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Beneficiary Satisfaction Survey report Kosovo

 International Federation
of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

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1. Summary

In March 2013, the International Federation Office in Kosovo launched a Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF) operation to assist the most affected families during the spring floods.

As planned, the beneficiary satisfaction survey was conducted in a two week period at the end of the operation between 3 and 20 May 2013, among the people assisted through the DREF operation *MDRKV006* responding to the floods in March 2013. During the survey a total of 200 families were interviewed in the various affected areas. 18 volunteers, 7 branch secretaries and 4 Red Cross HQ staff were involved in conducting the beneficiary satisfaction survey. The collected information was analyzed in a database.

The beneficiaries were asked about how they had been affected by the floods. According to the comments mainly the items stored in the houses or in the yards were damaged. Other issues were also mentioned such as food shortages; they could not live in their own houses, they were cut off by the floods from the outside world. The majority of the interviewed beneficiaries stated that only the Red Cross had been assisting them.

The distributed items met the basic needs of the assisted persons. The assistance arrived on time, quite shortly after the launch of the operation, therefore the distributed items were useful for the beneficiaries. People appreciated highly the fact that the relief had been distributed directly to them as they would have experienced some difficulties to pick up the items. The support of the Red Cross volunteers was highlighted in the comments.

In general terms, the beneficiaries were asked about their needs and were informed about the distributions, however, based on the feedbacks the preferred way of receiving information was to be personally contacted. According to the feedbacks, community mobilization was also activated as people were informing and supporting one another during the assistance.

Two thirds of the interviewed people stated that only the Red Cross had asked them about their needs. Some of them were participating also in the needs assessment and unloading the relief goods. The majority of the respondents received the relief within one week. The efforts of the Red Cross organization were much appreciated concerning the timely delivery.

The operation aimed to assist the most vulnerable families during the floods to meet their basic needs. Many of the people supported would not have been able to cope with the situation without external support.

99 per cent of the people interviewed in the survey confirmed that they had recognized the support from the Red Cross. The parcels did carry a Red Cross logo, and the volunteers were wearing Red Cross uniforms.

2. Background

Although not prone to frequent natural disasters, the geological configuration of Kosovo, its location within a region characterized by seismic volatility, renders it susceptible to earthquakes, landslides and seasonal river floods. Such incidents happen at least once or twice each year. Kosovo cannot be described as a high risk area, however, when looking at the low capacities or the low level of coping mechanisms and particularly high vulnerability, it becomes evident that even small-scale disasters have a strongly negative impact on communities and thus require the development of better disaster preparedness and response capacity. The Red Cross is among a handful of actors that have some capacity to respond and is the only one being approached by the communities whenever some disaster happens.

Due to heavy rainfall in Kosovo that started on 14th March 2013 and lasted for more than 24 hours, many villages in several municipalities were flooded. The majority of these affected areas are situated in the rural and poorer part of Kosovo. Some villages were isolated as well due to the damaged and /or not accessible bridges. The rivers that flooded were as follows: Drini I Bardhe, Klina, Bistrica, and Lushta. The sudden cold wave with low temperatures and strong winds all over Kosovo further worsened the situation of the affected population. The flooding caused damage to houses and personal belongings, casualties in livestock, damages in agricultural land and equipment. The situation was complicated also by the fact that many families had also been evacuated and could not return to their homes as those were still under water. There were shortages of food and other essential goods, as the population had not been prepared for such a heavy rain especially since the winter had not been too snowy either.

The most affected municipalities were Klina/ Klina, Skenderaj/Srbica, Peja/Pec, Istog/ Istok, Kamenice/Kamenica, Gjakova/Djakovica, North and South Mitrovica/Mitrovica, Zvecan, Leposavic.

According to the information received from the Red Cross branches and emergency departments, an estimated 990 households were affected by the flooding.

In previous years it was noted that whenever a natural disaster like floods happen, the Red Cross organizations were the only ones responding even though they have limited capacity to do so. This highlights the need for developing better disaster preparedness and response capacity.

A “lessons learned” workshop was conducted with the RC branches involved in the DREF operation. Also a beneficiary satisfaction survey was carried out among the people who were assisted through the DREF operation.

In Skenderaj municipality, in the village of Izbice, the flooding resulted in the death of a ten year old girl who had, on her way back from school, fallen into the river. Beside damages to the households and agricultural equipment, the flooding caused also difficulty having access to clean drinking water, as the majority of the affected areas are not connected to a water pipe system but use open wells.

