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DEVELOPMENT
COOPERATION

Strengthening resilience of older persons and persons with disabilities during COVID-19 and future disasters

SECOND INTERIM REPORT

22 July 2022

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List of acronyms used in the report

AAGG – Albanian Association of Geriatry and Gerontology
 BiH – Bosnia and Herzegovina
 CSO – Civil Society Organisation(s)
 CVA – Cash and Voucher Assistance
 FSP – Financial Service Provider
 IFRC – International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies
 MHPSS – Mental Health and Psychosocial Support services
 NOOIS – National Organisation of Persons with Disabilities (Serbia)
 NS – National Red Cross Society
 PFA – Psychological First Aid
 PSS – Psychosocial Support
 RC – Red Cross
 RCSBIH – Red Cross Society of Bosnia and Herzegovina
 SOP - Standard Operative procedures

1. Description

1.1. Name of coordinator of the grant contract: Natasa Todorovic

1.2. Name and title of the contact person: Natasa Todorovic

1.3. Name of beneficiary(ies) and affiliated entity(ies) in the action:

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Shoqata Shqiptare E Geriatrise Dhe Gerontologise (Albanian Association of Geriatry and Gerontology), Not for profit organisation, Registration number 2898, Address: Rr. Ymer Kurti P12/1/6/3, 1001 Tirana, Albania, VAT Number L11326451N

Kryqi Kuq Shqiptar Association (Albanian Red Cross), Private/ public law body with legal form, Registration number 5622, Address: Rruga Pjeter Budi, Ndertesa 19, Hyrja 10, 1000, Tirana Albania, VAT Number J62103001W

Udruzenja za pomoc i razvoj Hajde (Association for Help and Development HAJDE), NGO, Registration number 4201508740000, Address: Dervisa Numica 6, 71000 Sarajevo, Bosnia and Herzegovina, VAT number N/A

Association for support and development Humanost, Non profit and non governmental organisation, Registration number 5260507, Address: Branislav Nushic 13-1/17, 1000 Skopje, Republic of North Macedonia

Osterreichisches Rotes Kreuz (Austrian Red Cross), Association, Registration number 432857691, Address: Wiedner Hauptstrasse 32, 1041 Vienna, Austria, VAT number ATU 163 70 905

European Disability Forum, AISBL, Registration number 459 641 626, Address: Avenue des Arts 7-8, 1210, Brussels, Belgium, VAT number: BE0459641626

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Kosovar Catholic Church Caritas, NGO, Registration number 5200022-0, Address: Shën Nënë Tereza Nr. 3/Kisha Katolike 70000 Ferizaj, Kosovë, VAT number 330242206

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Red Cross Society of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Legal entity, Registration number 4200443490004, Adress Kranjčevićeva 2, 71000 Sarajevo, Bosnia and Herzegovina, VAT number 200443490004

Red Cross of the Republic of North Macedonia, Organisation funded by Red Cross Law, Registration

number 4064216, Address Bul. Koco racin 13, 1000 Skopje, Republic of North Macedonia

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Savez slijepih Crne Gore (Union of the Blind of Montenegro), Public law body, Registration number 477, Adress: Njegoseva 6, 81000 Podgorica, Montenegro, VAT number 02019981

1.4. Title of the action: **Strengthening resilience of older persons and persons with disabilities during COVID-19 and future disasters**

1.5. Contract number: CN 2020/ 420-503

1.6. Start date and end date of the reporting period: 15 November 2021 – 31 May 2022

1.7. Target country(ies) or region(s): Serbia, Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Kosovo*¹

1.8. Final beneficiaries &/or target groups (if different) (including numbers of women and men):

Older persons and persons with disabilities are two groups that even in regular times face significant constraints barriers in participating in the society, including participation in decision making or community life, having their needs met in a range of contexts, accessing services etc. which has a cumulative effect to their physical and mental health. The COVID-19 crisis amplified all these issues and increased the risks for their physical health, mental health and social exclusion. The intervention envisioned by the project therefore addresses these risks on multiple levels.

During the reporting period the direct beneficiaries that were supported through the intervention were older persons and persons with disabilities across the six project sites through provision of psychological first aid and psychosocial support as well as timely, accurate and accessible information from verified trusted sources including on the epidemic, response progression and measures of protection and self-protection (e.g. gender-based violence) as well as individual rights through a telephone/ text message based service centres. In total 6,079 individual callers called these services across the six project sites, as of 15 November 2021, with female callers being a majority.

The civil society organisations and their networks in each of the project sites were engaged in the project activities through the project partner organisations, providing support in the research activities implemented in the first year of the project. This had a positive effect to their capacities to engage in data collection and research activities in the future but also provided them with important project-related information that prepares them for the advocacy and policy influencing activities envisioned further down the line in the project. The civil society organisations will be playing an important role in work on influencing policies across the six project sites and will also benefit from the experience and expertise provided by the EU partners in the project. Their participation was also very important in the events organised to mark important dates during the year – such as the International Day of Older

¹ Hereinafter: This designation is without prejudice to positions on status, and is in line with UNSCR 1244/1999 and the ICJ Opinion on the Kosovo declaration of independence.

Persons, 1 October, but also in ensuring the service provided in the intervention can reach as wide a population within the target groups as possible.

The continuing effects of the pandemic crisis in the region that particularly impact older persons' and persons with disabilities' socio-economic status include the lasting unavailability of many regular healthcare services due to the pandemic pressure on the public health systems in each of the project sites. For many older persons and persons with disabilities the access to regular health check-ups is significantly reduced which not only means that their existing health conditions are not adequately taken care of, but also that any new conditions are not diagnosed on time and therefore not treated. The other issue is the general economic situation which, despite the economies in the region generally recovering faster than originally expected² there are concerns related to inflation that may, through increase in the prices of food, energy and other essential goods negate the effects of regular pension delivery.

1.9. Country(ies) in which the activities take place (if different from 1.7): N/A

² <https://www.ebrd.com/news/2021/western-balkans-economies-recover-faster-than-expected-.html>

2. Assessment of the implementation of the action activities and its results

2.1. Executive summary of the action

Mental health: 30 telephone-based centres for remote support and assistance have been established and have been functioning coordinated by trained staff and operated by trained volunteers across all the six project sites. The centres have been operational each working day in the timeslots that are widely publicised and advertised and the total number of calls as of 31 May 2022 is 2,628 calls across the six project sites, with 1,601 female callers and 1,027 male callers. The Red Cross organisations in the project sites have relied on their ongoing relief and other support activities to provide additional support to select callers expressing the need that could be met through one of the other Red Cross activities and the beneficiaries were fitting the existing criteria for these forms of support. The reduced infection rates across the region in the later part of the reporting period and the still present stigma related to mental health issues, particularly for older persons and persons with disabilities for whom certain mental health problems are normalised, account for a lower frequency of calls compared to the first year.

The evaluation process of the first year of remote support services has been started in the reporting period. The evaluation team developed the methodology and with the partners' support collected the data, performed the interviews and is at the moment in the process of drafting the report.

The preparations for switching to the model of face to face support based on the healthy ageing methodology and the analogous methodology for persons with disabilities as well as on the proven practices such as self-help groups have been taken with the materials shared with the partners and the preparatory discussion with interested beneficiaries implemented.

Cash and Voucher Assistance: In the reporting period the action has completed a major element of the planned activities, namely the distribution of relief support via Cash and Voucher Assistance to 5,000 beneficiaries belonging to populations of older persons and persons with disabilities affected by the ongoing COVID-19 crisis, as well as distribution of 1,000 food and hygiene parcels to families of older persons and persons with disabilities. This is a major milestone in the action and will be followed up by post-distribution monitoring to provide the data on beneficiary satisfaction, feedback and cash grant use. Key achievements in this implementation period also include development and testing of Standard Operating Procedures for Cash and Voucher Assistance in the five project sites (excluding Kosovo* where this activity was not planned). Key challenges in implementation as reported by the partners were specifics of both target groups – most vulnerable citizens in the population of older persons and persons with disabilities in terms of health status, mobility, personal documentation and physical access to financial service providers (banks). This required additional actions, support and resources from the local Red Cross branches to ensure proper receipt of the cash grant by the beneficiaries.

Public Policy: The development of policy models based on the research completed in the previous reporting period is nearing finalisation. Final versions of studies have been produced following the partners' feedback for five project sites and for the sixth, North Macedonia, this work is in progress, delayed by the longer data collection process caused by the elections and changes in administration that affected the availability of stakeholders. The SeConS team has prepared instructions for advocacy activities for the project partners and is at the moment working on summaries with key findings from the study for each project site to facilitate the advocacy activities going forward.

The civil society networks' meetings planned for the second year will be organised in the second half of the year as it is planned to invite the representatives of key decision makers and other stakeholders to these events and present the finished studies and policy models for their feedback and further discussion and advocacy activities.

The advocacy activity of the partners has continued to be lively with participation in different events at national and global level, including Working Group on Aging and the seminar "Aging in the Digital Age" of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE), 66th session of the NGO Commission on the Status of Women etc.

The activity **4.1.2. Training for CSO network members in the region provided by AGE Platform Europe and the European Disability Forum: Strengthening advocacy networks** has been moved from the third year into the second half of the second year in order to harmonise it with the other advocacy activities being run in parallel. The Red Cross of Serbia, AGE Platform Europe and the European Disability Forum have discussed the curriculum and prepared the draft agenda for the training which will be implemented in the 11th month of the second project year.

2.2. Results and activities

Specific Objective: Older persons, persons with disabilities, CSOs and grassroot organisations are better able to cope with the Covid-19 situation in Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, North Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia and Kosovo

Outcome 1 (Mental health)

Mental health of older persons and persons with disabilities across six project sites is preserved and their resilience enhanced

Indicator: 60,000 older persons and persons with disabilities that receive psychosocial support remotely and face to face

The provision of Remote Psychological First Aid and Psychosocial Support was continued through the established five telephone centres in each of the six project sites. Using the Remote Psychological First Aid during COVID-19 methodology developed by the Psychosocial Centre of the International federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies³ as a way of assisting older persons and persons with disabilities to manage their situation and make informed decisions, the telephone centres had in the reporting period the total number of 2,628 calls across the six project sites, with 1,601 female callers and 1,027 male callers.

The Red Cross organisations in the project sites have relied on their ongoing relief and other support activities (such as soup kitchen programmes, distribution of food and hygiene parcels, home visits, support with vaccination etc.) to provide added value to the project activities in situations where the callers expressed the need that could be met through one of the other Red Cross activities and the beneficiaries were fitting the existing criteria for these forms of support.

Mental health issues are still followed by a certain stigma across the region and for older persons and persons with disabilities certain mental health issues such as anxiety or depressive symptoms are normalised and considered normal especially during an extended crisis, due in part, to ableist and ageist prejudices. Combined with the reduced infection rates across the region in the later part of the reporting period, this accounts for a lower frequency of calls compared to the first year.

The telephone centres are staffed by educated professional associates and volunteers who have undergone training in psychological first aid provided by the Red Cross of Serbia in the first year of the project implementation. More than 150 volunteers and staff members provide information, but also discuss fear with the callers, their worries or anxieties related to the epidemic, immunization and protection measures. In cases where this is justified and possible, the staff and volunteers also provide referrals to other services that may provide particular forms of support and assistance that the caller needs.

Most callers initially called due to lack of clear information and related fears and uncertainties with more calls focusing on vaccination and particularly the third dose across the region.

The evaluation process of the first year of remote support services has been started in the reporting period. The evaluation team led by prof. Dr Barbara Juen of the University of Innsbruck, Austria

³ <https://pscentre.org/?resource=remote-psychological-first-aid-during-covid-19-may-2020>

developed the methodology and with the partners' support collected the data, performed the interviews and is at the moment in the process of drafting the report.

The preparations for switching to the model of face to face support based on the healthy ageing methodology and the analogous methodology for persons with disabilities as well as on the proven practices such as self-help groups have been taken with the materials shared with the partners and the preparatory discussion with interested beneficiaries implemented. The telephone support will be continued as is in the majority of project sites and telephone centres as the partners have taken over the support duties for this activity recognised as valuable by the local communities. In some of the telephone centres there are currently plans to extend the scope of activities and services provided – in one centre, Kragujevac in Serbia the service has already been expanded by once per week providing advice for families who provide care and support to families with functionally dependent members – mostly older persons with dementia.

