

# Bosnia Appeal: The charities that need your support

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1. WAR CHILD was founded 18 months ago by two film producers after making a television programme in Croatia. It has sent about 50 aid convoys to Bosnia - the most recent contained blankets, food, medicine and clothes. The charity also delivers goods for other NGOs in Bosnia. Last summer, War Child received an Overseas Development Administration grant for a mobile bakery in Bosnia which is now producing 1,500 loaves of bread a day for refugees in Medjugorje. There are plans for another mobile bakery backed by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and for a trauma therapy unit for children in Sarajevo.

2. BRITISH RED CROSS will, by the end of this year, have given pounds 12m to the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), which has been working in former Yugoslavia since June 1991, when the war began, and has more than 1,000 personnel there. The pounds 5m of the British Red Cross's donation has been allocated to Bosnia; the ICRC's budget this year for Bosnia is pounds 120m. The British Red Cross is worried about how much it can give next year: 60 per cent of its grant comes from public donations. 'It is difficult keeping the profile of Bosnia high. There is now an element of fatigue among those who give,' says Denise Meredith of British Red Cross. The ICRC is managing to get food and medical supplies to about 600,000 people in Bosnia each month, in spite of access problems. It is now sending blankets, 5,000 wood-burning stoves, winter clothing and plastic sheeting. A Red Cross food parcel costing pounds 10 will help to keep a family for a month.

3. CARE INTERNATIONAL has been working in former Yugoslavia since February. British Care has given about pounds 600,000, representing 20 per cent of Care International's total aid budget for Bosnia. Food and shelter for displaced people in Bosnia is Care's primary concern. The first consignment of Care's 49,000 winter parcels to the Tuzla region, with clothes for babies and vital food for mothers and children, has been delivered; 6,000 packages are for mainly Croatian Herzegovina. With a base at Split and an office in Tuzla, the charity runs one of the largest truck fleets from the coast into central Bosnia.

4. CAFOD (Catholic Fund for Overseas Development) has been involved with the conflict since December 1991 through Caritas, an international aid branch of the Catholic Church which works with local churches in the country in need. Cafod has spent pounds 700,000, but is being squeezed because of demands in India and Angola, while Caritas has spent pounds 84m. Lack of money, and to a lesser extent access, has forced Caritas to reduce the number of food lorries it sends out. 'It's dropped from 30 to 40 a week to about 10 to 15. It is a great worry,' says Mark Topping at Cafod. Caritas is trying to form a joint convoy with Mirhamet, a Muslim agency, under UN protection. 'This would help us get food to those who need it most,' says Mr Topping.

5. CHRISTIAN AID has channelled pounds 100,000 into the World Council of Churches' programme for former Yugoslavia. The WCC has provided food, shelter materials, agricultural and other relief supplies. It also supports the WCC Ecumenical Solidarity Fund, assisting women who have been victims of violence.

6. EDINBURGH DIRECT AID was formed in September 1992 specifically to send food and medical aid to displaced people in Bosnia and Croatia. So far, in spite of the death of a volunteer in July, it has sent 12 convoys of lorries filled with donated food and medical supplies mostly to central Bosnia. This month, the twelfth convoy of four lorries attempted to reach Sarajevo but failed and is now delivering the aid to Vitez. Often the convoy helps other agencies by delivering their aid. So far it has raised pounds 50,000, which has paid for the lorries and their maintenance, but it needs more to expand its activities.

7. FEED THE CHILDREN has been working in former Yugoslavia since July 1992. It has raised more than pounds 1.5m for central Bosnia in the past 18 months and delivered more than 3,400 tons of emergency medical and food supplies to destitute children and their families since. It sends two full lorries from Britain to central Bosnia each week and is the only British aid agency supplying baby food to the area. Its Vitez warehouse has continued to distribute aid when UN aid was cancelled last month because of the death of a UN convoy driver.

8. HELP THE AGED began working with the UNHCR in villages and towns along the Bosnian-Croatian border seven months ago. It visits elderly people living in camps - 38 per cent of those living in camps in Croatia are elderly - and makeshift houses, taking them mainly food and medicine; many are frail, having struggled against inflation and bad living conditions before the conflict began. 'The elderly were the last to leave many of the villages when they were 'ethnically cleansed' and were appallingly treated by the warring forces,' says James Newsome, of Help the Aged's international desk. The charity has spent more than pounds 200,000 in former Yugoslavia and needs as much again.