In order to assist the most vulnerable families from among the affected, at the request of the RC organizations in Kosovo, the International Federation launched DREF operation. Based on the assessment conducted by Red Cross staff and volunteers, 760 families were assisted with food and non-food items. The families assisted were among the most vulnerable ones with low income. Even that small amount of stock they possessed was soaked and therefore not usable. In addition to this, 110 food and non-food relief items were purchased as a replenishment of RCK emergency stock.

Item	No. of units distributed for the affected families
Food (family food parcel containing wheat flour, rice, sugar, vegetable oil, white beans and relish)	760
Hygiene kits (standard family hygiene parcel)	760
Drinking water (bottled, pack of 9 liters)	1,440
Blankets	1,520
Mattresses	760
Replenishment of emergency stock	
Food (family food parcel containing wheat flour, rice, sugar, vegetable oil, white beans and relish)	110
Hygiene kits (standard family hygiene parcel)	110
Blankets	220
Mattresses	110

3. Methodology used while conducting and analyzing the survey

Scope of the survey

The survey questions touched upon issues of relevance / appropriateness of goods and services, timeliness, information dissemination and visibility. Most of the questions in the questionnaire (see attached) can be placed in one of these categories. Therefore this report will present the findings and conclusions based on these four main criteria.

The beneficiary satisfaction survey was conducted in May 2013, among the people assisted through the DREF operation *MDRKV006* responding to flash floods during March 2013.

The areas covered by the survey included the most affected municipalities: Klina/ Klina, Skenderaj/Srbica, Peja/Pec, Istog/ Istok, Kamenice/Kamenica, Gjakova/Djakovica, and Mitrovice/Mitrovica.

Purpose of the survey

1. To find out whether beneficiaries were satisfied with the goods and services received during the operation
2. To expand the knowledge base, identify best practices and provide concrete recommendations for the future appropriateness and relevance of the disaster response operations
3. To enhance the visibility of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, especially the Red Cross Organisations in Kosovo
4. To provide feedback on further improvement possibilities of the beneficiary satisfaction survey and its usage
5. To contribute to the DREF final report.



Main activities carried out: meetings with branch secretaries to be involved in the survey, workshops for volunteers and branch secretaries, field visits and data gathering (interviews, observation), monitoring of the conducting the survey by the headquarters and IFRC office representatives, regular coordination with IFRC Europe Zone Office, data analysis, survey report writing.

Status of the operation at the time of conducting the survey: The implementation of the DREF operation MDRKV006 was finalized by the end of May 2013. The Red Cross Organizations and the International Federation were organizing a “lessons learned” workshop for the volunteers who participated in the distribution to share their experience and provide feedback during the time of the operation.

Methodology

Methods: the methods used for data collection included mainly individual and household interviews and, to some extent, observation. Monitoring of the interviewing and activities was done in some involved municipalities by the representatives of the IFRC Office in Kosovo.

Data analysis: The collected information was registered by the Red Cross staff in a database prepared by the International Federation, and data analysis was carried out with the support of the IFRC Europe Zone Office.

Selection of beneficiary sample: The team did aim to reach a representative sample, therefore the selection of interviewed families was decided to be done in the majority of affected municipalities in order to reach a wider impression about the scale of the operation, and the quality of assistance provided to the beneficiaries. A total of 200 families were selected to participate in the survey, representing 26 per cent of the total targeted families. This number provides a broad sample for database to analyze whether the operation has reached its objectives and the needs of targeted beneficiaries have been met.

The following table shows the number of families interviewed in each of the affected municipalities:

Branch	Number of families interviewed
Peja	30 families
Istog	35 families
Klina	40 families
Skenderaj	35 families
Gjakova	25 families
Kamenica	20 families
Mitrovica	15 families

Validity and reliability of the data collected: Given the situation that the survey was conducted among a representative sample of the beneficiaries, the data collected provides us reliable and valid information about the opinion of the beneficiaries. The questionnaire was carefully translated into local languages.