Activity 1.1.5 Provision of timely, accurate and accessible information from verified trusted sources including on the epidemic, response progression and measures of protection and self-protection (e.g. gender-based violence) as well as individual rights through a telephone/ text message based service centres; provision of psychosocial support including evaluation of services and adjustments

In the reporting period the activity continued with the existing telephone centres providing remote services using trained volunteers. The services used established times during the day and callers called in with the issues ranging from needs for different information, to needs for psychological first aid and psychosocial support.

Serbia

The Red Cross of Serbia runs four centres coordinated by its four municipal branches in Kragujevac, Niš, Čukarica and Subotica. One centre is run by the National Organisation of Persons with Disabilities (NOOIS), so the general division is that the Red Cross centres focus more on older persons and NOOIS centre focus on persons with disabilities. Total number of calls in Serbia in the reporting period was 428 (268 male and 160 female). A large number of calls was related to immunisation concerns and information related to vaccination, although a substantial number of calls was about the general concerns related to the pandemic, as well as the need for psychosocial support. The vaccination process has been undergoing since early 2021 in Serbia and towards the end of the year and beyond many of the questions were about the safety of the vaccines, the effectiveness of the third dose and the recommendations of medical professionals.

Albania:

Five telephone centres are run by the two partners in the project. Albanian Red Cross is working in three centres, covering the north in Shkodra, the centre in Durres and the south in Vlora. The AAGG covers Tirana and Korca regions. Total number of calls in Albania in the reporting period was 1,205 (789 female and 416 male). Broken down by partner: AAGG: 505 (317 female and 188 male) ARC: 700 (472 female and 228 male)

A lot of the calls were related to concerns with health issues and accessing healthcare services but a lot of the calls were likewise about general concerns and the needs for psychosocial support due to the uncertainty of the pandemic situation. Since the vaccination effort was underway in Albania as well, a

number of calls were related to vaccines, their availability, safety, effectiveness and the process of registration.

Bosnia and Herzegovina:

The Red Cross Society of Bosnia and Herzegovina continued running the telephone-based services in call centres in the City Red Cross Banja Luka, West Herzegovina Cantonal Red Cross Ljubiški and Red Cross of Brčko District BiH. Association HAJDE continued covering Sarajevo and Jablanica through their two telephone centres

The number of calls in the period was 56 (27 female and 29 male) with the high frequency of calls related to vaccination. Many callers were interested to learn about the difference in vaccines, specifically the difference in effectiveness between Pfizer and AstraZeneca vaccines. Others asked about the availability of vaccines and for scheduling process. In several cases, for persons unable to leave their homes, the Red Cross has provided transportation for doctors who perform vaccination in their home. With the vaccination becoming more available, there were more calls related to the third dose with the volunteers providing the official recommendations by health authorities.

Montenegro

The Red Cross of Montenegro works through centres coordinated through its local branches in Bijelo Polje, Budva, Podgorica and Niksic, focusing predominantly on older persons while the other partner, Union of the Blind of Montenegro works out the previously established Pljevlja centre with a psychologist with great previous experience in working with persons with disabilities, and its focus is on persons with disabilities. Total number of calls in Montenegro in the reporting period was 482 (331 female and 151 male). The reasons for calling are generally classified into three categories: some callers need information, frequently telephone numbers of other services that they need to contact in order to address their different needs related to social and material situation, health etc. These callers are provided with precise information and referrals. Other callers are contacting the centres due to personal problems, such as loneliness and social isolation, disruption of routine, concerns about the prolonged uncertain epidemiological situation caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. These callers have a strong need to be heard and to express all their problems and the trained volunteers provide them with psychosocial support. It is clear that the prolonged crisis increase the psychological pressure due to both epidemiological concerns as well as the continued challenges in accessing general healthcare and support.

North Macedonia

The centres are based in five Red Cross of the Republic of North Macedonia branches in cities of: Skopje, Bitola, Veles, Gostivar and Kochani. Total number of calls in North Macedonia in the reporting period was 338. Out of this number, 224 were female callers and 114 were male.

The concerns of callers have changed with the passing months and the changes in the epidemiological situation. There has been a mix of callers who needed to be referred to different medical services and who needed legal advice in the previous period and while these still exist, there has been expected increase in the number of callers asking about vaccines. The calls have increasingly been about vaccine safety and the technical information related to registration and vaccination spots and then progressively about the need for the third dose and the opinion of medical professionals about its safety and

effectiveness. As the new virus strains appeared, the callers also asked about their symptoms, severity and the efficacy of vaccines. It was recognised that many callers would call repeatedly as they developed the trust in the volunteers and felt reassured that they can always call and talk to someone. Some callers would also get practical assistance from the Red Cross volunteers, for example with groceries shopping that they could not do themselves due to having to stay in isolation.

Kosovo*

The centres are based in the offices managed by Caritas Kosova in the following municipalities: Pristina, Prizren, Ferizaj/ Urosevac, Mitrovica and Vitia/Vitina. Total number of calls in Kosovo* in the reporting period was 119, out of them 70 female and 49 male.

As in the other project sites, the reasons for calls were changing with the changes of the epidemiological situation and the availability of vaccines. As for the referrals, the majority of callers were consistently referred to Centres for Social Work and medical services. A notable proportion of callers called in order to explore avenues related to financial and material assistance provided by social services, but others called about assistance with disabilities, including access to disability aids and they were referred to the appropriate services. As was registered in the other project sites too, some of the calls that were focused on mental health were by relatives or neighbours of older persons living in isolation or who are prone to anxiety, concerned about the effects that prolonged uncertainties of the pandemic may have on their mental health. A trend that some callers get attached to the volunteers they had talked to and continue calling and asking to talk to them again has been recognised in this project site as well.

Training in Healthy Ageing: preparation for the face to face phase of support to older persons and persons for disabilities

On April 28 and 29, the Red Cross of Serbia organized a training for its partners, specifically for coordinators of psychosocial support within the project. The training covered important areas related to healthy lifestyles and healthy aging, relying on the Decade of Healthy Aging of the World Health Organization 2020-2030, which contains four thematic units:

- Environment adapted to all ages
- Fight against ageism
- Integrated health and social care services
- Long-term care services

In addition to basic data on aging and health, the training included ageism and ableism, myths about aging, health assessment, the importance of physical activity, healthy eating, prevention of non-communicable diseases, social isolation and lifelong learning, as well as basic steps in behaviour change. The training was held online and was attended by 22 participants representing partner organizations from the Western Balkans region.

1.1.6 Evaluation to ensure the service is adapted as necessary to better meet the needs of users

The evaluation process has been started in the reporting period. As envisioned by the action design, the evaluation team is led by prof. Dr. Barbara Juen of the University of Innsburck, Austria and her team that also includes Priya Lena Riedel and Alicia Beckel. The team developed the methodology and identified its objectives as follows:

- To assess the process and effectiveness of services, as well volunteers satisfaction.
- To analyse the design, implementation and management, as well as outreach of services envisioned in the project.

The evaluation process started with collecting the data from the partners, including narrative and financial reports produced during the course of project implementation as well as the quantitative and qualitative data already collected in all the six project sites. Additionally, the evaluators collected data using interviews with beneficiaries of the services, developed by the University Innsbruck and created standardized questionnaires for the volunteers working in the telephone centres. The interviewing process has been finalised and the evaluation team is at the moment drafting the draft evaluation report for comments by the project partners. The final evaluation report is planned to be submitted at the end of July.

Outcome 2 (Relief/ Cash and Voucher Assistance)

Physical health and social welfare of older persons and persons with disabilities across six project sites is preserved and enhanced while capacities of National Red Cross Societies to provide Cash and Voucher Assistance are strengthened

Indicator: a) 6,000 of older persons and persons with disabilities that are reached with relief provision including cash transfers and where appropriate relief items

The distribution of Cash and Voucher Assistance (CVA) has been completed or nearly completed in all the project sites in the reporting period, including the distribution of in-kind relief assistance implemented by Caritas Kosova in accordance with the plan. The meetings with the responsible authorities as well as the EU representatives have been organised in all the project sites to discuss the specific approach to target groups and achievement of maximum effectiveness in providing the CVA assistance as well as to ensure overlapping with other similar interventions is avoided.

The activities related to building efficient and proactive Cash and Voucher Assistance capacities in the region that will be used in all of the relevant future crises are nearing finalisation with Standard Operating Procedures being tested or in the process of adoption across the Red Cross societies in the region,

Key achievements in this implementation period includes development and testing of Standard Operating Procedures for Cash and Voucher Assistance, and Cash Grant distribution to end beneficiaries – older persons and persons with disabilities. 4,781 older persons and persons with disabilities have received the cash grant of ~85 EUR in local currency so far. Additional 172 beneficiaries in Montenegro and 47 in Serbia will receive the cash grant in the following implementation period. Additionally, 1,000 food and hygiene parcels were distributed to beneficiaries in Kosovo* in accordance with the planned relief activities.

The approximate breakdown of recipients of assistance is 60% older persons and 40% persons with disabilities. Not all project partners have finalised processing all the data so currently available data are:

	Older persons (%)	Persons with disabilities (%)

Albania	60.10	39.90
Montenegro	60.00	40.00
Serbia	59.39	40.61
Kosovo	62.00	38.00

The post distribution monitoring of CVA activities are in the preparatory phase, with the plan to assess the satisfaction and get feedback from 10% of the recipients in each of the project sites in the period between July and September so that the final results are available in late September.

Activity 2.1.1. Needs assessment for distribution of cash and voucher assistance and in kind relief items

Following the actions from the previous implementation period, the partners have defined detailed selection criteria for cash grants recipients – older persons and persons with disabilities, set geographical targeting accordingly, and defined delivery mechanism for the cash grant distribution.

All partners have decided to use the multipurpose cash grant with no restrictions in terms of use and no special conditions to be fulfilled by the beneficiaries in order to obtain it (unconditional and unrestricted cash grant), other than fulfilling the qualifying criteria.

Albania:

Criteria for beneficiary selection included: multi children family with members in the category of older persons, single female-headed households, low income, low pension, presence of chronic diseases, families receiving financial assistance and with family members who are persons with disabilities, as well as families who lost their source of income due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Geographical targeting included five selected areas of Tirane, Shkoder, Durrës, Vlore, and Korce.

Selected delivery mechanism for the cash grant was a personalized bank cheque.

Bosnia and Herzegovina:

Criteria for beneficiary selection included: multi-member families, single-member households, low or no income, low or no pension, chronic diseases, affected by COVID-19, beneficiaries of social assistance.

Geographical targeting was carried out taking into account development rank and has included 45 municipalities.

Selected delivery mechanism for the cash grant was a bank transfer to personal bank accounts of the beneficiaries.

Montenegro:

Criteria for beneficiary selection included: households with no income, households under defined minimal income according to the number of family members, single older households, material status, health status, remote areas

Geographical targeting included 14 municipalities.

Selected delivery mechanism for the cash grant was a direct cash delivery by the Post Office of Montenegro.

North Macedonia:

Criteria for beneficiary selection included: vulnerable people, over the age of 69, recipients of the “Guaranteed minimal assistance” from the government.

Beneficiaries were selected using the national database kept and regularly updated by the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy, which has also determined geographical targeting.

Selected delivery mechanism for the cash grant was a bank transfer to personal bank accounts of beneficiaries.

Red Cross of Serbia:

Criteria for beneficiary selection included: beneficiaries of the Red Cross Soup kitchen programme of age 70 and over (born in 1952, or earlier), beneficiaries of the Red Cross Soup kitchen programme with confirmed status of disability; persons of age over 70 and/or persons with disabilities who applied for social assistance, but have not obtained this social right due to income or land census that was just above the criteria set by the Law on social protection.

Geographical targeting was carried out taking into account high ageing index of municipalities, as well as development group rank, and has included 40 municipalities.

Selected delivery mechanism for the cash grant was one-time dedicated bank account.

Activity 2.1.2. Conduct Cash and Voucher (CVA) Self Assessment and establish a Plan of Action

All partners have drafted multiyear Cash preparedness plans of action following these workshops in the previous implementation period.

Activity 2.1.3. Incorporating CVA into M&E, Finance, HR and Communication systems

This set of activities was incorporated into the partners' Cash preparedness Plans of Action, so each Red Cross Society will complete them in line with the relevant developments that are also taking place outside the project scope, bearing in mind their close connection with overall processes and procedures of the partners' organizations.

