

**DRD** DANISH  
REFUGEE  
COUNCIL



**DRUŠTVO CRVENOG KRSTA/KRIŽA BOSNE I HERCEGOVINE**  
**CRVENI KRIŽ FEDERACIJE BOSNE I HERCEGOVINE**



**MARCH 2023**  
**HEALTH FACTSHEET**



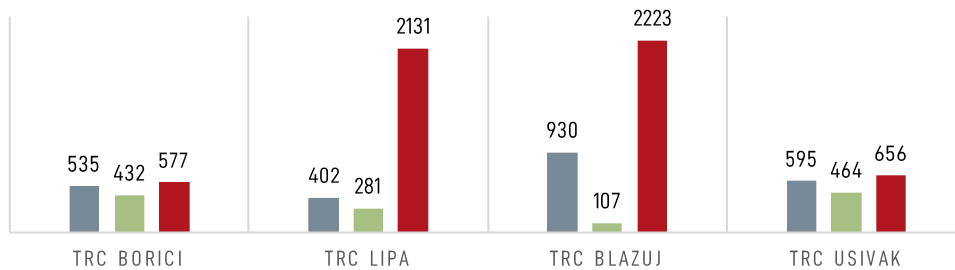
Photo: Health promotion activities TRC Blažuj

# 1. KEY HIGHLIGHTS & MONTHLY TRENDS

- ❖ DRC has ensured **2,462 medical examinations** and **1,284 medical interventions** in March 2023. Alongside this, there were **5,586 PoCs medically attended directly by DRC staff** inside TRCs in Bosnia & Herzegovina. Moreover, out of these, DRC facilitated **854 pediatric examinations & interventions** within two pediatric units in TRCs Usivak and Borici.
- ❖ DRC has facilitated **27 referrals towards PHCs** and **35 referrals towards SHCs** for specialized healthcare and diagnostics. Moreover, **2 PoCs were hospitalized** in healthcare facilities.
- ❖ As a part of DRCs COVID-19 response, **PHC medical teams performed 2,468 medical screenings** in four reception centers. There was **one PoC tested for COVID-19 using Ag-RDT test**.

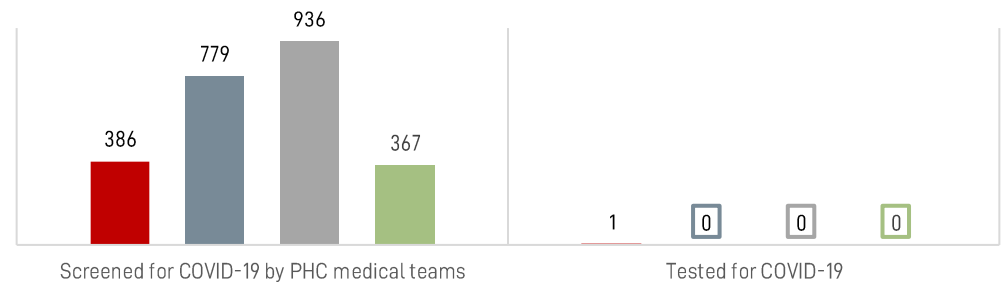
**DRCs HEALTH RESPONSE INSIDE TEMPORARY RECEPTION CENTERS**

