

DREF operation update



International Federation
of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

Ghana: FLOODS

DREF operation n° MDRGH003
GLIDE n° FL-2010-000118-GHA
Update n°1
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The International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent (IFRC) Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF) is a source of un-earmarked money created by the Federation in 1985 to ensure that immediate financial support is available for Red Cross and Red Crescent emergency response. The DREF is a vital part of the International Federation's disaster response system and increases the ability of National Societies to respond to disasters.

Period covered by this update:
08 to 31 October, 2010.

Summary: CHF 122,297 (USD 124,389 or EUR 92,163) has been allocated from the IFRC's Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF) to support the Ghana Red Cross Society (GRCS) in delivering immediate assistance to some 3,000 households. Unearmarked funds to repay DREF are encouraged.

The heavy rains in the northern regions of Ghana in September and early October 2010 have caused heavy flooding with huge human and material damages in the affected areas. Regions most affected were Northern, Upper East, Upper West, Brong Ahafo, Eastern and Western.



The Red Cross volunteers sensitize communities at river bank to move to upper land. Photo: Ghana Red Cross Society

In response to the disaster, GRCS mobilized and deployed its volunteers in the regions to provide First-Aid service and psychological counselling to the affected population. The volunteers also assisted some of the affected persons with evacuation. The National Disaster Management Organization (NADMO) in Ghana has been collaborating with other humanitarian actors such as the Red Cross to provide relief assistance to the affected population and assisting them in relocating to temporary shelter camps provided by the authorities in the affected communities.

In view of the recent situation in these regions, the GRCS with support from the IFRC and the Swiss Red Cross is providing relief assistance to the most affected people in the Northern, Upper East and Upper West Regions of the country. The National Society (NS) has procured non-food items (NFIs) including blankets, hygiene kits, water purification items, mosquito nets, farming tools, shelter kits including tarpaulins as well as family kits to target beneficiaries. The NS through its volunteers has been working in collaboration with NADMO to carry out sanitation and good hygiene sensitization in the affected communities to prevent outbreak of epidemics.

During this reporting period, the IFRC regional disaster response team (RDRT) deployed member and the planning and reporting Officer of the West Coast Regional Representation to support the NS disaster management team in revising the plan of action. The revised plan of the action now takes into account

the SPHERE standards in relief distribution and is also well align with budget. Through the revised plan, the GRCS will be assisting 1,500 families with basic NFIs while the Swiss Red Cross will be assisting 499 families with NFIs in the three target regions. The sensitization activities on good hygiene practices still target 3,000 households in the target communities. The regional branches of the GRCS have also trained selected 200 Red Cross volunteers who will be deployed during the distribution phase as the NS has commenced registering and issuing ration cards to the 1,500 vulnerable most affected using well defined selection criteria. The GRCS is also working in collaboration with other humanitarian actors like the WFP, UNHCR among others in the affected regions.

This operation is expected to be implemented over three months, and will therefore be completed by 31 December, 2010; a Final Report will be made available three months after the end of the operation (by 31 March, 2011).

The major donors to the DREF are the Irish, Italian, Netherlands and Norwegian governments and ECHOO. Details of all donors can be found on:

<http://www.ifrc.org/what/disasters/responding/drs/tools/dref/donors.asp>

[<click here to view contact details>](#)

The situation

The torrential rains in the north of Ghana caused heavy flooding, which resulted in the destruction of property including houses, farmland, crops, livestock and public structures including school buildings and bridges in September and early October 2010. Communities most affected were in the Northern, Upper East and Upper West Regions of Ghana where the disaster has claimed 18 lives with more than 2,097 houses collapsed and 9,674 households displaced, according to GRCS preliminary assessment. In addition 8,760 acres of farmland were submerged and crops including livestock washed away. Other regions affected were Brong Ahafo, Eastern and Western Regions where many families were rendered homeless. About 123 communities were affected with the impact most felt in Chereponi, Gusheigu, West Mamprusi, East Mamprusi, East Gonja, and West Gonja Districts where more than 900 houses, 11 school buildings and about 832 acres of farmland have been destroyed with more than 500 people displaced.

The torrential rains in the Northern Region coupled with the spillage of the Bagre Dam in Burkina Faso remained the major threats to the population as water level kept rising prior to the end of the rainy season. As the rainfalls continued during the month of October there was the fear of more communities being threatened by floods especially in the Volta and Eastern Regions with the opening of the Akosombo Hydro-electric Dam.