As the survey was conducted mainly by volunteers, a workshop was organized for them in order to prepare them for the survey through field visits and meetings with beneficiaries. During the workshop, the following issues were discussed:

- How to approach the beneficiaries (what behaviour is appropriate, how to introduce ourselves, familiarise the respondents with the situation etc.)
- Interviewing techniques
- Going through and interpreting each of the questions with guidance from the International Federation's representative

It had been agreed that the survey should be conducted in a participatory way through discussions. The volunteers did not ask people questions one by one, but were talking with them about how they felt about the assistance they received. Therefore people interviewed felt more comfortable and were openly sharing their opinion. The team consisted of: 21 volunteers and 5 Red Cross staff.

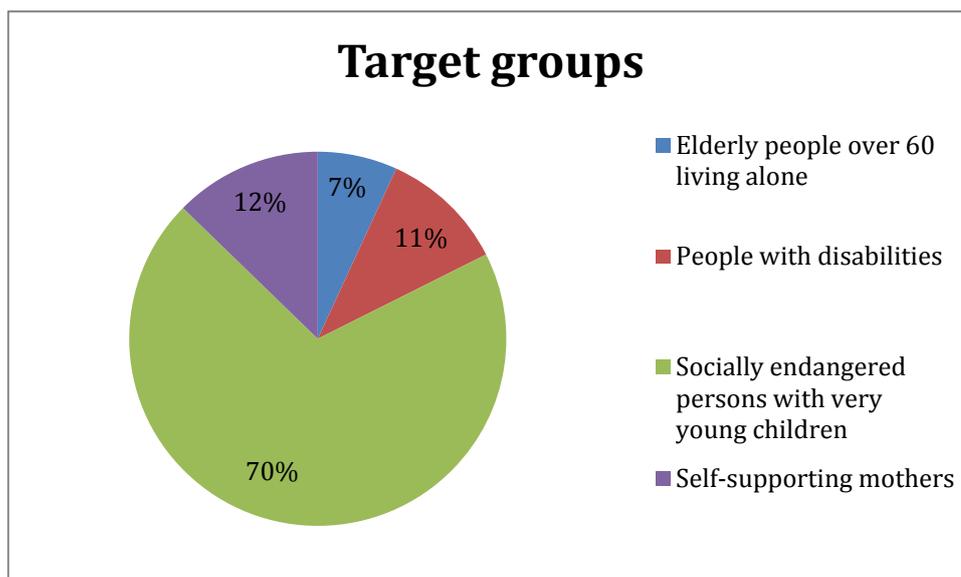
Meeting with stakeholders and their involvement in the implementation of the survey: before starting the implementation of the survey, Red Cross branch secretaries and their headquarters were invited to a meeting where they were informed about the survey, and coordination was established with them. During the implementation of the survey, the branch secretaries were also participating in different phases of the activity. They participated in the interview, were monitoring some interviews and were giving support to the volunteers. The Red Cross headquarters staff was also involved in the monitoring as well as in compiling all the information received from the volunteers to the database. International Federation staff also conducted monitoring and field visits and was observing the interviews.

4. Findings of the survey

Background

The operation aimed at targeting the most vulnerable population groups with basic relief items so as to support them in dealing with the consequences of the extreme weather conditions.

Most of the families assisted are in bad social situation with many children, and many families comprised elderly and disabled people. This was also shown in the answers received for the question if they would have the means to become self-sufficient after the disaster operation, 53 per cent of the respondent answered "no", meaning that they are the most marginalised groups of the society and would require constant support to meet their needs. Most of these respondents were from the regions Peja, Skendraj, Kamenica and Mitrovica. These places are less developed and were more affected during the war in 1999. This resulted in increasing their vulnerability, and when adding to this the disaster affect, these families became the most vulnerable ones.



Most of these respondents were from the regions Peja, Skendraj, Kamenica and Mitrovica. These places are less developed and were more affected during the war in 1999. This resulted in increasing their vulnerability, and when adding to this the disaster affect, these families became the most vulnerable ones.