Activity 2.1.4. Develop Standard Operative procedures (SOPs) and conduct Financial Service Provider negotiations

A Blueprint for the Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) to support partners in establishing their own SOP for the Cash and Vouchers assistance was prepared by the Red Cross of Serbia.

The blueprint SOP for partners includes a complete sequence of tasks to be performed in order to carry out cash based intervention, responsibility for their implementation, related outputs, tools, and further instructions aligned with the CVA methodology of the Red Cross Movement.

The structure of the Blueprint follows key milestones in implementation of a single CVA intervention. The procedure is divided into five sections that should be implemented successively:

Section	Brief description
SOP Section 1: CVA Intervention description	<p>Section 1 of the procedure includes Assessment and Response Analysis for CVA Intervention.</p> <p>At the end of procedure in Section 1, all elements of the CVA intervention have been decided upon and Red Cross staff involved have a clear picture of how the CVA intervention will be implemented.</p> <p>In addition, if funds for CVA Intervention are not secured, key elements for fundraising were defined to enable resources mobilization.</p>
SOP Section 2: CVA Intervention Set up and Planning A) Financial service provider B) Beneficiaries selection plan C) Community Engagement and Accountability approach D) Monitoring Plan and Post Distribution Monitoring E) Instructions for Red Cross staff and volunteers in the field	<p>Section 2 of the procedure relates to Implementation: Set up and Planning.</p> <p>At the end of procedure in Section 2, all prerequisites to launch a CVA intervention have been in place.</p>
SOP Section 3: Selection of beneficiaries, gathering data and documentation	<p>Section 3 of the procedure relates to Implementation: Selection of beneficiaries.</p> <p>At the end of procedure in Section 3, actual beneficiaries that will receive the cash grant are known and all data and documentation needed for encashment is complete.</p>
SOP Section 4: Cash Grant Distribution	<p>Section 4 of the procedure relates to Implementation: Cash Grant Distribution.</p> <p>At the end of procedure in Section 4, actual beneficiaries have received the cash grant.</p>
SOP Section 5: Post distribution monitoring; Reporting; Closure	Section 5 of the procedure relates to Post distribution monitoring, reporting and closure of the CVA Intervention.

Section	Brief description
	At the end of procedure in Section 5, a CVA Intervention has been completed.

All steps/tasks presented in this Blueprint were derived from currently available Red Cross Movement Guidelines and Toolkits, in an attempt to include all required actions and fulfil set standards as described in various thematic guidelines that are relevant, but not exclusively related to Cash and Voucher Assistance (such as Needs Assessment, Project Management Functions; Protection, Gender and Inclusion; Beneficiary Communication and Accountability; and Community Engagement and Accountability).

Each partner was able to adapt the blueprint to specific organizational requirements and develop appropriate Standard Operative Procedures to be used in the framework of this project, as well as in all future CVA interventions. Partner will fine-tune and revise their draft Standard Operative Procedures as needed upon completion of the cash grant distribution on the basis of experience gained through the cash grant distribution.

All partners have completed negotiations with financial service providers for the cash grant distribution within the project and appropriate agreements were in place where needed.

Serbia: The Red Cross of Serbia has developed the Blueprint Standard Operative Procedures for partners in this implementation period. It will be presented to the CVA Technical working group after fine-tuning following the cash distribution, so to be used for establishing the SOP for the Red Cross of Serbia.

Mapping of financial service providers was completed. The Red Cross of Serbia has signed contracts with two banks with national coverage for cash grant distribution.

Albania: Even though certain Standard Operative Procedures were in place in Albanian Red Cross, and have been used during previous CVA interventions, CVA working group was working with project experts to finalize the up-to-date CVA Standard Operating Procedures by securing inputs from all relevant departments and where the specific roles and responsibilities of all support service functions will be reflected.

Mapping of financial service providers was completed including banks, remittance companies and post offices.

Bosnia and Herzegovina: The Standard Operative Procedures are in the process of development.

Montenegro: The Standard Operative Procedures are in the process of finalization and adoption. SOP are not still fully finished as it is necessary to adapt and adopt all other internal procedures including M&E, HR and Finance in order to adopt the SOP and distribute it to all local branches.

The negotiations with different financial service providers were completed. The Agreement with the Post office was reached for this project.

North Macedonia: The development of Standard Operative Procedures for CVA is in progress, and it is expected to be adopted in the course of the year.

The Red Cross HQ has completed negotiations with the Financial Service Provider – Komercijalna Banka AD Skopje and the agreement for the project was signed.

Activity 2.1.5. Conduct 2 regional trainings on CVA (1 x cash training level 2 and 1 x markets trainings)

No regional trainings took place in this implementation period as the focus of the project was on cash grant distribution. Market training will be implemented in the second half of the second year.

Activity 2.1.6. Distribution of cash assistance and in kind relief items including Post Distribution Monitoring (PDM)

Following the preparatory activities from the previous implementation period, all partners have distributed cash grants for older persons and persons with disabilities in the period March – June 2022.

All partners have decided to use the multipurpose cash grant with no restrictions in terms of use and no special conditions to be fulfilled by the beneficiaries in order to obtain it (unconditional and unrestricted cash grant), other than fulfilling the qualifying criteria.

Each partner has defined detailed beneficiary selection criteria in close cooperation with the relevant national institutions in line with the local needs and operational context.

A total of 4.781 older persons and persons with disabilities have received the cash grant of ~85 EUR in local currency so far. Additional 172 beneficiaries in Montenegro and 47 in Serbia will receive the cash grant in the following implementation period. Precise and detailed data on the structure of beneficiaries will be provided in the next report, as the processing and compiling of voluminous data is in progress.

All beneficiaries have received appropriate information on the project, cash grant, criteria for selection and instructions on encashment in line with the chosen cash grant delivery mechanism in each country.

Each partner has established a feedback mechanism for receipt of questions, troubleshooting, complaints and impressions, by setting the call centre phone lines for beneficiaries. Analysis of the received feedback is underway.

Post-distribution monitoring will take place in the following period to provide the data on beneficiary satisfaction, feedback and cash grant use.

Key challenges in implementation as reported by the partners were specifics of both target groups – most vulnerable citizens in the population of older persons and persons with disabilities in terms of health status, mobility, personal documentation and physical access to financial service providers (banks). This required additional actions, support and resources from the Red Cross branches to ensure proper receipt of the cash grant by the beneficiaries.

Online workshop on lessons learnt will take place after complete process of cash grant distribution is finalised in order to provide detailed report on specific challenges and measures taken by the partners in order to further enrich the cash grant distribution process.

Serbia:

As previously agreed with the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, majority of beneficiaries in Serbia were selected by the Red Cross branches in close cooperation with the local Social welfare centres from the agreed lists of beneficiaries of the Soup kitchen programme. Beneficiaries of the Red Cross Soup kitchen programme in Serbia are selected in close cooperation and mutual agreement of the Red Cross branches and Social welfare centres, as well as local Self Governments and local NGOs. This ensures selection of the most vulnerable citizens for the programme, and includes institutional screening and verification of various vulnerability criteria.

In addition, also in agreement with the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, a total of 31 beneficiaries were selected among the persons who applied for social assistance, but have not obtained this social right due to income or land census that was just above the criteria set by the Law on Social Protection. Out of 27 municipal Social welfare centres who responded, only eight municipalities had beneficiaries who qualified for the cash grant within this project.

A buffer of 47 beneficiaries has been left in reserve in order to ensure that persons who were not included in the final lists prepared in cooperation of the Red Cross branches and Social welfare centres to their best knowledge at the time, but fulfil the criteria, can be subsequently included. After that, the list of municipalities will be extended so the cash grant reaches 1,000 beneficiaries in total.

Cash grants have been delivered to 953 older persons and persons with disabilities in this implementation period.

Albania:

Beneficiaries have been selected according to the scoring scheme that was developed to create a ranking list through the KoBO platform. The preliminary list of potential beneficiaries was prepared by using data on beneficiaries gathered during provision of psychosocial support, data provided by NGOs/partners working with older persons or persons with disabilities, municipal Social Welfare Offices, and the Red Cross branches.

The preliminary list with 1,500 identified potential beneficiaries has been cross checked and verified by Red Cross staff and volunteers through home visits.

The delivery mechanism was a personalized bank cheque. Cheques were distributed to beneficiaries by Albanian Red Cross staff at distribution points. Albanian Red Cross opened a separate bank account for CVA at Raiffeisen Bank of Albania from which the cash grant was withdrawn by the beneficiaries by encashing the cheques.

Cash grants have been delivered to 1,000 older persons and persons with disabilities in this implementation period.

Bosnia and Herzegovina:

The selection of beneficiaries has been conducted by the Red Cross branches by comparing data of the beneficiary registry of the Red Cross branches, and clearing it through the system of social protection by liaising with centres for social welfare and as well as getting additional support by health centres and local NGOs. The preliminary list with potential beneficiaries has been cross checked and verified by Red Cross staff and volunteers through baseline survey.

The delivery mechanism was a bank transfer to personal bank accounts of beneficiaries, executed by the Red Cross branches.

Cash grants have been delivered to 1,000 older persons and persons with disabilities in this implementation period.

Montenegro:

The selection of beneficiaries has been conducted by the Red Cross branches using the data of the beneficiary registry of the Red Cross branches, local social welfare centres and local NGOs.

The delivery mechanism was direct cash delivery by the Post Office of Montenegro.

Cash grants have been delivered to 828 older persons and persons with disabilities in this implementation period. Further 172 beneficiaries will receive cash grants in the coming days.

North Macedonia:

Beneficiaries were selected using the national database kept and regularly updated by the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy, which also was used for geographical targeting.

The delivery mechanism was a bank transfer to personal bank accounts of beneficiaries, executed by the Red Cross of the Republic of North Macedonia HQ.

Cash grants have been delivered to 1,000 older persons and persons with disabilities in this implementation period.

On March 30, 2022, in the Red Cross of the Republic of North Macedonia HQ, the Secretary General of the Red Cross, Sait Saiti and the Minister of Labor and Social Policy Jovanka Trenchevska gave statements to the media regarding the implementation of activities for distribution of one-off financial assistance for socio-economically vulnerable families and for people with disabilities.



prescribed standards of the World Health Organization and the Red Cross. The contents of parcels are as follows:

Item No	Description	Quantity
1	Flour Type 400 (5 kg pack)	1
2	Pasta 500 g	1
3	Milk, ready to drink 3.2% fat (12/1 pack)	1
4	Salt 900g	1
5	White cheese 2/1 pack	1
6	Sunflower Oil 900 ml	1
7	Chicken soup dried 62 g	1
8	Veil soup dry 65 g	1
9	Rice 800 g	1
10	Sugar 1/1 900 g	1
11	Black Tea 400g	1
12	Jam mixed 2.5 kg	1
13	Red paprika (spice) 100 g	1
14	Chicken pate 75 g	1
15	Beans 900 g	1
16	Hibiscus/menta/chamomile tea 1 pack 20g, 20 tea bags	1
17	Coffee ground 100 g	1
18	Canned fish in oil 115 g	1
19	Canned Tuna fish in oil 125 g	1
20	Canned Veggies 800g	1
21	Dried Potatoes package 300g	1
22	Dried vegetables Spices 250g	1
23	Petit Beurre biscuits 900g	1

24	Laundry soap powder 3 l	1
25	Hair shampoo 1 l	1
26	Dishwashing fluid shampoo 1 l	1
27	Liquid hand soap 250 ml	1
28	Toothpaste 100 ml	1
29	Tooth brushes 3/1	1
30	Toilet paper 8/1	1
31	Paper kitchen towel 2/1	1
32	Wet wipes ph 5.5, alcohol and paraben free	1
33	Domestos 900ml	1
34	Masks 50a pack	1
35	Hand disinfectant 100 ml	1

Prior to the activity Caritas presented the project and project factsheet, main objectives, planned activities and target groups/beneficiaries at online quarterly coordination meetings organized by European Union Office Kosovo, Ministry of Finance, Labour and Transfers and UNDP. The following international and local actors were also present at these meetings: UNICEF, WHO, Ministry of Health, various associations and local non-governmental organizations.