Coordination and partnerships

The GRCS has been participating in coordination meetings both at the national and regional levels aimed at effective humanitarian assistance to the affected population. The NS is also using the forum to explore partnership opportunities with other humanitarian actors like the UN systems. The GRCS consulted the Department of Plant Production and Regulatory Unit of the Ministry of Agriculture on the availability of seeds and technical advice on the seeds to be procured and distributed to the target beneficiaries. NADMO has distributed food items including maize, rice, beans and non-food items such as mattresses, sleeping mats, plastic buckets, blankets and plastic plates to some of the affected persons in the Upper East Region.

A parliamentarian from Central Gonja also supported some of the affected communities in Central Gonja with food and non-food items. The meetings with regional NADMO officials revealed these humanitarian actions, and also helped the Red Cross in avoiding duplication of tasks in these communities. The meeting with WHO also showed that the organization has distributed medical items through the Ghana Health Service in the Central Gonja. Items donated by WHO include infusion sets, cotton wool, disposable needles/syringes, forceps, toilet soap and gloves while UNICEF has donated some items to support some of the displaced persons sheltered in temporary camps. The Red Cross continued to collaborate with NADMO in the sensitization of affected communities on good hygiene and sanitation practices.

Red Cross and Red Crescent action

The GRCS DM team with support from the deployed RDRT member and the Planning and Reporting Officer of the West Coast Regional Representation worked to review the plan of action to align it with the budget as it was found out that SPHERE standards were not adhered to in the initial plan. With the revised plan, the total number of beneficiaries of the Red Cross NFIs procured with the DREF is now 1,500 most affected families while the Swiss Red Cross will be supporting the NS to assist another 499 affected families in the target regions. Some 300 families and two most affected schools in the Upper East Region will be reached with NFIs and corrugated iron roofing sheets respectively. These items were procured from the GRCS prepositioned stock. However, the sensitization activities will reach out to the initial 3,000 target households. The GRCS has developed new selection criteria for the identification and registration of 1,500 beneficiaries. To facilitate easy transportation of procured items to the regions in the north, the NS has repaired and put into use one of its trucks which in the long-term is also enhancing the capacity of the NS in logistics and cost saving.

Progress towards outcomes

Relief distributions (food and basic non-food items)

Outcome: The 1,500 most affected households have received specific quantity and quality non-food items based on the assessment and selection criteria from Red Cross.

Activities planned

- Procure and distribute 1,500 blankets and 3,000 sleeping mats to 1,500 beneficiaries in the Northern, Upper East and Upper West Regions.
- Mobilize and train 120 volunteers on registration and distribution strategies of the Red Cross.
- Conduct a rapid emergency needs assessment in the target communities.
- Procure and distribute backyard gardening tools (hoes, cutlasses, boots, racks) and seeds to 500 target households.
- Control supply movements from point of dispatch to end user.
- Monitor and evaluate the relief activities and provide report on distribution of relief items.
- Develop an exit strategy.

Progress: The GRCS has procured and prepositioned all the relief items in the target regions. Items procured and prepositioned include 1,500 jerry cans; 2,000 plastic buckets; 1,000 tarpaulins; 3,000 sleeping mats; and 1,500 blankets. Following the review of the plan and budget, it was discovered that the operation could only provide seeds for target households and therefore concluded to the procurement and distribution of seeds. However, after consultation with the Ministry of Agriculture, it was advised that due to lack of preservation methods on the part of beneficiaries, backyard gardening tools should be provided instead since the planting season is April/May each year. Hence, the procurement of hoes, cutlasses, boots and racks is ongoing. The family kits for 499 families by the Swiss Red Cross have also been received and are about to be transported to the target regions.

The GRCS regional branches in the three target northern regions have selected and trained 200 Red Cross volunteers on beneficiary identification, registration and distribution strategy. The trained volunteers have started distributing ration cards in the Northern and Upper West Regions. About 800 beneficiaries have been registered in seven districts in the Upper West as at this reporting period.

Water, sanitation, and hygiene promotion

Outcome: Reduced risks of waterborne diseases through hygiene promotion, health education and provision of drinking water in target communities in the affected regions for three months.