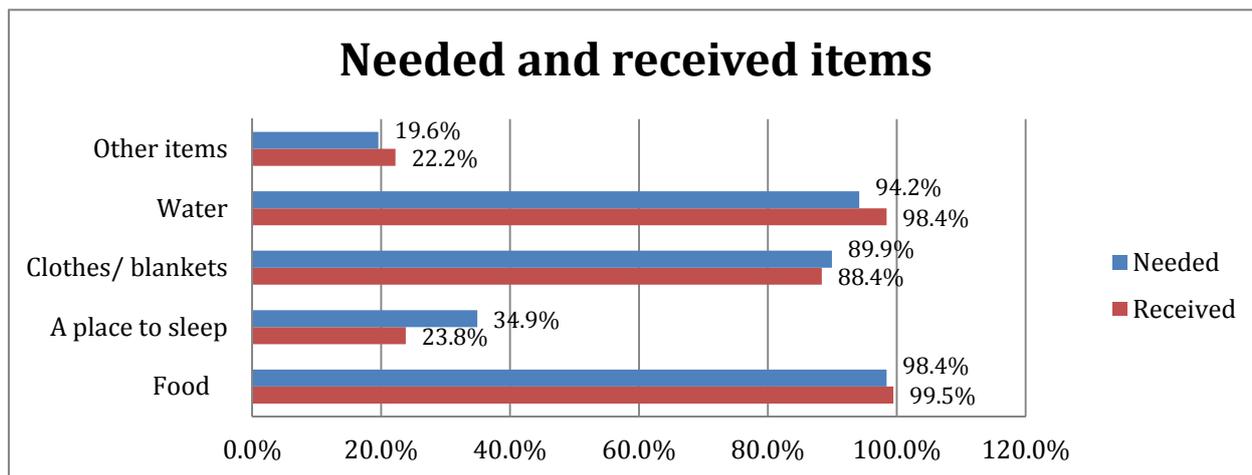
The respondents reported that the majority of them and their relatives were not injured during the flooding. However their properties were damaged, and this was the mainstream answer they reported. Principally the greater part of their belongings was damaged, and also one fatality happened in Skenderaj Municipality when a young girl fell into the water. Some people were also stuck in the houses but luckily they were staying on the second floor. They mainly listed the lack of food and non food items as their ones were under water and not usable. The survey was conducted after the operation was completed, and by that time the inundation was already over and there was no water in the houses of the affected people, reported by the team conducting the survey.

During the survey the total of 188 people were interviewed. Out of them 120 male and 68 female persons answered to the questions of the volunteers.

When asked about who provided the relief items, 93 per cent of the respondents stated that only Red Cross was supporting them. Only two per cent stated that they received some support from the government, however they did not specify from which body. Three per cent mentioned also others among those who supported them. They highlighted the assistance by those neighbours who had a boat, as well as the assistance during the evacuation by the Kosovo Security Forces.

Appropriateness of the operation

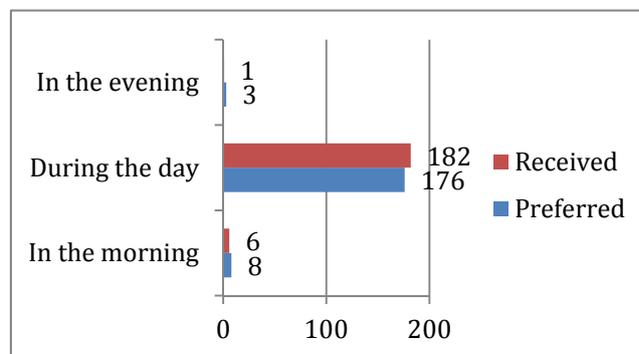
The appropriateness of the operation was measured through the questions related to the needs of the beneficiaries, to the received relief items, and to the distributions process. The chart below shows the answers of the people in relation to their needs and what they actually received. The table clearly shows that the needs of the people were met through the items distributed.



The table above does not contain “other items”. During the interview the volunteers asked the beneficiaries to specify what they meant by “other items”. Most of them mentioned that they would need to get water pumps as well as to receive financial compensation for the damages by the floods. Assistance with water pumps and evacuation was provided by the Kosovo Security Forces.

A minor discrepancy in expectations and result of relief distribution is tracked in the response, but this may be a result of the survey being done months after the operation, and people had to reflect on their needs retrospectively.

