



REPUBLIC OF SLOVENIA
MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS

INTERNATIONAL HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE OF THE REPUBLIC OF SLOVENIA



**MEDNARODNO RAZVOJNO
SODELOVANJE SLOVENIJE**
SLOVENIA'S DEVELOPMENT
COOPERATION

INTERNATIONAL HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE OF THE REPUBLIC OF SLOVENIA

Overview of contributions and projects in the 2010–2015 period



Cover photo: Rehabilitation of Ukrainian children in Slovenia
(ITF; photo: Slovenian Red Cross)

INTRODUCTION

Millions of people around the world fall victim to natural disasters, armed conflict and other events. Due to climate change, environmental disasters and extreme weather events are growing in number and strength, and the number of victims is rising. The world is still struggling with protracted armed conflicts and their effects. The greatest challenge is presented by prolonged crises, leaving masses of displaced people in their wake. These people live in unfavourable conditions, without access to food and drinking water or the basic living essentials. Special attention should be devoted to children, women, the elderly and people with special needs, who are the most vulnerable in the event of natural disasters or armed conflicts. Such crises are in the focus of more than 80 per cent of all humanitarian efforts and call for the international donor community to take extensive and decisive measures.

*After the floods in Bosna and Hercegovina
(Caritas Slovenia)*



The needs for international humanitarian assistance, which is essentially aimed at saving lives, preventing and alleviating suffering and preserving dignity, are increasing, while the nature of crises requires measures entailing close cooperation of the entire international community. Slovenia provides international humanitarian assistance to affected countries according to their needs, thereby taking into account the



*A Somali woman helps build a well
(IRD Global Institute)*

internationally accepted principles of humanity, neutrality, impartiality, and independence, as well as the principle of international humanitarian law. Large-scale disasters and armed conflicts frequently require a rapid response, whereby assistance is channelled through one or more organisations. The nature of a humanitarian crisis, the needs of the population, the countries' own capacities, the principle of aid effectiveness, presence of international organisations on the ground, and the security of humanitarian workers are also factors to be taken into account. When the situation permits a rapid response and thus a comprehensive approach to satisfying emergency humanitarian needs of the affected population, Slovenia also responds to crises by sending personnel and in-kind assistance. In protracted crises and when the security situation permits the direct implementation of projects by Slovenian implementing institutions and NGOs on the ground, the Slovenian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, capacities permitting, also supports the implementation of humanitarian projects in affected areas.

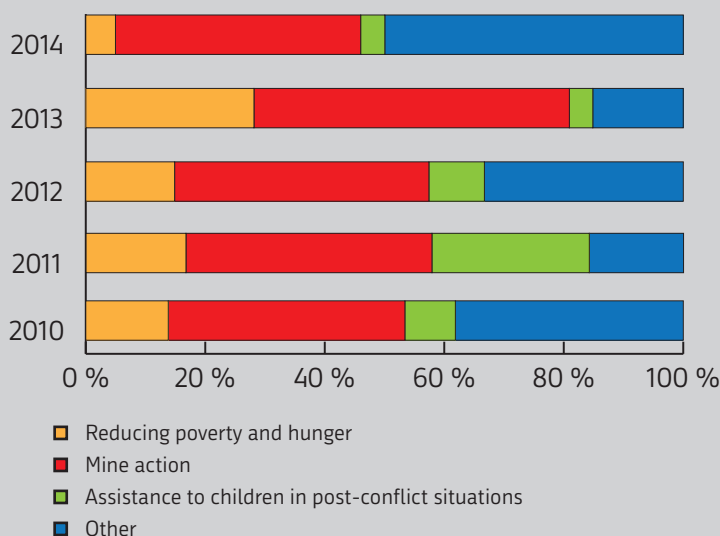
INTRODUCTION

Humanitarian assistance in numbers

Between 2010 and 2015, Slovenia contributed humanitarian assistance in approx. 25 crisis situations around the world. Humanitarian projects were implemented by Slovenian implementing institutions and NGOs (Centre for International Cooperation and Development (CMSR), ITF – Enhancing Human Security, ADRA Slovenia Humanitarian Association, Caritas Slovenia, Institute Circle, Institute for African Studies, IRD Global Institute, Mission Centre of Slovenia, SLOGA – NGDO Platform for Development Cooperation and Humanitarian Aid, Slovene Philanthropy – Association for promotion of voluntary work, Slovenian Red Cross and others) in nearly 20 countries.

