

WORLD VISION *Insider*

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World Vision Assists Kosovar Refugees

As thousands of ethnic Albanians continue to cross the Kosovo border every hour, World Vision staff are meeting immediate needs in Montenegro and Albania.

Reports from our staff on the ground in Montenegro and Albania estimate that at least 500,000 Kosovars are now displaced. Of these, more than 240,000 have fled to Albania, another 140,000 to Macedonia, and at least 60,000 to Montenegro.

World Vision's relief efforts are focused on the refugees now in Albania and Montenegro. Most refugees have no food or possessions. They are exhausted, traumatized, and hungry. World Vision—one of the few non-governmental organizations currently stationed in Montenegro—has aided some 25,000 refugees since the crisis began through the provision of food, personal care items, and blankets.

Assistance in Montenegro

Most of the refugees fleeing into Montenegro are finding temporary shelter in factories, mosques, and private homes. Food, however, is quickly becoming scarce. World Vision's current activities include:

- Distributing food items in partnership with the Mother Teresa Society. These distributions include rice, flour, oil, bread, and tinned meat to refugees in the Montenegro cities of Rozaje and Podgorica, and soon to refugees in Ulcinj and Plav.
- Purchasing 20 tons of flour and 1,320 pounds of yeast to bake 2,500 loaves of bread each day for the next 15 days.
- Providing 3,000 liters of long-life milk.

- Stocking four soup kitchens in the border city of Rozaje with stoves, pots, and plates.
- Providing a continual supply of food and firewood over the next three months to meet the food needs of the displaced.

Expanding Relief in Albania

In an effort to meet the extensive and largely unmet refugee needs in Albania—a desperately poor country—World Vision has expanded its relief efforts for the refugees there. Our

immediate goal for Montenegro and Albania is to raise \$2 million to extend aid to a minimum of 50,000 refugees.

Please Pray

- Pray for refugee families who have lost their homes and loved ones.
- Pray for World Vision staff as they strive to meet the physical and spiritual needs of refugees.
- Pray for lasting peace in this region.
- Pray for a timely and compassionate response to the Kosovar refugees from people around the world.

A Decision No Mother Should Ever Have to Make

With tears rolling down her cheeks, Hamida, a 40-year-old ethnic Albanian, told a World Vision staffperson how she was faced last week with giving up two of her children or sacrificing her entire family of seven.

When Serbian soldiers came to her home in northern Kosovo on April 2, she and her husband, Kadrian, 36, were forced to leave two of their seven children behind. Two sons, ages 14 and 15, were out tending the family's sheep.

The Serbian soldiers hurried the couple and five of their children out of their home. Hamida recalls, "We asked the soldiers if we could stop and get the two boys, but they did not let us. We asked if they knew where they were and all they

said was that they had probably been shot."

The family joined a stream of at least 32,000 displaced Kosovars making their way over the snowy mountains and across the border into Montenegro.

Traveling by tractor, they arrived in Rozaje with only the clothes on their backs. They are staying in a furniture factory where they sleep shoulder to shoulder with 200 other refugees and receive relief supplies from World Vision.

"All I want is to hold my boys in my arms again," says Hamida.

Her husband, Kadrian, could only stand by silently, tears welling in his eyes.



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