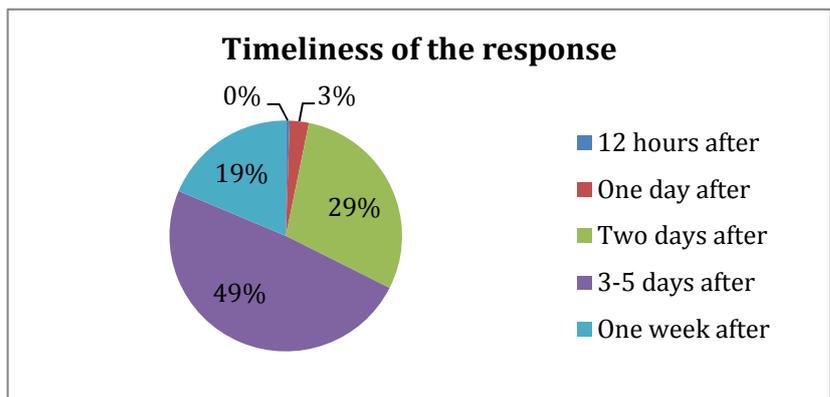
Related to the distributions, people were asked about the preferred time of the distribution time and method of distributions. The chart shows the answers to the questions about the actual and preferred time of distributions. Daytime was shown to be the most preferred time of distribution due to the fact that it is easier to them to receive in daylight.



The majority of the respondents received the relief at home. They also stated that in case they had had to travel, that would have caused difficulties for them as, due to the high water levels, access to many houses was blocked, many of the beneficiaries did not have any transportation means or they had to stay at home to take care of their relatives. Some of the beneficiaries used their tractors and came to the RC branch to pick up the goods when they wanted.

When asked about the time of the distribution, people answered that the majority of them received the items during the day that was also the preferred time for the distribution. Also four families received the relief in the evening, however, they did not mention this as a problem for them but the contrary: as appreciation of the work of the Red Cross “24 hours a day, seven days a week”.

The Red Cross Organisations did their utmost to address the needs of the affected population at the earliest possible time therefore to ensure the timely response to their needs. Needs assessments were conducted by the Red Cross local branches almost immediately after the floods happened. Given the fact that RCK had some items on stocks those were immediately distributed and the procurement of the items started as soon as the funds were received from IFRC.

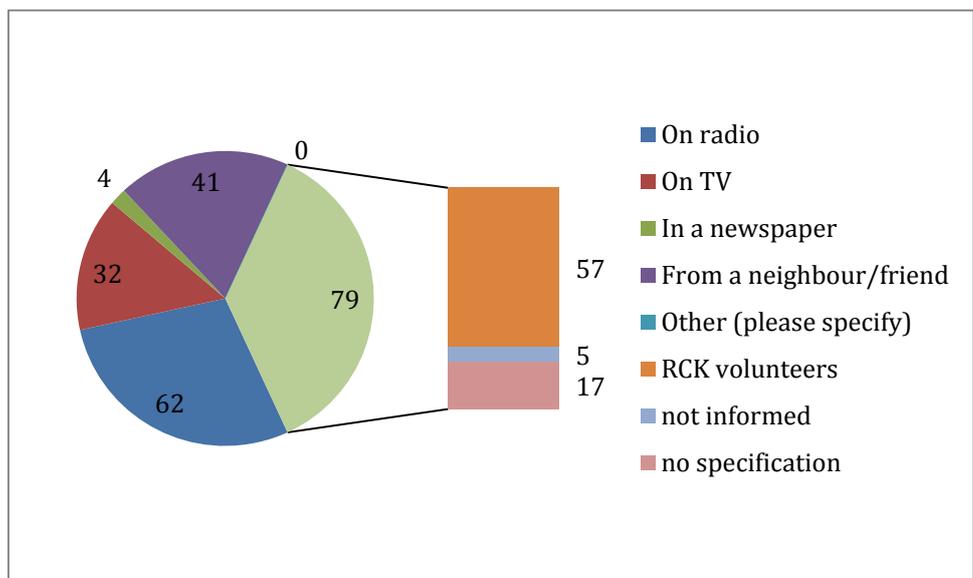


The International Federation has a range of established contacts and cooperation with suppliers. Therefore the procurement of the items did not take long. This was a lesson learnt from previous operations that prepositioned stocks and agreements with suppliers need to be in place should there be an emergency operation. Based on this, the distributions took place within one week as it is summarized in the chart.

Information dissemination

98% of the beneficiaries answered that they had received all the necessary information related to the distributions on the information channels summarized in the chart below.