The basic criteria included being over 65 or registered as a person with disabilities, regardless of age. The users of the Caritas Kosova telephone centres' services in the project were assessed and approximately 450 users were selected along with 550 other persons who fit the other criteria: economic situation, (pension level, beneficiaries of social support programmes), number of family members, general living conditions (access to basic necessities, water, electricity, health care). The final lists were cleared with the institutions of the social support system such as Centre for Labour and Social Policy and Department for Family and Social Affairs to avoid overlapping with other similar support programmes. The five selected regions were chosen based on the economic and social criteria as well as based on the presence of different ethnic and religious communities.

Out of a total of 1,000 parcels planned for the five regions of Pristina, Prizren, Mitrovica, Vitina and Urosevac, 928 parcels were successfully distributed by the end of May with the remaining 72 distributed in June. The distribution was disseminated through Caritas premises and with assistance of local associations and organizations (the Blind and Visually Impaired Association, the association of children with special needs Podrzi Me, the Deaf Association and Blind Association, HandiKOS, municipal Centres for Social Work, and pensioners' associations at municipal level). The majority of recipients in the distribution were over the age of 65 (app 62 %), and the remainder (app 38 %) were persons with disabilities. 56% of the recipients are male and 44% are female.

No major problems were encountered during the distribution of parcels. However, need for more support was clearly identified as the ongoing economic and social situation contributes to the number of people in need of basic necessities, especially food, increasing. Therefore, Caritas, in cooperation with Offices of Social Assistance and with further funding provided by the Ministry of Finance, Labour and Transfers was able to implement additional distribution of 2000 relief parcels: 950 in Gnjilane, 950 in Mitrovica and 100 in Ferizaj/Urosevac. These were only food items and the beneficiaries were families living below the poverty line, persons with disabilities, etc. who were not covered by the distribution in this action, but the distribution in this action served as indication of the need and benefits that this sort of support can provide to the struggling population.



Outcome 3 (Strengthening Local Communities)

3.1.1. Grass-roots microprojects to increase social inclusion and participation of older persons and persons with disabilities at community level

The activities under this outcome are planned for the second half of the second year as well as the third year. For the moment the preparatory activities including preparation of the documents necessary for launching calls for proposals of microprojects and getting feedback from partners on the documents have been done. The calls for proposals will be launched in September, using the civil society organisations networks and all other available channels of communication in each of the project sites.

Outcome 4 (Public Policy)

Public policy creators in the six project sites are assisted in improving public policy in the wake of the COVID-19 epidemic

Indicators: a) 6 Policy models addressing the identified gaps in service delivery and support to vulnerable groups during emergencies developed and submitted to the representatives of public administration in each of the six project sites.
b) 18 policy creators at national level reached

The development of policy models is nearing finalisation. Final versions of studies have been produced following the partners' feedback for five project sites and for the sixth, North Macedonia, this work is in progress, delayed by the longer data collection process caused by the elections and changes in administration that affected the availability of stakeholders. The SeConS team has prepared instructions for advocacy activities for the project partners and started working on 2-pagers with key findings from the study for each project site to facilitate the advocacy activities going forward

The civil society networks' meetings planned for the second year will be organised in the second half of the year as it is planned to invite the representatives of key decision makers and other stakeholders to these events and present the finished studies and policy models for their feedback and further discussion and advocacy activities.

The advocacy activity of the partners has continued to be lively with the key events in which the project representatives took part including high level international events such as Working Group on Aging and the seminar "Aging in the Digital Age" of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE), 66th session of the NGO Commission on the Status of Women, Human Rights Forum - Serbia in 2021 etc.

4.1.2. Training for CSO network members in the region provided by AGE Platform Europe and the European Disability Forum: Strengthening advocacy networks

This training has been moved from the third year into the second half of the second year in order to harmonise it with the other advocacy activities being run in parallel. The Red Cross of Serbia, AGE Platform Europe and the European Disability Forum have discussed the curriculum and prepared the draft agenda for the training which will be implemented in the 11th month of the second project year.

Activity 4.2.1. Research with older persons, persons with disabilities and informal caregivers on issues related to COVID-19 epidemic and previously existing but exacerbated by the epidemic and creation of recommendations/ policy models for policy creators to improve long term care services (LTC) in regular times as well as in potential second wave of COVID-19 and other emergencies (heatwaves, floods, droughts, earthquakes, harsh winter conditions etc.).

Workshop with project partners

At the end of the first project year, Red Cross of Serbia organized a meeting with all project partners regarding the planned activities for the second year. SeConS team has presented the plan for following months and explained partners what its roles is in the following months regarding advocacy activities. It was agreed that, after finalisation of studies for each project location, studies will be submitted to each project partner for commenting. In addition, it was agreed that recommendation for each project location will be developed and formulated in cooperation with project partner. As for the advocacy

activities SeConS team emphasized that will be a support in preparation of advocacy plan and materials for each project partner.

Qualitative research with beneficiaries started and completed for all six project sites

During previous period selected team of researches with support of SeConS team started with qualitative research with beneficiaries. SeConS team has prepared a sample for qualitative research with respect of different characteristic of potential beneficiaries (type of service they use, gender, age, etc.). Contact lists of potential respondents were received from project partners for each location. Respecting all highest ethical standards research team has contacted potential respondents and conducted interviews. Up to 12 interviews were conducted for each location.

Preparation of studies for the six project sites

Based on all collected material during first and at the beginning of second year (desk analysis, quantitative and qualitative research) project team has worked on preparation of studies for all six project sites. The final studies will include comprehensive analysis of all collected material. Draft versions of studies have been submitted to project partners for commenting as they were finalised. The SeConS team has, upon receiving feedback addressed comments received from partners and finalised studies for four project sites. At the moment of the reporting study for Kosovo is in the revision process and will be finalised in accordance with comments received from partners. As for North Macedonia, based on all collected material during first and at the beginning of the second year (desk analysis, quantitative and qualitative research) the project team has started with preparation of study for North Macedonia.

Preparation of 2-pagers for each project site

The SeConS team has started with preparation of 2-pagers with key findings from the study for each project site. Team anticipates that this type of material will be useful for each project partner in order to promote and present the study to most relevant stakeholders and service providers in their country. The 2-pagers are being prepared in local and English language.

Meeting with Age Platform Europe

Since the SeConS team is during the second project year responsible for supporting each project partner in their advocacy activities, SeConS in cooperation with Red Cross of Serbia has organized a meeting with Age Platform Europe. Meeting was held online and the main topic was the timeline for future advocacy activities. All parties have agreed on a timeline and roles and responsibilities of each partner within this project.

Preparation of advocacy instructions for project partners

SeConS team in cooperation with Red Cross of Serbia has prepared instructions and timeline for all project partners in order to prepare advocacy plan for future activities. The instructions were shared with partners for commenting and finalised following the feedback.

Activity 4.2.5. Regular annual meetings of civil society networks in the six project sites

The annual meetings of the civil society networks will be organised in the second part of the year. It is planned to organise them after the studies have been completed and the policy models as well as other

advocacy materials are all completed in order to invite the representatives of relevant decision makers from different levels to these meetings and present the results of the studies and the proposed policy models for long term care development. This way the civil society organisations will be all joining in a targeted advocacy activity with the key policy makers in their context, both national and local, supported by SeConS experts and the Red Cross of Serbia coordinators in presenting tailored key messages related to development of long term care and engaging the stakeholders in a longer term strategically minded relationship through which public, civil and private sector can work together in improving the relevant policies.

Activity 4.2.6. Participation of members of CSO Networks and representatives of older persons and persons with disabilities participate in official policy-related meetings and working groups at local level as well as in policy and strategy related meetings and working groups at national level

Serbia:

Red Cross of Serbia

Conference “Support to Victims of Gender-Based Violence - Improving Comprehensive Protection”

At the invitation of the Provincial Protector of Citizens - Ombudsman, on Monday, December 6, the representative of the Red Cross of Serbia Natasa Todorovic, the project coordinator participated in a conference entitled “Support to Victims of Gender-Based Violence - Improving Comprehensive Protection”. Ms. Todorovic spoke about violence against older women, which is a public health problem, a problem related to gender-based violence and human rights violations. There are various challenges in defining this type of violence, but also a problem is the lack of research on violence against older women and services aimed at older women victims of violence.

Representatives of the Red Cross of Serbia participated in the social dialogue on Intergenerational Solidarity

On December 8, the Ministry of Human and Minority Rights and Social Dialogue organized a dialogue on “Intergenerational Solidarity”. The dialogue was attended by prof. Dr Dragan Radovanović, President of the Red Cross of Serbia and Natasa Todorović, Red Cross of Serbia expert, as a moderator. During his presentation, the President of the Red Cross of Serbia emphasized the importance of considering intergenerational solidarity in terms of demographic change, climate change, digital transition, but also situations such as the COVID-19 pandemic. He pointed out that the society on a global level has been going through very significant changes in recent years, which are fundamentally changing the way of life and many social norms.

Red Cross of Serbia at the “Human Rights Forum - Serbia in 2021”

On the occasion of the International Human Rights Day, the Ministry of Human and Minority Rights and Social Dialogue, in partnership with the United Nations Team in Serbia, the OSCE Mission in Serbia, the Council of Europe Office in Belgrade and the National Convent for the European Union organised a “Human Rights Forum - Serbia in 2021”. The Forum was attended by representatives of ministries, international organizations, independent bodies and civil society organizations. On behalf of the Red Cross of Serbia, Natasa Todorovic, the project coordinator, participated in the Forum. She

participated in Panel 1 – “Social groups and access to human rights” and spoke about the human rights of older persons.

Debate on Discrimination against Older Persons and the 2030 Agenda

The debate on „Discrimination against Older Persons and the 2030 Agenda“ was held on 15 March 2022, organized by the Centre for Democracy Foundation, and within the Social Pillar of the „Sustainable Development for All“ Platform. In addition to Nataša Todorović from the Red Cross of Serbia, the project coordinator, the participants were: Brankica Janković (Commissioner for Protection of Equality), Borka Jeremić (Head of the United Nations Population Fund Office in Serbia), Snežana Simić (retired University professor), Snežana Šantić (Association of Pensioners Stari grad). The discussion was moderated by Sarita Bradaš (Centre for Democracy Foundation). Discrimination against older persons was discussed in the context of the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, relying on one of the most important principles of the Agenda – leave no one behind (LNOB).

Video of the debate: <https://youtu.be/ZTANA2SRuH4>

Panel discussion “Existing model of support for families of people with dementia”

On May 24, 2022, a panel discussion entitled “Existing model of support for the families of people with dementia” was held in the premises of Rakovica municipal administration in Belgrade, Serbia. The forum was organized by an informal network of helpers for families with dementia, which includes different civil society organisations (HHU Hleb života, UG Okrilje, UG Destigma etc.) and with the support of the HumanaS network. In addition to the representatives of the Red Cross of Serbia, the panel discussion was attended by representatives of the City Institute of Gerontology, the City Institute of Public Health, the Institute of Mental Health, the Gerontological Centre Belgrade, and the Centre for Social Welfare Rakovica. The representative of the Red Cross of Serbia, Natasa Todorovic, the project coordinator, spoke on the topic “Living with dementia in the modern world” and pointed out that the care needed for people with dementia includes primary health care, specialist services, community services, rehabilitation, long-term care and palliative care, medication for dementia, hygiene products, assistive technologies and household adaptation.

National Organisation of persons with Disabilities (NOOIS)

Public debate on draft Action plan for implementation of Strategy for combating discrimination in Serbia

On March 25 the project assistant participated on behalf of NOOIS in the initial public debate organized by Ministry of human and minority rights and Team UN Serbia on draft Action plan for implementation of Strategy for Combating Discrimination in Serbia. The NOOIS representative highlighted the need to incorporate the concept of the reasonable accommodations in Serbian legislation and continue enhancing legal framework for rights of persons with disabilities and continued awareness raising and training of decisions makers, civil servants and judiciary.

