



Floods in Serbia

CONSEQUENCES

39 municipalities hit by floods
1,6 million people affected
51 people perished in the floods
32,000 people evacuated
485 houses destroyed
16,200 housing units damaged
43,000 people lost income basis
40 Roma settlements damaged
Total disaster damage:
1,5 billion EUR (3% GDP)



Extensive areas of Serbia were flooded. © EHO/ HEKS

Situation

In May 2014, the heavy rainfall-driven floods hit 39 municipalities in Serbia and their 1.6 million residents. Overall, damages and economic losses amount to EUR 1.5 billion. The floods and landslides caused complete destruction of 485 housing units, as well as 16,200 apartments and individual housing units. Around 280 bridges, 600 km of roads and more than 100 public buildings (health and educational facilities) were damaged. Ongoing cooperation programmes in Serbia have been partially affected by flood damage and had to be reprogrammed.

Emergency relief

The Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) through its Humanitarian Aid released an Emergency support for Serbia and Bosnia-Herzegovina amounting to **CHF 800,000**. A Swiss Armed Forces transport helicopter was deployed in the disaster zone (60 flights).

In Serbia, mostly during the rains, SDC locally released **CHF 200,000** for small actions, supporting: 1) Red Cross in cooperation with the Ministry of Interior (water pumps, blankets, food, rubber boots, waterproof clothes), 2) Serbian Office for Flood Recovery (institutional support), 3) Ecumenical Humanitarian Organization (EHO) for flooded Roma settlement, 4) Centre for Youth Integration shelter for street children and 5) Rehabilitation of Knjazevac region water management system.

The Swiss population, the Serbian diaspora and businesses both in Switzerland and in Serbia have shown great solidarity and rose over **CHF 3 million** of donations and in-kind contributions. Funds were mainly channeled through Swiss NGOs and private companies to official lines in Serbia.

Funds for recovery and reconstruction

At the International Donors Conference in Brussels, held on July 16th 2014, Switzerland committed a total of **CHF 15 million** to flood-damaged Bosnia-Herzegovina and Serbia, with **CHF 7,5 million** each.

Switzerland has been contributing to institutional capacity building of the Office for Reconstruction and Flood Relief, an office that has been established in May 2014 by the Government of Serbia to coordinate all recovery measures. Furthermore, Swiss Cooperation provided institutional support for the Standing Conference of Towns and Municipalities (National Association of Serbian Municipalities) which had an important role in damage assessment at local level.

In addition to the Swiss Government contribution of CHF 1,3 million (financed by the Swiss Federal Office for Migration within the Migration Partnership Agreement between Serbia and Switzerland), an amount of **CHF 280'000** was provided to the Social Housing Upgrade Program implemented by EHO-HEKS (Ecumenical Humanitarian Organization and



HEKS Foundation). This project supports Roma whose houses were ruined in four municipalities during the floods: Sabac, Lazarevac, Valjevo, Obrenovac. Reinforcing the good results and proved model of owner-driven social housing, an additional **CHF 1,7 million** is provided by the Swiss Solidarity through HEKS Foundation for supporting more eligible beneficiaries and improving the access to water supply system, thus multiplying the efforts in the country.

Within the Joint Social Inclusion and Education program of UNICEF and Serbian Red Cross, the UNICEF component has been used (**CHF 750'000**) for the procurement of basic back-to-school supplies to preschool/primary school students in Obrenovac which allowed a timely start of the new school year in this heavily affected municipality.

Planned future DRR measures

In December 2014, Serbian Government adopted a National Disaster Risk Management Program that will address disaster resilience and recovery in a systemic and comprehensive way. The Government Office for Reconstruction and Flood Relief is tasked with the coordination of the National Program implementation. The Government is looking into a more sustainable solution i.e. extending the Flood Office mandate and building a stronger government response to disaster prevention. A new Law on Disaster prevention is being in preparation.

To enhance disaster coordination and preparedness capacity at both local and

central level, disaster risk reduction (DRR) measures endorsed within the National Disaster Risk Management Program will be supported with an amount of up to **CHF 2,5 million**. The aim is to channel support through a national policy framework with a joint coordination mechanism - a multi donor trust fund under the umbrella of the Global Facility for DRR (GFDRR) of the World Bank.

Further support for the energy domain (**CHF 500'000**) and DRR measures at municipal level through Energy cities project in line with the Swiss Cooperation Strategy Serbia 2014-2017 in the amount of **CHF 3 million** is being considered by SECO.



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Further Information

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