Activities planned

- Procure and distribute 150,000 water purification tablets and 1,500 pieces of water jerry cans to 1,500 most affected households in the target regions.
- Procure and distribute 3,000 bars of soap and 1,500 mosquito nets to 1,500 most affected households in the target regions.
- Mobilize and train 90 Red Cross volunteers on good hygiene, water purification system and health promotion.
- Sensitize the target communities on water purification, good hygiene and health practices.
- Provide First Aid services in the affected areas.

Progress: The NS has procured and prepositioned 1,500 insecticide treated mosquito bed nets and 3,000 bars of soap in addition to the items mentioned above. The trained Red Cross volunteers have been working in collaboration with NADMO to carry out sensitization on good hygiene practices in the target districts. The collaboration is facilitating logistics for the Red Cross volunteers as they are moving to the field together with NADMO officials for community sensitization. The volunteers have also received training on water treatment and use of bed nets which they will be carrying out in the target communities through demonstration during the distribution phase. Since the floods commenced in the northern regions, Red Cross volunteers have been providing First Aid service to the displaced persons in the temporary camps and continued to work with local health authorities to improve the health conditions of the affected persons. However, with the revision of the plan of action, the procurement of water purification tablets could not be realized due to limited funds and the fact that some other humanitarian actors are already intervening in that aspect.

Emergency shelter

Outcome: About 300 most vulnerable households in the affected communities are provided with emergency shelter during the three months.

Activities planned

- Carry out damage need assessment in the affected communities;
- Develop beneficiary selection criteria and register beneficiaries;
- Procure and distribute 1,000 tarpaulins and 200 shelter kits to the target beneficiaries in the regions;
- Conduct technical briefing on emergency shelter to 30 selected Red Cross volunteers in the affected areas.

Progress:

The regional managers of the GRCS in the affected regions and the Red Cross volunteers have collaborated with NADMO and other agencies to carry out an assessment of the situation and identified the immediate needs of the most affected persons, which include provision of food and non-food items as well as shelter as most of the identified families have completely or partially lost their houses during the floods. In view of this, the NS has procured 1,000 tarpaulins, 200 shelter kits for distribution to the identified and registered beneficiaries.

The DM team has also developed new criteria for beneficiary selection after the initial plan of action had been revised. The new selection criteria developed for the identification and registration of 1,500 beneficiaries include families whose houses were completely damaged, displaced families, single parents, families with children under five years old, pregnant and lactating mothers, physically challenged, the aged, families who lost their farmland, size of the family and level of vulnerability.

Challenges:

The regional branches of the GRCS participated in other activities such as the eye care programme, national measles campaign and also the monitoring of the political situation in neighbouring Côte d'Ivoire in case of any eventual population movement. However, these activities did not really affect the operation as the election in Côte d'Ivoire was peacefully conducted though a re-run was scheduled for the 28 of November. The measles campaign also ended on 6 November thereby allowing the Red Cross regional officials to be involved in the floods operation. The NS timely resolved the logistics constraint in terms of transportation of items to the northern regions as it has repaired one of its trucks to be used to transport NFIs to the target destination. The NS is also collaborating with humanitarian agencies especially UN systems and NADMO in the northern regions for the repositioning of these items to the various distribution points put in place by the Red Cross.

Communications – Advocacy and Public information

The GRCS communication team continued to collaborate with media agencies in Ghana to highlight the activities of the Red Cross towards assisting the population affected by floods in Ghana. The NS is also using its good relationships with the media to sensitize the affected communities on steps to take before, during and after any flood disaster. The regional media houses in the target regions are being mobilized to provide good coverage to the relief operation of the GRCS in the three northern regions and sensitize the communities on the activities of the Red Cross.

How we work

All IFRC assistance seeks to adhere to the [Code of Conduct for the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and Non-Governmental Organizations \(NGO's\) in Disaster Relief](#) and the [Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Disaster Response \(Sphere\)](#) in delivering assistance to the most vulnerable.

The IFRC's vision is to inspire, encourage, facilitate and promote at all times all forms of humanitarian activities by National Societies, with a view to preventing and alleviating human suffering, and thereby contributing to the maintenance and promotion of human dignity and peace in the world.

The IFRC's work is guided by [Strategy 2020](#) which puts forward three strategic aims:

1. Save lives, protect livelihoods, and strengthen recovery from disaster and crises.
2. Enable healthy and safe living.
3. Promote social inclusion and a culture of non-violence and peace.

Contact information

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