovo since June of 1993 when a bulk flour program was instituted to assist social cases. Over the past six years, Mercy Corps has grown its programs, its staff and its involvement. Over 25 programs totaling over \$25 million have been implemented, benefiting hundreds of thousands of people. Working through the Mother Theresa Society, the largest and oldest indigenous NGO in Kosovo, Mercy Corps has been able to help people and save lives. Bulk food, non-food commodities, hygiene parcels, food parcels, agriculture programs, health and medical programs, winterization programs and civil society programs have all been a part of Mercy Corps' efforts to assist those less fortunate.

In addition, Mercy Corps has also been involved in Sanjak, Montenegro, Albania and Macedonia over the past six years. Bulk food and non-food commodity programs, feeding programs and civil society programs have all been implemented to assist the people of these countries. Mercy Corps intends to stay involved in these countries, in addition to Kosovo, in an effort to bring lasting peace and stability to the Balkans.

Senokos Camp

Mercy Corps is currently managing the Senokos refugee camp between Tetovo and Gostivar. The camp currently houses 2,600 refugees but is expected to expand to almost 9,000 in the coming weeks. Our activities focus on overall camp management, food distribution and selected social services. UNICEF provides educational services to children while Doctors of the World provides health services and Solidarite provides water and sanitation services.

Blace Camp

The transit camp at the border, Blace, is currently co-managed by Mercy Corps and Action Against Hunger (AAH). While Mercy Corps manages the overall activities of the camp, AAH manages the food and non-food distribution. The camp has a 24-72 hour in-transit population of anywhere between 500 and 10,000 at any given time. Blace is the first point of contact refugees have with Macedonia before being assigned a refugee camp.

Assistance to Refugees Staying with Host Families

Assistance in the form of bulk food and non-food commodities are being provided to 75,000 refugees, host families and social cases throughout Macedonia. Working with Catholic Relief Services and the Macedonian Red Cross, Mercy Corps is supplying flour, vegetable oil, beans, sleeping pads, blankets, women's and children's shoes and socks and kitchen sets. Many of these items are procured locally, benefiting the local economy.

Social Mobilization Program

Under the guidance of Mercy Corps' medical officer, a social mobilization program is underway in one of the largest refugee camps, Brazda. The program aims to help the more than 25,000 refugees living in this camp identify and provide for some of their own health, sanitary and recreational needs. Under the program, the camp is divided into clusters and refugees from each cluster are identified to provide leadership and empower their fellow residents with information and advocacy. In addition, an infant care program is being conducted at both Brazda and Senokos, providing a "mother/infant friendly" environment, health education and training to mothers. Mothers learn about proper breast feeding, diarrhea and care for newborns.

Milk and Cheese Assistance

In order to provide refugees with a more balanced diet, Mercy Corps is providing fresh milk and cheese to the refugees living in the camps. This program has the added benefit of providing local producers of these products with a new market and cash infusions into the economy and has received accolades from camp managers and refugees alike.

Ad Hoc Initiatives

Mercy Corps has undertaken several ad hoc initiatives with a variety of donors in our relief efforts. LDS Charities from the US has sent hygiene kits, food parcels, soap, clothing and blankets for distribution through Mercy Corps. In addition, they are providing fresh foods to the camp population in Senokos. The American Friends Service Committee is providing pillows, hygiene kits, clothing and soap. Other organizations have contributed both money and commodities. Private funds have been used to purchase smaller quantities of needed food and non-food items in an effort to plug gaps which can and do exist in the commodity pipeline and to assist organizations which have contacted Mercy Corps.

The Return

While Mercy Corps responds to the immediate needs of refugees in Macedonia, Mercy Corps continues to look to the return to Kosovo. When a peace agreement is finally reached, Mercy Corps will be ready to return with the refugees. A multitude of commodities and tasks will be needed and undertaken in order to rebuild Kosovo and Mercy Corps intends to be there. Macedonia and its industries and businesses will be a key player in this effort supplying much needed commodities and labor to rebuild Kosovo.

5/7/99

ICMC
International Catholic Migration Commission
Stenkovac I Camp in Brazda, Macedonia
May 14, 1999

The Kosovar refugees face multiple challenges, both presently and upon their future resettlement in countries around the world. ICMC is supporting their present needs, while addressing their imminent adjustments to new cultures, languages and societies.

Community Services

In an effort to offset the uncertainty of their future, ICMC provides a measure of normalcy to the refugees through its Community Services.

Women and children are suffering particular difficulties from their emotional trauma. Missing sons, husbands and fathers leave a mournful gap among family units; women have confronted the threat of rape and beatings; and, torn from their homes and communities, the Kosovars need solace as the aftermath of these events sets in.

Within tents located throughout the camp, ICMC has set up community centers or "odas," an Albanian term for "a room in a house for gathering." Here, women find ways to cope with their experiences through socializing and talking in support with one another. Younger girls practice traditional skills such as sewing and embroidery. With a focus on their future resettlement, they also study English and other languages.

Children gather to play sports, sing songs and recite poems. They study art and drawing. These lessons are so popular that each session fills to capacity and more children stand waiting for the next. ICMC also distributes non-food items such as toys and children's clothes.

People of all ages are accepting the services of a "barber shop," a private area sectioned off by a blue tarp. The refugees enjoy chess and checkers, though perhaps basketball most of all. They play on a makeshift court at all hours of the day; in fact, some have been seen playing at 4:00 AM in the rain.

Vulnerable Persons

ICMC welcomes vulnerable persons and all those in need of daily care within the refugee population at Stenkovac I.

In particular, ICMC shelters the elderly who are alone and unable to care for themselves, youth without a family, the physically and mentally disabled and traumatized victims.

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These populations can find care and counseling in a quiet environment where a trained medical staff addresses their needs.

Many children and disabled persons were separated from their families while fleeing Kosovo and crossing the border into Macedonia. There are elderly persons without children or grandchildren to care for them and who must rely on non-family support.

Battered women find comfort from counselors within the confines of the ICMC centers, while remaining confident that their children may stay with them and be cared for, as well.

Public Information

One of the many problems that the refugees face is that they have been cut off from nearly all their channels and sources of information and communication. In any society, information is a key social force keeping individuals and society informed and able to function in their community.

In addition to Community Services, ICMC aims to help the refugees maintain awareness of events both within the camp and around the world through several projects.

- Phone center: provides refugees with three free minutes on a cellular telephone, an integral step to helping them trace their relatives for reunification
- Public Address System: provides daily news broadcasts from Deutcha Vella, the British Broadcasting Corporation and Albanian Radio, as well as information on camp life
- Information Center: addresses camp issues from missing children and provides information on their immediate future regarding humanitarian evacuations and relocation

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