■ Medical Examinations ■ Medical Interventions ■ Medically Attended

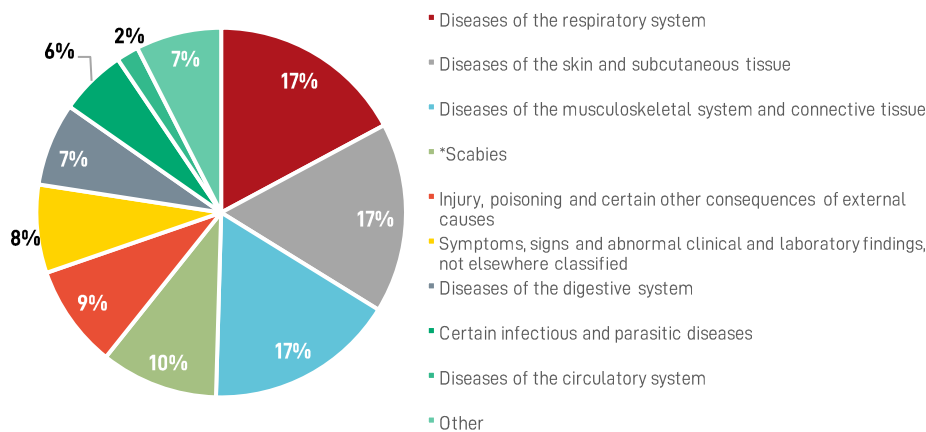


**DRCs COVID-19 RESPONSE INSIDE TEMPORARY RECEPTION CENTERS**

■ TRC Borici ■ TRC Lipa ■ TRC Blazuj ■ TRC Usivak



**CLASSIFICATION OF MOST FREQUENT DISEASES AND HEALTH RELATED PROBLEMS**



## OBSERVATIONS

- 📦 Number of medical examinations have decreased in 23% compared to February 2023, which corresponds to lower number of PoCs residing inside the centers. Nevertheless, ratio of individuals with health concerns from the general population have increased significantly.
- 📦 There has been unexpected increase certain infectious and parasitic diseases of up to 220%, musculoskeletal diseases of up to 45%, and injuries and trauma of up to 20%. This could correspond to extreme changes in weather conditions, affecting general wellbeing. Moreover, due to high turnover of people in the centers, spending more time one the move, with limited access to hygiene and medical aid, number of skin infection and injuries have increase.
- 📦 When it comes to referrals for specialized health care and diagnostics, namely PHC referrals were for laboratory services and dental care. Moreover, SHC referrals were for specialist examination, namely orthopedic surgeons attending injuries, and gynecologists.
- 📦 Hospitalizations were mainly due to trauma needing immediate surgery and intensive care.

## 2. HEALTH RESPONSE

- ❖ To stress the importance of DRC's Health Response inside and outside of TRCs, DRC has developed a tool to track incoming inquiries/referrals to enhance DRCs' service provision and the quality of the response, enabling informed programme adjustments. Most of the referrals and inquiries were received inside of TRCs (99%).
- ❖ **DRC has successfully addressed 3,626 incoming health related inquires/referrals** received from other organizations in March 2023.
- ❖ **DRC has successfully facilitated 80 medical escorts**, ensuring access to culturally sensitive specialized health care, diagnostics and in-patient treatment inside the local health facilities.

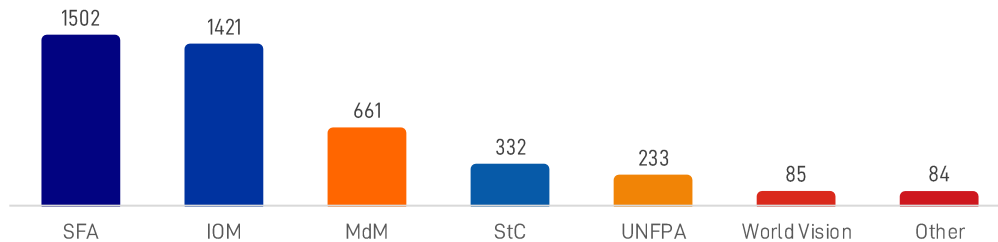
### INCOMING INQUIRIES/REFERRALS AND MEDICAL ESCORTING

**3,626**  
Incoming healthcare referrals

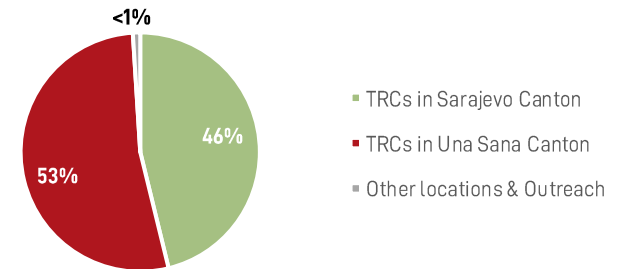
**148**  
Health related expertise provided