The share of available bilateral assistance earmarked for humanitarian purposes by Slovenia between 2010 and 2014 peaked in 2014, accounting for 14 per cent, and amounted to EUR 1,486,402. Pursuant to the Resolution on International Development Cooperation of the Republic of Slovenia until 2015, humanitarian assistance priorities are aimed at reducing poverty and hunger, promoting mine action and providing assistance to children in post-conflict situations. The share of assistance allocated by Slovenia for these priorities during the last five years ranges from 50 to 85 per cent.

Graph: Humanitarian and post-conflict assistance between 2010 and 2014



EMERGENCY HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE

Slovenia provides emergency assistance immediately after disasters, when humanitarian needs are greatest. Such assistance is aimed at saving human lives, reducing suffering and providing basic necessities, and is channelled particularly through international organisations, such as the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF), World Health Organization (WHO), World Food Programme (WFP), United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC), Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UN OCHA), and United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA). In recent years, Slovenia has also responded to crises by allocating in-kind assistance (medications and medical supplies for Libya and Tunisia and sleeping bags and blankets for Ukraine).

Reconstructed school building and playground of an elementary school in Bosnia and Herzegovina (Institute Circle)

Examples of Slovenia's rapid response provided in the form of contributions to international organisations include: assistance allocated to UN OCHA for Haiti after the disastrous earthquake in 2010; to UNICEF for the Philippines following the devastating typhoon Haiyan in 2013; to the WHO for West African countries during the Ebola outbreak in 2014; to the UNRWA at the donor conference for Palestine and the reconstruction of the Gaza Strip in 2014; and to UNICEF for Nepal following the devastating earthquake in 2015. Emergency humanitarian assistance has also been provided to Syria since the outbreak of unrest through international humanitarian organisations and NGOs, such as UNHCR, the ICRC and the WFP, focusing on the humanitarian needs of internally displaced people and refugees in neighbouring countries. Slovenia also responded by sending assistance to Libya following the 2011 unrest that resulted in a large number of internally displaced people and refugees, including in Afghanistan, Iraq, Palestine, Sudan, Democratic Republic of the Congo, and elsewhere.



EMERGENCY HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE

Slovenia also allocates emergency assistance through the Administration of the Republic of Slovenia for Civil Protection and Disaster Relief by seconding experts and donating in-kind assistance, capacities and geographical distance permitting, and taking into account aid effectiveness.

In the wake of disastrous flooding that struck Bosnia and Herzegovina and Serbia in May 2014, Slovenia was among the first countries to respond by sending experts, members of the Civil Protection Service, units with boats, manned helicopters, and sludge pumps. It also provided medical products and the transportation of in-kind assistance collected by Slovenian NGOs.

Slovenia continued contributing to improve the humanitarian situation following the floods with reconstruction activities. Projects led by Slovenian NGOs and institutions focused on the reconstruction of education and health-care facilities, road infrastructure, environmental protection, and mine action.

*Opening an elementary school after floods in Bosnia and Herzegovina
(Institute Circle)*



*New refuse vehicle to help remove the debris after flooding in Serbia
(CMSR)*

In 2015, Caritas Slovenia, in cooperation with the national and diocesan Caritas of Bosnia and Herzegovina in Sarajevo, carried out a project to restore the health centre and fire station damaged by floods. Through the project, more than 800 villagers from Vidovice and the neighbouring villages were provided with adequate health care. Security in the event of fire or other disasters was also improved, since the voluntary fire brigade has regained adequate premises and possibilities for unhindered operation. "The greatness of a person is measured by their compassion and help to those in need," stated the president of the fire brigade at the opening of the fire station.

OTHER FORMS OF HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE AND REHABILITATION

Reducing poverty and hunger

On a global scale, food security is increasingly threatened by the negative effects of climate change, such as droughts, floods, tsunamis, other extreme weather events, and protracted conflicts that result in an increasing number of displaced people. According to 2014 data provided by the WFP, more than 800 million people around the world suffer from hunger. The greatest challenge is presented by densely populated areas which are exposed to the negative effects of climate change, making them more vulnerable to natural disasters, and areas frequently affected by extreme droughts.