Participation in the process of development of the action plan of Strategy for Deinstitutionalisation

In March Ministry of Labour, Employment, Veteran and Social Affairs appointed four representatives of NOOIS to the working group for drafting the action plan for implementation of the Strategy for Deinstitutionalisation, which will contribute to development of long term care in the long run

Albania

Albanian Association of Geriatry and Gerontology

Development of Integrated Health and Social Care Model at Local Level

The Albanian Association of Geriatry and Gerontology participates in the process of development of model of Integrated Health and Social Care to be implemented at local level and provided to older persons in need of support and other persons in need of support for independent living, such as persons with disabilities. In May the Ministry of Health and Social Welfare that coordinates the process organised a round table with national stakeholders as well as the UN where the representative of AAGG presented data both collected through the project as well as through independent research, information on the expressed need in different parts of the country, and informed the stakeholders on the work in the project that will result in the proposal for a policy model focused on long term care services. AAGG will continue being engaged in this process and using the project results and tools in its advocacy efforts.

Bosnia and Herzegovina

Association HAJDE

Meetings with Centres for Healthy Ageing

In the process of preparation of the activities of direct support to older persons the representatives of Association HAJDE have had two meetings with Centres for Healthy Ageing in Sarajevo. These centres represent synergy between civil sector expertise in providing services for older persons and the public sector that provides support including through funding from the national budget. The meetings were very successful and the direct support activities for older persons will be using the premises of the Centres for Healthy Ageing for the remainder of the project implementation period.

Montenegro:

Red Cross of Montenegro

Working group for development of Action plan for Development Strategy of Social Protection System for Older Persons until 2022

Red Cross of Montenegro is still a member of the Working group for development of Action plan for Development Strategy of Social Protection System for Older Persons until 2022, where all project activities and relevant information are shared with the member group consisted of the representatives of governmental and NGO institutions. This is a new national-level body and was formed in 2021 with the establishment of the Ministry of Finances and Social Protection and due to the reconstruction of the government in the reporting period it has not yet had any working meetings.

Union of the Blind

Participation in the working group on changes and adaptations of the Law on Social and Child Protection

The Executive Director of the Union of the Blind has been invited to join the working group on changes and adaptations of the Law on Social and Child Protection which will provide opportunities to influence the decision making related to long term care services. The working group has not yet met due to the reconstruction of the government of Montenegro.

Kosovo*

Caritas Kosova

Caritas Kosova has had regular participation at online quarterly coordination meetings organized by European Union Office Kosovo, Ministry of Finance, Labour and Transfers and UNDP. The other international and local actors were also present at these meetings: UNICEF, WHO, Ministry of Health, various associations and local non-governmental organizations. These meetings were used by Caritas Kosova to familiarise other stakeholders with the activities in the project and were especially useful during the preparation of in-kind relief distribution to ensure any duplication and overlap is present.

2.3. Logframe matrix updated

	<i>Results chain</i>	<i>Indicator</i>	<i>Baseline (value & reference year)</i>	<i>Target (value & reference year)</i>	<i>Current value* (reference year) (* to be included in interim and final reports)</i>	<i>Source and mean of verification</i>	<i>Assumptions</i>
<i>Impact (Overall objective)</i>	<i>Contribute to strengthened resilience of older persons and persons with disabilities in the Western Balkans during Covid-19 and future disasters</i>	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
<i>Outcome (s) (Specific objective(s))</i>	<i>Older persons, persons with disabilities, CSOs and grassroot organisations are better able to cope with the Covid-19 situation in Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, North Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia and Kosovo</i>	<i>a) The mental and physical health and quality of life of 60,000 older persons and persons with disabilities is preserved and their resilience to Covid-19 and future epidemics and emergencies is enhanced</i> <i>b) Organisations representing older persons and persons with disabilities are actively included in planning and other emergency-related activities across the six project sites</i>	x x	60 000 (2023)	8,707 (2022)	<i>a) Interviews with a representative sample of the target population; project reports; evaluation report</i> <i>b) Project reports; reports of local grassroots organisations supported through sub-granting; evaluation report</i>	<i>Potential new COVID-19 outbreaks and related measures taken by the governments in the region may influence project activities</i>
<i>Outcome 1 (Mental health)</i>	<i>1. Mental health of 60,000 older persons and persons with disabilities across six project sites is preserved and their resilience enhanced</i>	<i>a) # of older persons and persons with disabilities that receive psychosocial support remotely and face to face</i>		60 000 (2023)	8,707 (2022)	<i>a1) Structured interviews on psychosocial support</i>	<i>Manageability of COVID_19 situation improves</i>

<i>Outcome 2 (Relief) Cash and Voucher Assistance</i>	<i>2. Physical health and social welfare of 6000 older persons and persons with disabilities across six project sites is preserved and enhanced while capacities of National Red Cross Societies to provide Cash and Voucher Assistance are strengthened</i>	<p>a) # of older persons and persons with disabilities that are reached with relief provision including cash transfers and where appropriate relief items</p> <p>b) # of staff/ volunteers enhancing their capacities through training participation</p>		<p>a) 6,000 (2022)</p> <p>b) CVA 10 (2022)</p> <p>PSS 150 (2021)</p> <p>Advocacy 150 (2023)</p>	<p>6,000 (2022)</p> <p>CVA 24 (2022)</p> <p>156 (2022)</p> <p>N/A</p>	<p>a1) Signed receipts/ distribution lists (for cash transfers and relief distribution).</p> <p>b) Partner reports</p> <p>Training records (lists of participants)</p>	<p>Manageability of COVID_19 situation improves</p> <p>Partners and external institutions and public authorities understand the advantages of CVA programming as default response and are thus willing to further engage in the CVA process</p>
	<i>3. Grassroots civil society organisations are supported to create local initiatives fostering social inclusion and direct support and engage with local policy makers.</i>	<p>a) # of older persons and persons with disabilities whose resilience is built through social inclusion activities and contribution to local level planning</p> <p>b) # case studies with list of good practices and recommendations related to coping strategies and inclusion of older persons and persons with disabilities contributing to emergency planning and response</p>		<p>6000 (2023)</p> <p>15 (2022)</p>	<p>N/A</p> <p>N/A</p>	<p>a) Reports of grassroots civil society organisations</p> <p>b) Project coordinator reports/ collection of good practice models</p>	<p>Local level authorities and institutions will recognise the value of working with older people in regard to the COVID-19 epidemic and be interested in good practices</p>

<p>Outcome 4 (Public Policy)</p>	<p>4. Public policy creators in the six project sites are assisted in improving public policy in the wake of the COVID-19 epidemic</p>	<p>a) # Policy models addressing the identified gaps in service delivery and support to vulnerable groups during emergencies developed and submitted to the representatives of public administration in each of the six project sites.</p> <p>b) # of policy creators at national level reached</p>		<p>a) 6 (2022)</p> <p>b) 18 (2023)</p>	<p>5 (2022)</p> <p>20 (2022)</p>	<p>a) Project reports</p> <p>b) Project reports</p>	<p>Six regional governments in the six project sites will recognise the importance of policy development in the framework of the COVID-19 epidemic.</p> <p>Risk: Negative development of economic situation leading to austerity measures throughout the region</p>
<p>Output 1</p>	<p><i>1.1. Provision of accurate, timely and accessible information from verified trusted sources including on the epidemic, response progression and measures of protection and self-protection (e.g. elder abuse or abuse of a person with disabilities in family context) as well as individual rights</i></p> <p><i>1.2. Psychosocial Support services are provided to ensure preservation of mental health and building of resilience</i></p>	<p># of persons that received information</p> <p># of people PSS services are provided to</p>	<p>0</p> <p>0</p>	<p>30,000 (2023)</p> <p>30,000 (2023)</p>	<p>8,707 (2022)</p> <p>8,707 (2022)</p>	<p>Reports</p> <p>Documentation / interviews</p>	<p>see above</p>

Output 2	<p><i>2.1. Relief assistance/basic needs assistance through a combination of Cash and Voucher and in kind activities based on needs, epidemiological situation, capacity and movement restrictions</i></p> <p><i>2.2. Cash preparedness of Red Cross National Societies in the Western Balkans strengthened in order to provide sustainable CVA assistance</i></p>	<p># of people CVA is provided to</p> <p><i>Cash and Voucher SOPs established and tested/reviewed</i></p>	0	12,000 (2022)	6,000 (2022)	<p><i>Post-distribution monitoring</i></p> <p><i>Training reports, partner reports</i></p> <p><i>Partner reports</i></p>	
Output 3	<p>3.1 Engagement of CSOs and grassroots organisations with local level public policy and decision makers, with increased participation of older persons and persons with disabilities, is supported through microprojects (60 in total)</p> <p>3.2. Support of a variety of social inclusion activities (including direct support and services) at community level for older persons and persons with disabilities</p>	<p><i># local level grass-roots policy initiatives across six project sites</i></p> <p><i># local level grass-roots micropatterns across six project sites carried out via sub-granting engaging with service provision</i></p> <p><i># of older persons and persons with disabilities engaged with services (such as direct support, inclusion, lifelong learning...)and policy initiatives</i></p>	20 (2023)	60 (2023)	1,200 (2023)	<p><i>N/A</i></p> <p><i>N/A</i></p> <p><i>N/A</i></p>	<p><i>Documentation</i></p> <p><i>Reports</i></p> <p><i>See above</i></p>

Output 4	<p><i>4.1. Research conducted on long term care services and provisions in the six project sites</i></p> <p><i>4.2. Recommendations developed and disseminated on how to improve public policy and increase funding to ensure better access long term care services and provisions for older persons and persons with disabilities</i></p> <p><i>4.3 CSO networks engage in policy dialogue on improving access to rights of older persons and persons with disabilities, with focus on accessibility and provision of long term services</i></p> <p><i>4.4. Media and dissemination activities created</i></p>	<p><i>Research study with # participants conducted</i></p> <p><i>Document with recommendations</i></p> <p><i># of meetings</i></p> <p><i>Campaign with ## people reached</i></p>	<p>6,000 (2022)</p> <p>6 recommendations documents (2022)</p> <p>70 meetings (2023)</p> <p>60,000 people reached (2023)</p>	<p>6,000 (2022)</p> <p>5 (2022)</p> <p>20 (2022)</p> <p>30,000 (2022)</p>	<p><i>Research report</i></p> <p><i>Recommendations document</i></p> <p><i>Agenda, Minutes</i></p> <p><i>Campaign statistics</i></p>	<p><i>see above</i></p>
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2.5. Please provide an updated action plan for the future activities of the project

Note: The activity **4.1.2. Training for CSO network members in the region provided by AGE Platform Europe and the European Disability Forum: Strengthening advocacy networks** has been moved from the third year into the second half of the second year in order to harmonise it with the other advocacy activities being run in parallel. The Red Cross of Serbia, AGE Platform Europe and the European Disability Forum have discussed the curriculum and prepared the draft agenda for the training which will be implemented in the 11th month of the second project year.

Year 1													
Activity	Half-year 1						Half-year 2						Implementing body
	Month 1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	
1.1.1. Review of provided psychological first aid and psychosocial support during the first wave of COVID-19 epidemic and assessment of needs													
1.1.2 Training for volunteers of telephone/ text and app-based information services in providing referrals to callers in need of legal advice, medical advice, mental health advice and social support advice													Western Balkans Red Cross partners
1.1.3. Training for peer support													Western Balkans partners
1.1.4. Training for provision of remote and in person psychological first aid and psychosocial support													Western Balkans partners

1.1.5 Provision of timely, accurate and accessible information from verified trusted sources including on the epidemic, response progression and measures of protection and self-protection (e.g. gender-based violence) as well as individual rights through a telephone/ text message based service centres; provision of psychosocial support including evaluation of services and adjustments									Western Balkans Red Cross partners
1.1.7. Reach out community activities to promote the remote psychological first aid and psychosocial support activities (telephone helplines)									1.1.4. Reach out community activities to promote the remote psychological first aid and psychosocial support activities (telephone helplines)
2.1.1. Needs assessment for distribution of cash and voucher assistance and in kind relief items									Western Balkans Red Cross partners

2.1.2. Conduct Cash and Voucher (CVA) Self Assessment and establish a Plan of Action													All Red Cross partners
2.1.3. Incorporating CVA into M&E, Finance, HR and Communication systems													All Red Cross partners
2.1.4. Develop Standard Operative procedures (SOPs) and conduct Financial Service Provider negotiations													All Red Cross partners
2.1.5. Conduct 2 regional trainings on CVA (1 x cash training level 2 and 1 x markets trainings)													Austrian Red Cross
3.2.1. Training for peer support													Western Balkans Red Cross partners
4.2.1. Research with older persons, persons with disabilities and informal caregivers on issues related to COVID-19 epidemic and previously existing but exacerbated by the epidemic and creation of recommendations/ policy models for policy creators to improve long term care services (LTC) in regular times as													SeConS, Red Cross of Serbia

well as in potential second wave of COVID-19 and other emergencies (heatwaves, floods, droughts, earthquakes, harsh winter conditions etc.).																			
4.2.5 Regular annual meetings of civil society networks in the six project sites																			Western Balkans partners
4.2.6. Participation of members of CSO Networks and representatives of older persons and persons with disabilities participate in official policy-related meetings and working groups at local level as well as in policy and strategy related meetings and working groups at national level																			Western Balkans partners
4.2.7. Six research studies on media representation of older persons and persons with disabilities during the COVID-19 epidemic in all the project sites																			Western Balkans partners
4.2.8. Media launches of research reports on media representation of older persons and persons with disabilities during																			Western Balkans partners

the COVID-19 epidemic and research with older persons, persons with disabilities and informal caregivers on issues related to COVID-19 epidemic																		
Etc.																		