**43**  
Medical escorting to health facilities

#### HEALTH INQUIRIES/REFERRALS RECEIVED FROM:



#### INCOMING HEALTH INQUIRIES AND REFERRALS: TRCs & OUTREACH



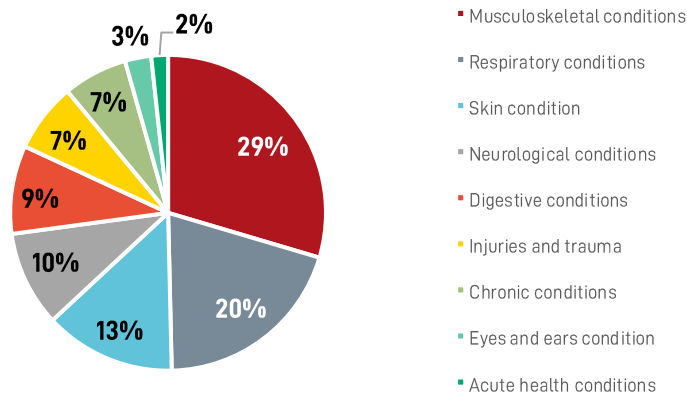
### DRC ASSISTANCES & REFERRALS IN OUT-OF-SITE AREAS

**496**  
Basic medical assistance provided

**35**  
Different locations

**56**  
Referrals for further support

#### HEALTH CONCERNS IN OUT-OF-SITE LOCATIONS



#### OBSERVATIONS

- 📦 Number of medical assistances in out-of-site locations have increased in 36% compared to February 2023, namely due to improved weather conditions, with PoCs spending more time in out-of-site locations.
- 📦 There has been significant increase of incidence in reported musculoskeletal conditions of up to 138% and skin conditions of up to 67%.
- 📦 However, number of respiratory conditions have decreased in 18%, in comparison to February 2023.
- 📦 Number of locations have remained similar in comparison to February 2023.

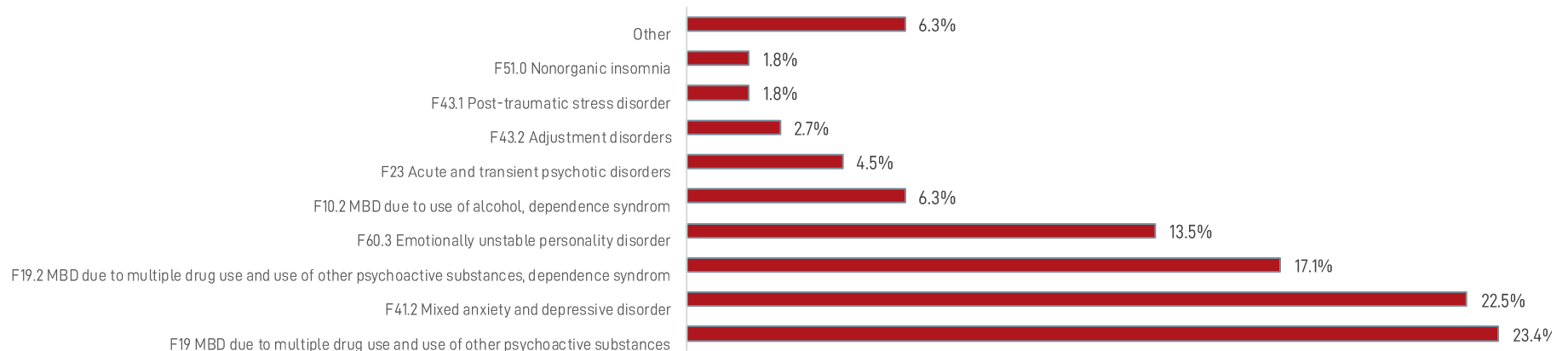


## 3. MENTAL HEALTH & PSYCHOSOCIAL SUPPORT

### Médecins du Monde - MDM

- ❖ During March, MDM, assisted **232 new direct beneficiaries** residing in TRCs in Una- Sana Canton and Canton Sarajevo. A total of **194 individual psychological counselling sessions** were conducted. In addition, **328 participations to group (empowerment and psychoeducational) sessions**.
- ❖ In March, during the individual psychological counselling sessions, main concerns reported by PoCs was psychoactive substance abuse as a mechanism to cope with high levels of stress, feeling nervous, restless, or tense, symptoms of depression and PTSD.
- ❖ MDM Psychiatrist provided regular and follow up psychiatric consultations to PoCs residing in all four TRCs. Total of **83 psychiatric care consultations** were conducted for 65 individuals.
- ❖ On 24<sup>th</sup> of March, MDM participated in a round table on the topic of *“Migration and mental health”*, organized by the IOM, as part of the First Congress of Psychotherapists in Bosnia and Herzegovina. On that occasion, MDM shared data on the most common difficulties in the field of mental health of refugees and migrants in fieldwork, the challenges direct service providers encounter, as well as the achievements.