*Building a well in Somalia
(IRD Global Institute)*

Slovenia provides emergency assistance to the food-insecure population in the Sahel region and other countries of Sub-Saharan Africa and beyond, which have difficulty securing a stable food supply. Between 2010 and 2015, Slovenia has been supporting the WFP programmes and projects in Ethiopia, Somalia, Kenya, Mali, Niger, Chad, Sudan, Central African Republic, and also in Pakistan and Kyrgyzstan. In addition, efforts to ensure food security have been enhanced by projects of Slovenian NGOs. These were aiming

particularly at populations in areas without access to safe drinking water, so activities focused on providing access to drinking water, including by building wells, water purification and irrigation plants, and by providing access to food in Somalia, Niger, Madagascar, Ethiopia, and Burundi.

In 2012, the Slovenian NGO IRD Global Institute carried out the project Birked in Somalia to resolve difficulties with the water supply in villages of the Dolo district. The region faces drought seasons twice a year. If the amount of rain is not sufficient, the water supply may be interrupted. The project provided water for the local population, who have to walk for more than one hour to reach the nearest water source, and it also helped reduce migration as a result of the insufficient water supply. The building of a birked (village water tank/well), in which the local population freely participated, facilitated permanent access to water for the survival of 3000 residents in the Dolo district.

*Building wells in North Burundi
(Caritas Slovenia)*



OTHER FORMS OF HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE AND REHABILITATION

Mine action

In cooperation with other donors, Slovenia is also engaging in mine action. Wars leave behind extensive areas contaminated by unexploded ordnance (UXO). In the post-conflict period, efforts by numerous stakeholders to clear such UXO with a view to preventing numerous civilian victims are essential. Approx. 133.3 million square metres of mine-polluted areas have been cleared: 128 million square metres in countries of South Eastern Europe, 2.1 million in South Caucasus and 1.3 million in South Lebanon.



Mine risk education in Jordan
(ITF)

Following the 2014 floods, a great deal of attention was also devoted to mine action projects in Bosnia and Herzegovina and in Serbia. As a result of the severe flooding, some of the UXO shifted to the cleared areas, which had to be examined and cleared again.

Most demining projects led by ITF between 2010 and 2015 were carried out in South Eastern Europe, the Middle East and North Africa. In addition to demining, special attention must be devoted to mine risk education, mine victims assistance and capacity building. Mine risk education is intended especially for young people. At one of the training sessions for raising awareness of UXO-related risks, a boy from Bosnia and Herzegovina who had been wounded by a bomb said: "Areas with dense growth which have not been used for a long time are really dangerous, although it is very unlikely that they are still mine polluted. You may lose an arm, a leg or your life. Do not risk it. Be aware of the danger and be careful. You do not need to learn from your own mistakes, as I did."

Manual demining
(ITF; photo: Arne Hodalič)



OTHER FORMS OF HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE AND REHABILITATION

Assistance to children in post-conflict situations

The well-being of children is among the most important priorities of Slovenian international development cooperation and humanitarian assistance. Furthermore, the protection and promotion of children's rights is an important priority of Slovenian foreign policy in the human rights field. Since 2004, Slovenia has provided rehabilitation for more than 1,100 children from Ukraine, Belarus, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, Kosovo, and the Gaza Strip. Efforts in this regard are aimed at providing medical rehabilitation and psycho-social assistance to children affected by humanitarian disasters.

Children from Ukraine and Belarus are still exposed to the effects of the 1986 Chernobyl nuclear disaster. Most frequently, these include deformed limbs, skin and respiratory diseases; the rehabilitation provided at Debeli Rtič therefore focuses on improving the respiratory system. Ukrainian children were helped at Debeli Rtič between 2005 and 2014, and Belarusian children from 2012 to 2015. Slovenia also made regular contributions to the Chernobyl fund, supporting efforts by the international donor community to create an environmentally safe area within the affected zone.

In cooperation with other donors, Slovenia has supported the medical rehabilitation of children affected in conflicts since 2009. More than 100 children from the Gaza Strip have taken part in rehabilitation provided at the Soča University Rehabilitation Institute, which also organised rehabilitation for youngsters from Egypt wounded during the unrest in 2011 and 2012 and for a Ukrainian girl wounded during this year's conflicts.