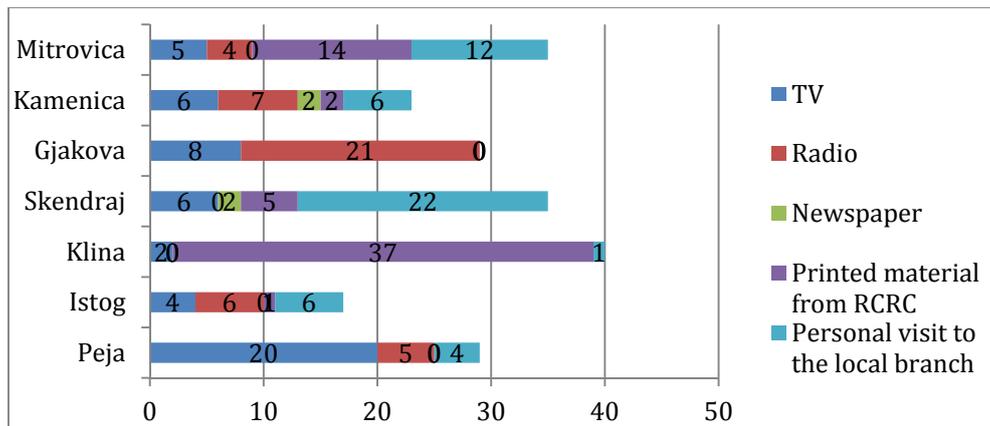
This chart shows that the majority of the respondents received information through radio and TV as the main source of information. Many of them were contacted by the Red Cross staff and volunteers personally or on the phone. Phone was highly preferred by many of the respondents. Also they appreciated to be directly contacted, so they could also provide additional information about their situation and also they could ask questions related to the distributions.



85 per cent of the people asked were aware about the contents of the distributed items and also knew about the time of distributions. The other 15 per cent that didn't know about the content of items to be distributed was due to the information they received from other sources or were for the first time affected and assisted by the

Red Cross. When asked about food and hygiene rules, 95 per cent of the respondents confirmed that they were informed about those during distributions and knew how to proceed with the items received.

The beneficiaries were asked if they had come across any information about the Red Cross activities after the disaster, and 78 per cent of the respondents answered “yes”. The chart below shows the detailed information through which information channels they heard about the Red Cross.



Participation / involvement of the targeted people

Out of the 188 families participating in the survey, only 7 stated that they had not been asked about their needs. A total of 83 per cent of respondents mentioned that they had been asked by the Red Cross about their needs and had been part of the assessment process. Other agencies were also mentioned, such as Government, and others, but without specifications. Two family representatives mentioned that their neighbour has asked them about what they would need.

75 per cent of the respondents stated that they knew how to file an eventual complaint related to the goods received. However, this answer was not typical in some of the affected areas, such as in Peja and Skenderaj, where the majority of the families were not aware of any complaint mechanism available for them. Red Cross organisations need to consider scaling up this type of information sharing in those areas. Related to beneficiary participation, the chart shows how beneficiaries felt of being involved in the project activities. In terms of assessment, planning and monitoring and implementation only few families answered that they were involved in planning (1), monitoring (4) and distributions (6). With only one exception, all these families came from Mitrovica. This needs to be addressed in the future operations to ensure and enhance beneficiary accountability.

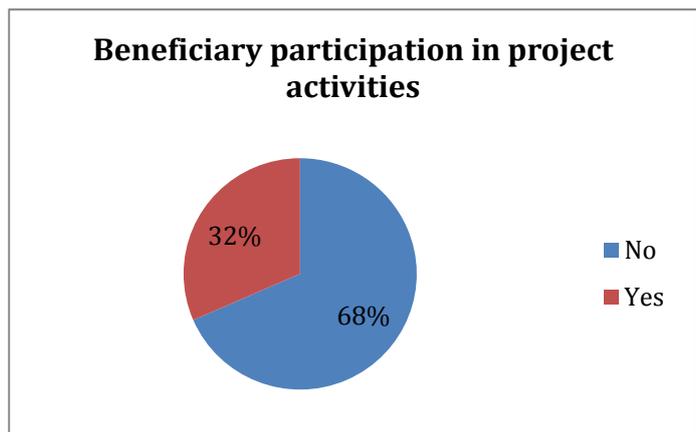
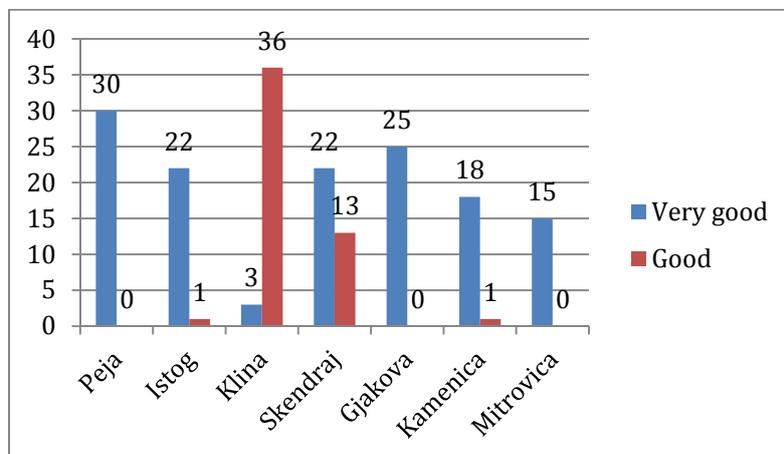