Year 2														Half-year 4						Implementing body
Activity	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24								
1.1.5 Provision of timely, accurate and accessible information from verified trusted sources including on the epidemic, response progression and measures of protection and self-protection (e.g. gender-based violence) as well as individual rights through a telephone/ text message based service centres; provision of psychosocial support including evaluation of																				Western Balkans Red Cross partners

services and adjustments																				
1.1.6 Evaluation to ensure the service is adapted as necessary to better meet the needs of users.																				Western Balkans Red Cross partners
1.1.8. Provision of psychosocial support and support to older persons and persons with disabilities in organising ongoing local level activities in self-help, peer support and healthy ageing																				Western Balkans Red Cross partners
2.1.1. Needs assessment for distribution of cash and voucher assistance and in kind relief items																				Western Balkans Red Cross partners
2.1.3. Incorporating CVA into M&E, Finance, HR and Communication systems																				All Red Cross partners
2.1.4. Develop Standard Operative procedures (SOPs) and conduct Financial Service Provider negotiations																				All Red Cross partners
2.1.5. Conduct 2 regional trainings on CVA (1 x cash training level 2 and 1 x markets trainings)																				Austrian Red Cross

2.1.6. Distribution of cash assistance and in kind relief items including Post Distribution Monitoring (PDM)														Western Balkans Red Cross partners
3.1.1. Grass-roots microprojects to increase social inclusion and participation of older persons and persons with disabilities at community level														Western Balkans Red Cross partners
4.1.2. Training for CSO network members in the region provided by AGE Platform Europe and the European Disability Forum: Strengthening advocacy networks														AGE Platform Europe, European Disability Forum
4.2.1. Research with older persons, persons with disabilities and informal caregivers on issues related to COVID-19 epidemic and previously existing but exacerbated by the epidemic and creation of recommendations/policy models for policy creators to improve long term care services (LTC) in regular times as well as in potential second wave of COVID-19 and other emergencies														SeConS, Red Cross of Serbia

(heatwaves, floods, droughts, earthquakes, harsh winter conditions etc.).														
4.2.2. Support to national partners in framing advocacy initiatives related to long term policy														SeConS
4.2.5. Regular annual meetings of civil society networks in the six project sites														Western Balkans partners
4.2.6. Participation of members of CSO Networks and representatives of older persons and persons with disabilities participate in official policy-related meetings and working groups at local level as well as in policy and strategy related meetings and working groups at national level														Western Balkans partners
4.2.7. Six research studies on media representation of older persons and persons with disabilities during the COVID-19 epidemic in all the project sites														Western Balkans partners
4.2.8. Media launches of research reports on media representation of older persons and persons with														Western Balkans partners

disabilities during the COVID-19 epidemic and research with older persons, persons with disabilities and informal caregivers on issues related to COVID-19 epidemic														
Etc.														

Year 3		Half-year 3						Half-year 4						
Activity		25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	36	Implementing body
1.1.8. Provision of psychosocial support and support to older persons and persons with disabilities in organising ongoing local level activities in self-help, peer support and healthy ageing														Western Balkans Red Cross partners
3.1.1. Grass-roots microprojects to														Western Balkans

increase social inclusion and participation of older persons and persons with disabilities at community level																					Red Cross partners
3.1.2. Media presentation of achievements of microprojects																					Western Balkans Red Cross partners
4.1.1. Training for CSO network members in the region provided by AGE Platform Europe and European Disability Forum: Engaging with policy makers and advocating for policy change in the process of EU accession																					AGE Platform Europe, European Disability Forum
4.1.2. Training for CSO network members in the region provided by AGE Platform Europe and the European Disability Forum: Strengthening advocacy networks																					AGE Platform Europe, European Disability Forum
4.2.2. Support to national partners in framing advocacy initiatives related to long term policy																					SeConS
4.2.3. Dissemination of recommendations: media launches in each of the project sites																					Western Balkans partners

4.2.3. Dissemination of recommendations: final project conference														Red Cross of Serbia, partners
4.2.5. Regular annual meetings of civil society networks in the six project sites														Western Balkans partners
4.2.6. Participation of members of CSO Networks and representatives of older persons and persons with disabilities participate in official policy-related meetings and working groups at local level as well as in policy and strategy related meetings and working groups at national level														Western Balkans partners
4.2.9. Public campaigns in all project sites to inform the public about the findings of the research as well as the policy recommendations														Western Balkans partners
Etc.														

3. Beneficiaries/affiliated entities, trainees and other cooperation

3.1. How do you assess the relationship between the beneficiaries/affiliated entities of this grant contract (i.e. those having signed the mandate for the coordinator or the affiliated entity statement)? Please provide specific information for each beneficiary/affiliated entity.

The relationship between the beneficiaries in the action was in good. The communication between the partners is constant between the coordinators in the Red Cross of Serbia and the coordinators in each of the partner organisations. In this period the communication between coordinators of the specific project areas has been increased especially in connection with the Cash and Voucher Assistance part of the action. The updates from partners were provided in time, with the issues in implementation being communicated to the project coordinator as needed and resolved in due time.

The Red Cross of Serbia project coordinator implemented monitoring visits to two project sites in the reporting period. In the period from 14 to 16 February, the coordinator paid a monitoring visit to the partners in Bosnia and Herzegovina: the Red Cross Society of Bosnia and Herzegovina and the Association Hajde. Natasa Todorovic, coordinator of the project and Dr. Milutin Vracevic of the Red Cross of Serbia had a meeting with the Secretary General of the Red Cross Society of Bosnia and Herzegovina Rajko Lazic during the first day of the visit as well as with project staff. During the visit, all segments of the project were discussed, as well as the importance of standard operating procedures that are being developed and that need to be improved in order for the assistance to be best directed and reach those who need it the most. Special attention was paid to the work of telephone support centres that are important for improving the mental health of older persons and persons with disabilities. On the second day of the visit, representatives of the Red Cross of Serbia visited the Association Hajde, which is implementing a part of the project related to advocacy for the introduction of long-term care services. This advocacy will be important for improving the quality of life of older persons and persons with disabilities in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The second component implemented by Hajde is psychological first aid and psychosocial support, within which trained psychology students volunteered on telephone lines. The main conclusion was that older persons are motivated and interested for the second part of the project, which includes direct support through activities of healthy ageing.

A monitoring visit to partners in North Macedonia was organized in the period from February 21 to 23, including visits to the Red Cross of the Republic of North Macedonia and the NGO Humanity. During the first day of the visit, Natasa Todorovic, project coordinator and Dr. Milutin Vracevic had a meeting with the Secretary General of the Red Cross of North Macedonia Sait Saiti, as well as with the project staff. A meeting was also held with a representative of the NGO Humanity to discuss future activities related to advocacy and organizing meetings with representatives of networks. Within the project, the Austrian Red Cross provides technical support, so a meeting was organized with a representative of the Austrian Red Cross about future activities and planned support by this partner in the project.

3.2. How would you assess the relationship between your organisation and State authorities in the action countries? How has this relationship affected the action?

The relationship has so far been good. As reported before, the implementation of the action brought the partner organisations in the project sites to the focus of media attention and this has contributed to the good relationship with the authorities. With the continuation of the COVID-19 crisis it was recognised that the civil society organisations providing psychosocial support to specific population is an important step up from the “usual” relief support. The population of older persons and persons with disabilities is served not only through psychological first aid and psychosocial support but also through provision of relevant and reliable information, ensuring that the telephone centres act as resource centres for this population, providing both information and referral to relevant services that can meet the expressed needs of the caller.

Providing information and support in immunisation has been recognised as an important effort in the countries in the region where the vaccination rate is stalling partly due to the perception that the pandemic is declining.

3.3. Where applicable, describe your relationship with any other organisations involved in implementing the action:

- Associate(s) (if any)
- Contractor(s) (if any))
- Final beneficiaries and target groups
- Other third parties involved (including other donors, other government agencies or local government units, NGOs, etc.)

3.4. Where applicable, outline any links and synergies you have developed with other actions.

Serbia:

Working Group on Aging and the seminar "Aging in the Digital Age" of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE)

The fourteenth meeting of the Working Group on Aging of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) was held in Geneva on November 22 and 23, 2021, with the participation of the Red Cross of Serbia representatives Natasa Todorovic and dr Milutin Vracevic who are also the pri. During the two days of the meeting, the representatives of the Serbian Red Cross took an active part in the part related to the writing of the five-year National Report on Aging. The United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and the Ministry of Labor, Employment, Veterans' Affairs and Social Affairs provided great support in writing the report. The bottom-up principle was used, which was the recommendation. Data were collected from relevant ministries, academia, independent bodies, the non-governmental sector, but also from the elderly in the part related to the preparations for the Ministerial Conference next year in Rome.

On the third day, November 24, a seminar "Aging in the digital era" was held, where representatives of the Serbian Red Cross participated in a panel and spoke about projects aimed at digital inclusion of the elderly. As part of this panel the Natasa Todorovic and dr Milutin Vracevic explained that given that we know that digitization can increase pre-existing inequalities included health, it will be made sure making sure that the education and coaching we do with older people is more focused on e-health so that we compensate the potential gaps and increasing inequalities.

Conference "Exploring violence against older women in the Western Balkans, Moldova and Ukraine"

The Red Cross of Serbia and the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) organized a conference on the occasion of the presentation of the results of the research "Violence against older women in the Western Balkans, Moldova and Ukraine". It is a study that summarizes the findings of research on

violence against older women based on a database from the large research study conducted by the OSCE in 2018 “Welfare and Security of Women”. The database of that research was kindly provided by the OSCE to the Red Cross of Serbia. The study covers: Serbia, Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Moldova, Ukraine and Kosovo.*

The speakers at the conference were as follows: Gabriela Alvarez Minte, Regional Adviser on Gender Equality, UNFPA Regional Office for Eastern Europe and Central Asia, who spoke about the need to recognize older women from a life course perspective and especially in the light of the Sustainable Development Goals and the imperative to leave no one behind; Borka Jeremic, UNFPA Office for Serbia, emphasized the importance of cooperation with the Red Cross of Serbia and the joint effort to understand the situation of older persons through research in order to create the basis for further advocacy activities; dr. Claudia Mahler, the Independent Expert on the enjoyment of all human rights by older persons, pointed out that data collection is important in order to understand the phenomenon of violence and enable the protection of older women, but also that special attention should be paid to those groups of women at increased risk (those who live in poverty, those with different levels of education or different ethnicity ...). A new United Nations Convention on the Rights of Older Persons would be important for safety and dignified aging of both women and men; Prof. dr. Patricia Brownell, Fordham University, New York, introduced the conference participants to previous initiatives and research on violence against older women and highlighted the importance of this study as a tool for advocacy at global level; Prof. dr. Marija Babovic, from the Faculty of Philosophy, University of Belgrade, presented the results of the research. The study shows that 16.7% of women over the age of 65 have experienced violence in the last 12 months. For many of them, this is a continuation of the violence they have suffered during the course of their lives, because the research also shows that 56.2% of women over the age of 65 have experienced some form of violence since they were 15; Natasa Todorovic, a psychologist from the Red Cross of Serbia and a representative of the International Network for the Prevention of Elder Abuse for Europe, presented recommendations for prevention of violence against older women, which can be divided into four categories: data collection, legal framework, education and social norms; Susan Somers, president of the International Network for the Prevention of Elder Abuse spoke about future steps and activities including a meeting of the Open-Ended Working Group on Ageing to be held in April in New York in 2022.