Slovenia has been providing psychosocial rehabilitation for socially disadvantaged

children from Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, Montenegro, Ukraine, and Libya for a decade. The psychosocial assistance to children and their families is also provided in countries affected by conflicts, and Slovenia has supported projects to provide assistance to children, their families and teachers in Iraq and Sri Lanka and to minor girls detained in Afghanistan.

With the project My Community Ein El Helwah, Institute Circle is providing assistance to Palestinian and Syrian refugees in Lebanon, with particular emphasis on children and women. By providing training for young Palestinian and Syrian animators, group activities for various communities, psychosocial support for 200 Syrian and Palestinian female refugees and 200 children, the project helps enhance relations between different communities in the Ein El Helwah refugee centre, and thus the reintegration of refugees, as well as reducing tensions between the refugees and the host country.

Children from Bosnia and Herzegovina receiving psychosocial rehabilitation in Slovenia (Institute Circle)



OTHER FORMS OF HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE AND REHABILITATION

Assistance to children in post-conflict situations

The well-being of children is also at the core of assistance to refugees and displaced persons. The children of Syrian refugees in Jordan and Lebanon were provided assistance in the form of awareness-raising of mine risk and teaching assistance, and psychosocial support was provided to Palestinian and Syrian refugees in Lebanon, particularly women and children. In 2011 and 2012, Slovenia also supported a project for the economic reintegration for refugees returning to Afghanistan.



Rehabilitation of Ukrainian children in Debeli Rtič (Slovenian Red Cross)

To ensure long-term effects and the ability to provide rehabilitation locally, Slovenia provided training at the Soča University Rehabilitation Institute for specialists, therapists and other experts from the Gaza Strip between 2012–2014, and from Libya in 2013. Training on social rehabilitation was provided for a large number of trainers, teachers and parents from the Gaza Strip. Children who come to Slovenia for medical or psychosocial rehabilitation are accompanied by mentors who acquire skills and knowledge during the rehabilitation, enabling them to continue such activities after returning home.

In 2014 and 2015, Slovenia supported the psychosocial rehabilitation of children from Ukraine who had been affected by the constant unrest in the country, traumatic events or the loss of their families. The Slovenian Red Cross and the ITF organised the arrival of 160 children in Slovenia to receive psychosocial rehabilitation. At Debeli Rtič, the children received various forms of rehabilitation and individual and group therapy, took part in sports, creative and social games, as well as received social pedagogical support. A pedagogical counsellor at the Debeli Rtič Youth Health and Holiday Centre addresses the issue of whether the effects of rehabilitation provided at Debeli Rtič fades after the children return home: “At a certain moment, we all need to believe that the situation can also be better. Here, the children have the chance to be what they are. When they return home, they are no longer the same and look at the world differently. They have experienced ten days of a real, carefree childhood, imagination, playfulness, joy, and happiness. This is minimal, but means a great deal.”

Medical rehabilitation of children from Belarus with the assistance of dogs (ITF; photo: Slovenian Red Cross)



OTHER FORMS OF HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE AND REHABILITATION

Slovenia also provided assistance to Haiti in the wake of a massive earthquake by contributions through international organisations and by implementing certain projects. Supported by Slovenian NGOs (SLOGA, in cooperation with IRD Global Institute, Food for Life and ADRA Haiti), a Slovenian school was built in October 2011, enabling 300 children to continue classes interrupted by the earthquake. In addition, Caritas Slovenia built an orphanage in Riviere Froide, thus ensuring a water supply and improving the health of children with special needs. IRD Global Institute helped set up a canteen, providing access to good-quality

hot meals for children and youth in the community where the Slovenian school was built. There is also a playground next to the school, which the children regard to be the best gift for them. IRD Global Institute also helped reconstruct a health care station, improving basic health care for children. Due to the difficult everyday situation and facing the loss of their closest relatives, the children have also been provided with psychosocial assistance. Slovenia thus ensured a comprehensive approach to the humanitarian crisis and helped satisfy the needs of the population also in the years following the earthquake.



New orphanage for disabled children and provision of drinking water supply in Haiti (Caritas Slovenia)

Slovenian school and playground in Haiti (IRD Global Institute)





Rehabilitation of victim of the Gaza conflict at the Soča University Rehabilitation Institute (ITF; photo: Arne Hodalič)



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