Image and Visibility

In general all the respondents were satisfied with the Red Cross operation. They were satisfied that the Red Cross organisations had mobilised their resources and provided support for them. 99 per cent of the beneficiaries confirmed that the relief items had the Red Cross logo and volunteers were wearing uniforms, or the Red Cross emblem was visible on their clothes. The below chart shows the answers related to the question about the behaviour of the volunteers during the distributions.



When beneficiaries were asked to give their opinion about the operations done by the Red Cross organisations, more than 90 per cent of the respondents were satisfied and would not want to change anything in the process. However, some people stated that they would prefer if there would be one person in their own municipality who is contacting them and provides information therefore contributing to a better coordination between the different organisations. People were also highlighting that during a disaster the response might be faster to meet their needs. When they do not have access to food and other basic items for days, that can highly influence their situation. It was also suggested that Red Cross organisations should have sufficient stocks available in case of disaster that can easily be mobilised, and then later replenished.

It has to be mentioned that the people indicated that they would need more aid not only in case of disasters. The target group of the operation was the most vulnerable within the affected population therefore when people were asked if they would have sufficient means after the disaster the majority answered "no". This again shows that the support provided by the Red Cross organisations was necessary and essential for the affected people as they would not have been able to cope with the consequences from their own resources.

5. Conclusions and Recommendations

General Conclusions

The biggest value of conducting the survey was that it shifted the emphasis of the analysis from output or outcome level indicators to the voices of the people assisted and managed to emphasize the very essence of the Red Cross work which is improving the lives of individuals. It is important to have the voices of the people heard not only during the initial assessment but also in the following phases of the project cycle.

The conclusion of the team working on the survey was that it is highly recommended to make this kind of survey a routine after emergency operations and therefore to plan for the corresponding costs in the budget. Although surveys might be laborious and costly, they provide valuable information on the overall success of an operation. It is important not only to provide assistance to the people but to also get their feedback. It also has a value in itself to visit some of the families in difficult conditions and talk to them and discuss as this makes them feel that the Red Cross/Red Crescent cares about them. Also it is a good learning process for volunteers, and the RC organizations can receive first hand feedback from beneficiaries.

Conclusions and recommendations about the methodology

- The data collection was based on a questionnaire. This questionnaire can be adapted and used also for other operations/activities in order to get the voice of beneficiaries heard about their satisfaction over the activities.
- The training on the survey helped volunteers better understand what each question aimed at.
- To avoid people getting tired of the too many questions, it is recommended to conduct the survey through discussions and only when a topic is not touched then ask a question.
- It is worth to test / pilot the questionnaire before using it so that we can avoid that some questions are not clear, or we cannot get the needed information from those.

Conclusions and recommendations by the Red Cross Organisations in Kosovo

- It is recommended that there should be contingency goods in place with the Red Cross so that they could start responding immediately when disaster occurs. RC organisations need to advocate for, and mobilize, resources to build up contingency plans, and contingency stocks for enabling them to respond immediately after emergency occurs.
- The items distributed to beneficiaries were in line with their basic needs and supported them to cope with the immediate consequences of the disaster. Communication with beneficiaries through previous beneficiary satisfaction surveys gave feedback on the items most needed after a disaster strikes.
- During distributions some communities mobilised themselves and were supporting the community members by organising transport for the evacuation, distributing the items to the homes of the targeted people, providing information about the needs of the affected people and sharing information related to the time and process of distributions.
- Beneficiary involvement in planning and monitoring is being improved during this operation and special emphasis should be maintained on this involvement.
- The Red Cross Organisations will continue using beneficiary satisfaction surveys in other types of projects too in order to be more accountable towards the donors and the beneficiaries.