Representative of the Red Cross of Serbia at the 66th session of the NGO Commission on the Status of Women

Nataša Todorović, expert and psychologist from the Red Cross of Serbia participated in the 66th session of the NGO Commission on the Status of Women organized from 14 to 25 March 2022, and in the side event organized by the International Network for the Prevention of Elder Abuse (INPEA) on 24 March. The topic of the event was: Advocacy-Education-Legislation: “Tools to Address Violence Against Older Women/ Widows”. The event was chaired by Susan Somers, President of INPEA.

The panellists were experts in the field of protection of older women from violence and protection of the human rights of older women.

Nataša Todorovic, who is also the representative of the INPEA network for Europe, spoke about the recently completed research on violence against older women in the Western Balkans and two other Eastern European countries. She pointed out that this research is important, because it is one of the few researches that covers several countries and shed light on a topic about which little is known, because violence against older women is a hidden phenomenon. A small number of studies deal with it and there are a small number of prevention programs as well as appropriate services for older women survivors of violence. The research was the result of various advocacy activities from different projects where

partners from different levels are connected: the Red Cross of Serbia, the European Union, UNFPA, INPEA, OSCE...

The following speakers also spoke during the session: Dr Emem Omokaro, Executive Director of the National Aging Agency of Nigeria, spoke about her government's efforts to build awareness of violence against older women and widows and community-level education that builds sensitivity to the phenomenon of elder abuse. Dr Pat Brownell, Fordham University and INPEA of North America, presented the strengths and challenges of the research framework for a better understanding of violence against older women (VAOW). Ferdous Ara Begum, a former member of the CEDAW Committee, and National Representative of INPEA for Bangladesh, spoke about the efforts of communities and governments to address the problem of violence against widows in Southeast Asia.

4. Visibility

How is the visibility of the EU contribution being ensured in the action?

All project communication is always making sure that the visibility requirements are satisfied. All the official communication, including reports, presentations, etc. feature prominently the European Union logo and the information on funding of the action.

In line with the communication plan, the communication with the different stakeholders, including decision makers at local and national level, civil society organisations, as well as the international organisations and agencies has focused on the concrete activities and themes of the action, such as mental health of older persons and persons with disabilities, the importance of cash and voucher assistance as a way to ensure older persons and persons with disabilities can customise the assistance to their immediate needs, the strengths of the civil society as a partner in reaching the older persons and persons with disabilities that are at risk of being overlooked by the existing systems of support.

One example of communicating to the public through a network of local television stations is an interview with the project coordinator wherein she presented the details related to the telephone assistance provided to older persons and persons with disabilities through the five telephone centres established and managed through the project. This interview was meant to ensure that the general public in the local communities are aware of the service and the role of the European Union and international partners in providing support to mental health of the two target groups, so it was distributed to a network of local television stations in Serbia:

<https://youtu.be/NeGvrg06ZJM>

As such, it is a continuation of the public presentation of the issue of mental health of older persons and persons with disabilities and the discussion of how the project activities may address it that was present in the first part of the project, for example through public addresses such as this interview of the project coordinator at the National Broadcasting Corporation in Serbia:

https://youtu.be/EABp_WTpF90

The websites of the project partners, as well as the HumanaS network website and the regional project website, as well as the social media feeds of the partners have regularly published the news on the project activities, ensuring that the European Union is always prominently referenced as the key provider of support to the action.

The Red Cross of Serbia has in the course of the project implementation become a member of AGE Platform Europe and its communications will be used to provide news on the project and its specific activities until the end of implementation.

The decision makers and partner organisations were familiarised with the project, its objectives and planned activities in a kick-off meeting organised in 2021 and from that point on the communication was maintained with relevant national stakeholders. Special points of interest were the activities leading to distribution of cash and voucher/ relief assistance where all the responsible partners had multiple contacts with the national social welfare system – starting with the responsible ministries – as well as the international agencies working in relief support to ensure that overlap and duplication of assistance is avoided.

The communication activities will be entering a new phase in the second half of the second year as important milestones in the action are reached. Finalisation of long term care policy recommendations will signal the period of intensified advocacy with the decision makers in all of the project sites, while the beginning of the activities in local communities through sub-granted microprojects at grassroots level will include communication to community level decision makers but also more intense communication with the public at local and national levels.

The planned meetings of civil society networks in the second year will feature representatives of key decision makers as well, since they will be used to present the long term care policy proposals, and this will be communication opportunities to channel key messages and ensure both the visibility of this portion of the project but also of the civil society as an important actor in advocating for long term changes that will address the effects of demographic changes.

Below is the list of notable visibility activities per project site, including the media write ups and guest spots, websites and social networks of partners, as well as printed materials produced in relation to the project by partners.

Red Cross of Serbia

Brief description of activity	Date of activity	Place	Targeted audiences/stakeholders	Number of people targeted	Link and/or reference (if applicable)
News item on the website of the Red Cross of Serbia	6/12/2021	Online	General public	N/A	https://www.redcross.org.rs/en/news/working-group-on-aging-and-the-seminar-aging-in-the-digital-age-of-the-united-nations-economic-commission-for-europe-unece/
News item on the website of the Red Cross of Serbia	11/12/2021	Online	General public	N/A	https://www.redcross.org.rs/e

					n/news/representatives-of-the-serbian-red-cross-participated-in-the-social-dialogue-on-intergenerational-solidarity/
News item on the website of the Red Cross of Serbia	14/12/2021	Online	General public	N/A	https://www.redcross.org.rs/en/news/red-cross-of-serbia-at-the-human-rights-forum-serbia-in-2021/
News item on the website of the Red Cross of Serbia	12/01/2022	Online	General public	N/A	https://www.redcross.org.rs/en/news/conference-exploring-violence-against-older-women-in-the-western-balkans-moldova-and-ukraine/
News item on the website of the Red Cross of Serbia	21/02/2022	Online	General public	N/A	https://www.redcross.org.rs/en/news/monitoring-visit-to-partners-from-bosnia-and-herzegovina/
News item on the website of the Red Cross of Serbia	28/02/2022	Online	General public	N/A	https://www.redcross.org.rs/en/news/monitoring-visit-to-partners-from-north-macedonia-within-the-project-strengthening-the-resilience-of-older-persons-and-persons-with-

					<u>disabilities-during-the-covid-19-crisis-and-future-crises/</u>
News item on the website of the Red Cross of Serbia	18/03/2022	Online	General public	N/A	https://www.redcross.org.rs/en/news/debate-on-discrimination-against-older-persons-and-the-2030-agenda/
News item on the website of the Red Cross of Serbia	31/03/2022	Online	General public	N/A	https://www.redcross.org.rs/en/news/representative-of-the-red-cross-of-serbia-at-the-66th-session-of-the-ngo-commission-on-the-status-of-women/
News item on the website of the Red Cross of Serbia	27/04/2022	Online	General public	N/A	https://www.redcross.org.rs/en/news/visit-to-the-red-cross-of-kragujevac/
News item on the website of the Red Cross of Serbia	30/04/2022	Online	General public	N/A	https://www.redcross.org.rs/en/news/health-y-ageing-training/
News item on the website of the Red Cross of Serbia	25/05/2022	Online	General public	N/A	https://www.redcross.org.rs/en/news/panel-discussion-existing-model-of-support-for-families-of-people-with-dementia/
News item on the TASIOP Website	13/01/2022	Online	General public	N/A	https://tasiop.org/?cat=3

News item on the HumanaS Website	13/01/2022	Online	General public	N/A	https://humana.s.rs/2022/01/13/konferencija-nasilje-nad-starijim-zenama-zapadnom-balkanu-moldaviji-i-ukrajini/
News item on the HumanaS Website	19/04/2022	Online	General public	N/A	https://humana.s.rs/2022/04/19/predstavnica-mreze-humanas-na-66-sesiji-nvo-komisije-o-statusu-zena/
Tweet of the Project Coordinator related to healthy ageing training	06/05/2022	Online	General public	N/A	https://twitter.com/NataliTodorovic/status/1522627772111278085?s=20&t=z5TEnP09t8K5sdfhXd28NQ
Tweet of the Project Coordinator related to presenting the project at the IFRC meeting in Bern	15/05/2022	Online	General public	N/A	https://twitter.com/NataliTodorovic/status/1525882905259565057?s=20&t=z5TEnP09t8K5sdfhXd28NQ
Tweet of the Project Coordinator related to general promotion of the project (including the project leaflet)	3/05/2021	Online	General public	N/A	https://twitter.com/NataliTodorovic/status/1390330397175726082
News item about CVA training on the Facebook page of the Red Cross of Serbia	2/12/2021	Online	General public	N/A	https://www.facebook.com/redcrossofserbia/posts/pfbid0bHh4KLVu3XCvYU2VbaZuEDPPMwMCNJHqc6yQ6qc7wDi8qPqdrCK748rd47BESXPml?_cft

					[0]=AZVbWr BP5KjfLrOX- UwkxpQgpZ1 JvUhm9yFkSl 2Gul- PIwEJe7t8BK 6YPcifhoqbM qzIndVLLo4r xwKf- KhMAd7qDE 67Fgvtj2SSmJ qWsinyrn7hg YqMmZjEK 0Y_yLp9ZJQ SqAlzNeegE Wn21vUiR9f- McqvAM2i27 FvxvRTMBF8 ruV8JzcofmC VXHUfcmjU VLt9MrgGaZ RXYyNn- LDaw P&t n=%2CO% 2CP-R
News item about Working Group on Aging and the seminar “Aging in the Digital Age” of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) on the Facebook page of the Red Cross of Serbia	10/12/2021	Online	General public	N/A	https://www.facebook.com/redcrossofserbia/posts/pfbid0JyVfhRUXebNaTCq5ZMwpZDabavLukC3CsY9b6QhfmlguYxXXwnCoPbGSYVMk8iE3l?_xts=%5B0%5D=68.ARC779GELarXw5mhM3w3d-aBYi66Um_3t9ZrvSA_gai4Xq_SPOacycTYASz2r4ERR7QG79Gupbi3I377oIEY32LcYkX36-qRH4Olx1WnMi1Ps-rWgqB7AahL

					NICQRAAF W45Ee6l8WX KscdTLp9N4 beRYzN1IUU I3FZAFpp6- dvmWNZB7s LOeS9BoLd1 qv7l0_maMk6 zUv4eu6GEB Cp1lcMLkwI4 BFPURPuVn PUtmlvHhf0Y As5MKDVP M8SbLt5Euu0 BgOp7URC3o SRqWugfMJt q878ztTOYG DHU_2y79dT GdEVasH6PA & tn =R
News item about the panel discussion on Intergenerational Solidarity organised by the Ministry for Human and Minority Rights of the Republic of Serbia, on the Facebook page of the Red Cross of Serbia	23/12/2021	Online	General public	N/A	https://www.facebook.com/redcrossofserbia/posts/pfbid0RYRJvKzRoMW13mHPDcrTvqDnKNOrZeg4gYra3vpHCLavjf1iit6ea28R7dn3qenbl?_xts%5B0%5D=68.AR Bw17_NTRFi xVAK064zNi qJVgaoNwe9 H6d7flsY1zjvbE88KA_sMS e8LWGA7Vm PZeNZYdNL VQQAJrs3vU Ffa2UHov2ov kAqdMGJzZ6 epeDvbAZwn BpJemPzEHN qlATCU7j92 nzngb5OvUyk xD_Y2MoQk PO2c5NE50- DHpkbhDZYF CgLcsy2ZC2