9. ISLAMIC RELIEF, which works for distressed people of all races and religions, has delivered up to pounds 7m of aid to former Yugoslavia since 1991. Earlier this year the charity set up 26 programmes in Bosnia and Croatia, including rehabilitation and resocialisation of rape victims, sponsoring and caring for 40,000 orphans. The charity aims to supply wood and water to 50,000 families in Bosnia throughout the winter; it needs just under pounds 2m to achieve the aim. It reckons that one cubic metre of wood, costing pounds 18, is enough for a family of five for the winter.

10. MARIE STOPES INTERNATIONAL started its Bosnian programme in May, creating four field trauma centres for both Croat and Muslim refugees in Bosnia and Croatia. With funds totalling pounds 1.4m from various EU countries and the UNHCR, the agency is establishing women's self-help support groups to address rape and trauma of war such as grief, loss, violence, dislocation and depression. Group counselling so far has been offered to 5,000 women; the aim is to reach 20,000. The MSI is to raise a further pounds 500,000 to complete this.

11. OXFAM launched its Cold Front Appeal for warm winter clothes - particularly jumpers and coats for displaced children and adults in Bosnia - four weeks ago. The target for adult clothes has nearly been reached but children's coats, and to a lesser extent jumpers, are still desperately needed. The heavy demand is because many displaced children have grown since last winter; a reason for the scarcity is that coats are expensive and tend to be handed down through families. 'People are frightened of dying from the cold; the levels of malnourishment are worse this winter,' says Anna Feuchtwang at Oxfam. At the same time the appeal intends to raise pounds 1m and the charity feels it has seen a slower response than last year. During the past 18 months Oxfam has spent about pounds 526,800 in Bosnia-Herzegovina on various projects including transport, medicines, clothes, food, blankets and engineering.

12. THE REFUGEE COUNCIL, which has helped 8,000 Bosnian refugees who fled to the UK, raised pounds 145,000 in August for refugees in Bosnia. 'We recognised that the vast majority, more than 3 million refugees, are still in former Yugoslavia. The crisis now is not so much of armed combat but of the effects of winter,' says Ken Ritchie, deputy director of the Refugee Council. About 75 per cent of the money raised is now channelled to other British charities working out in Bosnia, all of which are listed on this page.

13. SAVE THE CHILDREN is supporting its sister organisation Red Barnet, from Denmark, which is distributing family food parcels to displaced people in Bosnia. Last year the charity spent more than pounds 1m on aid to Eastern Europe and mostly needs clothes, food and heating - the war having severely reduced state finances.

14. SCOTTISH EUROPEAN AID is one of the smallest aid organisations working in Bosnia. It began earlier this year with a UNHCR grant of pounds 800,000 to work on a water engineering programme in the Tuzla area. The area is swollen with refugees and clean water is critically important. SEA reckons the average cost of restoring an adequate water supply is about 50p a person. The group's UNHCR grant runs out this month and it does not know if it will get further funding. It needs to raise money urgently to continue its work this winter and next year.

15. THE UNITED NATIONS ASSOCIATION'S TRUST BOSNIA, founded in July to raise money for the UNHCR's use, has raised pounds 59,000. Some of the money was earmarked for airlifting injured children out of Bosnia; the rest has been used in areas of most pressing need.

#### SENDING A DONATION

If you would like to support one or more of the charitable organisations please send a separate cheque for each donation, made payable to the organisation - with the wording as indicated below - and send to: Bosnia Appeal, The Independent, 40 City Road, London EC1Y 2DB.

1. WAR CHILD NOW.
2. VICTIMS OF WAR APPEAL (FOR MER YUGOSLAVIA) - This for the Red Cross.
3. CARE.
4. CAFOD (BOSNIA).
5. CHRISTIAN AID (BOSNIA).
6. EDINBURGH DIRECT AID.
7. FEED THE CHILDREN.
8. HELP THE AGED FORMER YUGO SLAVIA APPEAL.
9. ISLAMIC RELIEF BOSNIA FUND.
10. MARIE STOPES INTERNATIONAL (BOSNIA).
11. OXFAM. For more information about the Cold Front Appeal, contact Oxfam, 274 Banbury Road, Oxford OX2 7DZ (0865 311311).
12. THE REFUGEE COUNCIL.
13. SAVE THE CHILDREN FUND.
14. SCOTTISH EUROPEAN AID.
15. UNA TRUST BOSNIA.