### MOST FREQUENT PSYCHIATRIC DIAGNOSIS



### Red Cross

- ❖ Red Cross Teams, supported by DRC, have been operational in out-of-site locations (Tuzla, Goražde, Velika Kladuša and in Sarajevo Canton). Red Cross teams **assisted a total of 524 PoCs** (465 adult men, 9 adult women, 5 girls and 45 boys). Red Cross teams provided **187 Psychological First Aid (PFA) consultations**. Moreover, **532 First Aid assistances** (for PoCs with muscle pain and cramps, blisters, cold, lacerations, etc.) were provided, with **47 medical consultations** performed by medical doctors.



## 4. THEMATIC FOCUS – BED BUGS

- ❖ Bed bugs (*Cimex lectularius*) are small, flat, parasitic insects that feed solely on the blood of people and animals while they sleep. Bed bugs are reddish-brown in color, without wings, ranging in size to couple millimeters, and can live several months without food. Bed bugs are found across the globe, traditionally in developing countries, but recently spreading rapidly in the “western” world. Bed bugs infestations usually occur around or near the areas where people sleep. These areas include apartments, shelters, houses, hotels, cruise ships, buses, trains, and dorm rooms. They hide during the day in places such as mattresses, bed frames, headboards, dresser tables, inside cracks or crevices, behind wallpaper, or any other clutter or objects around a bed. Bed bugs are able to travel over 30 meters in a night to feed, but tend to live within 2-3 meters of where people sleep.
  - ❖ Bed bugs do not spread diseases, but can be an annoyance because their presence may cause itching and loss of sleep. Sometimes the itching can lead to excessive scratching and secondary skin infection. A bed bug bite affects each person differently and responses can range from an absence of any physical signs of the bite, to a small bite mark, to a serious allergic reaction, needing medical attention. One of the easiest ways to identify a bed bug infestation is by the tell-tale bite marks on the face, neck, arms, hands, or any other body parts while sleeping. However, these bite marks may take as long as 14 days to develop in some people, so it is important to look for other clues when determining if bed bugs have infested an area (finding bed bugs’ exoskeletons, or bed bugs in the fold of mattresses and sheets, seeing rusty-colored blood spots on sheets, etc.).
  - ❖ Bed bugs are experts at hiding, due to their slim flat bodies, allowing them to fit into the smallest of spaces and stay there for long periods of time, even without a blood meal. Bed bugs are usually transported from place to place as people move, traveling in seams and folds of luggage, overnight bags, folded clothes, bedding, furniture, and anywhere else where they can hide. Most people do not realize they are transporting bed bugs as they travel from location to location, infecting other areas as they move.
  - ❖ Everyone is at risk for getting bed bugs when visiting an infected area. However, anyone who travels frequently and shares living and sleeping space has a higher risk of being bitten and/or spreading a bed bug infestation. Bed bug bites usually do not pose a serious medical threat. The best way to treat a bite is to avoid scratching the area and apply prescribed topical medication and take antihistamines. Bed bug infestations are commonly treated by insecticide spraying, and the best way to prevent bed bugs is regular inspection for the signs of an infestation.
- Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention cdc.gov*
- ❖ During month of March, in TRC Blazuj, the number of patients complaining of skin conditions have increased, namely due to bed bug bites. DRC and IOM had a coordination meeting to respond properly to outbreak. Having in mind that bed bugs are unlikely to live on clothes, and that they are more likely to infest items in a suitcase/backpack, infestation with bed bugs is hard to identify during the entry screenings. Moreover, with a high turnover of PoCs, proper measures are needed in order to manage this issue. DRC actively worked on motivating the PoCs to wash their clothes often and report the signs and symptoms of bed bug bites to medical staff, as well as work with IOM on strengthening the existing preventive measures to stop the spread of bed bugs infestation.

Health Care Services are an integral part of the Danish Refugee Council’s humanitarian assistance to migrants, refugees and asylum-seekers in BiH. DRC teams ensure timely access to primary and secondary health care, basic medical and nursing care, medical escorting and health promotion and education. Additionally, in cooperation with relevant public health institutions, DRC ensures sanitary-epidemiological monitoring and infection-prevention and control measures, including the measures for preventing the spread of COVID-19 infection (medical screenings, testing, isolation, vaccination and PPE distribution). The response complements the DRC health and protection program implemented in all reception facilities and in out-of-site locations in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

### CONTACT

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