					NKINZgBnm Q1CZ5gHvIar Cvus27Ayzdh xazXIKDJSjy EWbpv_kqw KT4pOmEoX x_Mxxa9bisQ IHVozBxHi3Z FFFioBrEsp1rL gsQo4RzO03- - 3OX8H1DD1 xiSKYNKM0r A&_tn_=R
News item about the monitoring visit to one of the telephone centres in the project on the Facebook page of the Red Cross of Serbia	29/04/2022	Online	General public	N/A	https://www.facebook.com/redcrossofserbia/photos/a.561742460608121/5003194139796242/?type=3&_xts=%5B0%5D=68.ARCKhdCHaJkpdSQooC_-I_haVKnD9srho13UBuLFQM1MJBZdNOQbt40BdJ470eNc5ssxa56X2B4uYghLdIrqdIM2EGtXsAy8nb7qLDxRYWd8xBINg4UEvoR1ZE49iXzUYWQqNv2J5ho7Phx7jK3gIMH14BYqHfV1kgI-mN4OGv_9ouNaaq9LvCbLoYpHtPt5JhXJ_O9QwM4o-BVVBJ5tAWlQizPp-eekf-IqlQT9YdLfgL8Qd60xBP5THVgSTY54DxpfUeSmO2

					zMCLIBjv5u BOvu8elYAO lrFmO- wTd4- ZarLYnLLrg & tn =-R
News item about the healthy ageing training for the project partners on the Facebook page of the Red Cross of Serbia	4/05 /2022	General public	N/A		https://www.facebook.com/redcrossofserbia/photos/a.561742460608121/5016198648495791/?type=3&_xts%5B0%5D=68.ARAnNSLGoDNmuHJ3yj7vhBaUM_VH1zX5CKVVd31RzZcSsBdo8ycJohSLbuglvnimP31T-OFYA9YuOm_-Q2pRLTQgeSEN49k_4istxek6dAYs6jVbcOhBk8wrSfh6qKk3Sa-t_PIZhVAqvXH9i0ebGC0ElHJ2nnmKqRSdPNhpqPNMDKJxQS_Sbn6H9xPzySWselyHBMJrXM9g-ABnvo87Qjf0dpLKzVhVlGpsYNcfph3F1yBy_96yF6qrZXwyewQFJS1CiqhX7LcepEcBR3P0xS2VCWrI3BUPz9GAReP6YsewGkMSvT3dA& tn =-R
Facebook page of the project	Online	General public	N/A		https://www.facebook.com/St

					<u>rengthening-Resilience-Regional-project-111166714412916/</u>
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Albania

Brief description of activity	Date of activity	Place	Targeted audiences/stakeholders	Number of people targeted	Link and/or reference (if applicable)
Facebook post about the telephone psychosocial support services	14/12/2021	Online (Facebook page of Albanian Red Cross)	General Public	N/A	https://www.facebook.com/permalink.php?story_fbid=pfbid0dE4xf7m6B1fm0TE7Kv8AGxGxxx91MGzavUzxGdCRiygdtJDlAWxwwUF4a9KbDoNpl&id=269018396830675&cft[0]=AZXIP1xpi4QVpl3nTo8mVGU1-2qUU7eXC5bwr_uR66zMgX8S3OEDPyuWl-Ij67MYjqNfOmNX3mZ8ccSvifgl8RBLJ6ckqPIOmwZG2MK2F9-y9ZV_4p1uJvMY8kYbkWO2Byx7M7ti-

					fw7NbnIn N4uOqNq5 tLiHYk6hn wdTcx- WkkdsKcu pAjZzxK2 WmYYzv AK uhAw mNwe5_x GnhNUPW 4xfjdB25- KQSFlb53 zfjO9sUH- Y8R2GU4 MiTRbPyg kLJZSY& tn =%2 CO%2CP- R
Facebook post about the beginning of the face to face phase of support for older persons and persons with disabilities	11/03/2022	Online (Facebook page of Albanian Red Cross)	General Public	N/A	https://www.facebook.com/permalink.php?story_fbid=pfbid0pLjfMTxiLihoh2s3yyRECWe332rMTtG41gdr5kVKoESVz9bK7ByyJo2ihGsFnRshl&id=269018396830675&ct[0]=AZUq8U2mw8ewYCvgCMxMwAOXOSTX35Pi_Vggu_4XbGVHPRyb2U6HBgb3_LDy6KxmXZIb6YdAG3UHuNKnMhXvr3DosfBGN6-z4aTYK3I

				ZgM9MW YadqwHE F1szmB1K 6AZGAhM Ze7TKHqx 8chU19w MPlbu9Wu v9Ixojn2Ni RjuOGM7 3WSic1HK tDi1P04- D9f441p5 G2OvNFiD 83vxMyYc WnnES& tn =%2 CO%2CP- R
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Bosnia and Herzegovina

Red Cross Society of Bosnia and Herzegovina					
Brief description of activity	Date of activity	Place	Targeted audiences/stakeholders	Number of people targeted	Link and/or reference (if applicable)
RCSBiH Facebook profile post about the monitoring visit by the project coordinator.	02/03/2022	Online	General public	N/A	https://www.facebook.com/dckbih/posts/pfbid0hZMvVTQWMVNnfWn1XZ5TV2pNnDLzsLscGrZpQLu3RWEdHECXYQMZP82awkKpQqKr1?_xts=%5B0%5D=68.ARKhLaAVvyZcPPjTRNce5j7gzOz4cFr9JHMzZjm7Lc5RWdrnI2FkRzqqJCrUyEQq

				N_G7W7m 6KVwLIH 5zW- lhNgHs_nZ ib4QRPGA ynqxfn3BA oeH-- qzG5R1dx PginjG7ox vW0Y0euc 4d8X5mB0 nUKkbIUU oxoF33E7j kwZXOyX zZ6DeqkP- Xqpd5vHg TyF2grQkr 55KcWeO qms0yM3 N0_iw2J71 xQ- mD10anJB cJVDzq_A - UaFFI1f9c VNorZIsV WGtqH7jS gGMiPDw FU_EugzG qHDLdFV pyV4SzZz BV8_DljqI zQuddjPlh WG9Z8yG H98SYJ0F WvJ4dhEF b1bY9QBt bqaTuJ2P M3uH878 AEdL9h- QM- XK9icHIJs Zat2aFtxue U8oq75tGu 7Bpl2xGIF IUwT_Q& _tn_=R
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Montenegro

Brief description of activity	Date of activity	Place	Targeted audiences/stakeholders	Number of people targeted	Link and/or reference (if applicable)
Facebook post about the start of the activities of direct support to older persons and persons with disabilities in the project	15/05/2022	Online	General public	N/A	https://www.facebook.com/CrvenikrstCG/posts/pfbid0Krc6HWL9xppygF91fF1x4TRPfnTgr13Ux58ChxWH8kyeVJmzVhtkmuYExSqVDuPKI?cft[0]=AZWXksqNvRjsw9cr9mj5sKjDKa1X11gDDVJwaVswtzcGp7iznVp7jJzhlT53Gk1FXEhTFQcb7sh4Sb55nLmJc1IJyDnuJd0uEJzD98uUQv1yEEIO1lyWSgSz9UJ9NH7zUk3wPN9pNGPdI7HM6gx5mApIYmt_J_3zW6lSVXqzAr6mlKes_NznIrWCxTUbQIRQtUTjShcFbc2pvKh7OPDifj&tn=%2CO%2CP-R
Facebook post about the continuation of the activities of direct support to older persons and persons with disabilities in the project	20/05/2022	Online	General public	N/A	https://www.facebook.com/CrvenikrstCG/posts/pfbid02bqFaUgibufK5qX2

				UqtuLvq5D myMETiED H78mN3tu3 TRT9edSj6 MXESR4h GERSZS31? xts %5 B0%5D=68. ARAN8- ocTTIKux1 PQpMRKG Mm- YpuO_kQsl P- 1G2OUUzL 3- 0ol_Q8NRG tNEbhR920 KKCZ3Ltc CH5VHgbp GE01H9eJX PvyyDo8jzk OiGweBYY U_gqvB33G pDzpRju1F QMxpR0u8 mau0m2mU MTZ0T7lvJ 8xuszG- srR5RAxUv - KbCr3rcD9j 0qbK3Mvx2 cL7pTXLuL VSb8N1pw LYXOFSgG yF8zsKh8G AnXzgEHK J6qxOvDk0 3LTABKjFl oq0uP8DAj wTQN24sN KHqHkfng HKJ72V41J UOEhxw9 pdhSwJIkPi AuMR0HW p5xAM& tn _=-R
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Tweet by the Red Cross of Montenegro about the start of the activities of direct support to older persons and persons with disabilities in the project	15/05/2022	Online	General public	N/A	https://twitter.com/CKC_G_MRC/status/1525735085684711426?s=20&t=WEfMn1T2b90LDjVn-3jTHQ
Tweet by the Red Cross of Montenegro about the continuation of the activities of direct support to older persons and persons with disabilities in the project	20/05/2022	Online	General public	N/A	https://twitter.com/CKC_G_MRC/status/1527708264095485955?s=20&t=WEfMn1T2b90LDjVn-3jTHQ
Tweet by the Red Cross of Montenegro about the continuation of the activities of direct support to older persons and persons with disabilities in the project	29/05/2022	Online	General public	N/A	https://twitter.com/CKC_G_MRC/status/1530920162601353217?s=20&t=WEfMn1T2b90LDjVn-3jTHQ
News item on the Union of the Blind website related to available telephone support services	04/04/2022	Online	General public	N/A	https://ss-cg.org/?p=3162
Facebook post of the Union of the Blind of Montenegro related to available telephone support services	01/03/2022	Online	General public	N/A	https://www.facebook.com/545260818913411/photos/a.1989083344531144/4625459977560121/?type=3&_xts%5B0%5D=68.ARDb2TE_ZwMuBVNcXWAu3gaihOzXwJ0fmz3D7-qaRa8HyjZN1Coc37dTtU3wEi0YF

					CzbHCT8 RfSiDTt8S DaC_pVz- ldw2xk3eqz cfCjKa6ylm 8vYsK8Pr5 CupMQDd0 c9357HhiA blCbn6d5R1 uEqaxTYgI Qk3Z21hdtd nEcT- UqI59UxRj x7o9MncUb V1SfD5Yfp 1GiWj56n XRA_aSzEj uP0zrTmhj O6bheQtID ZxiE0E2utw ZreXsviiFj0 UltoeqkiEcg QUHho21d qTxgJJAfN 570Ri3d_yE Ct63cm3yB xt5mxA& tn_-R
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North Macedonia

Brief description of activity	Date of activity	Place	Targeted audiences/stakeholders	Number of people targeted	Link and/or reference (if applicable)
News item at the Red Cross of the Republic of North Macedonia website on a CVA training	18/11/2021	North Macedonia	General public	N/A	https://ckrm.org.mk/rabotilnica-za-kesh-ivoucher-poddrshka-vo-ramkin-na-proektot-zajnuvanje-na-otpornost-na-starite-lica-i-

					<u>licata-so-poprechenost-za-vreme-na-kovid-19-i-idni-katastrofi/</u>
News item at the Red Cross of the Republic of North Macedonia website on CVA cash distribution	30/03/2022	Online	General public	N/A	https://ckrm.org.mk/ednokratna-parichna-pomosh-za-semejstva-so-socio-ekonomski-ranliv-i-lica-so-poprechenost/
Facebook post by Humanity NGO on a monitoring visit of the project coordinator	14/03/2022	Online	General public	N/A	https://www.facebook.com/nvohumanost/posts/pfbid0icC3H79scsBUDq7BemYaBrcR36L4BmNN7NUtfyFY3cksRbmXfTydvtSw6kaubgCl?xts%5B0%5D=68.AR Cf6ZYHwhWgMAUkcVNzzR559bS9hMSoJIW3dWZigwoMnsWIcABOd8fdH74yaBmFPhcozYpw090YJ9yEx0LedhuLuU0MQfMs7Rko8JGGbFDjYmD4eyh5sBj9qGB5I

				Cyef CNz KSqchjrJC WP2ubRB 4avAIEpC HdKzWct2 tqP8bjbKD d0BoCBUo uSpRzXpU JW-abRiN- Xvf3MdJy vjlXGZPb PwbPZEA XI_rYB2V TgE- pievaa2ocJ QVu1o_6u vC9_3mta8 z0i1S1Sah 9EqM2H EckX3330 m5WxHN CrPEk_Tm uQR2u5yto FohFWJgD H6Ckgwr- 6IU1FDH7 RX4d- 8E6aGlr_s xMq5BAM KM6E2BE Y5U3L6zr DNaZUW7 9TxU0vJY p1Ruttoojd pt- HKEe1AD ZZRL6U& tn_=R
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The European Commission may wish to publicise the results of actions. Do you have any objection to this report being published on the EuropeAid website? If so, please state your objections here.

No objections

Name of the contact person for the action:

Natasa Todorovic

Signature:  

Location: Belgrade, Serbia

Date report due: 15 January 2023

Date report sent: 22 July 2022