

OPERATIONS UPDATE



International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies
Fédération internationale des Sociétés de la Croix-Rouge et du Croissant-Rouge
Federación Internacional de Sociedades de la Cruz Roja y de la Media Luna Roja
الاتحاد الدولي لجمعيات الصليب الأحمر والهلال الأحمر

HUNGARY, ROMANIA, UKRAINE: FLOODS

11.01.200210
January, 2002

Focus on Hungary and Romania

Appeal No. 13/01

Launched on 9 March 2001 for CHF 1,574,048 for 2 months. Budget revised in Situation Report no. 1, increased to CHF 2,185,764 and the time frame increased to 30 September 2002.

Please note that this Operations Update no. 3 focuses solely on the continuing flood relief activities in Hungary and Romania. The flood relief operation in the Ukraine has been completed as planned and a separate Final Report is being issued on that aspect of the appeal. A Final Report covering Hungary and Romania will be issued by 30 March, 2002.

DREF Allocated: CHF 150,000 (50,000 for each country)

Beneficiaries: 53,000

Operations Update No. 3; Period covered: June to December 2001; last Ops Update (no. 2) issued May 2001.

“At a Glance”

Appeal coverage: 81,4% (overall, including Ukraine)

Related Appeals: 01.52/2001 - Annual Regional Appeal for Central Europe

Outstanding needs: Replenishment of emergency relief stocks

Update/Summary: This Operations Update no. 3 focuses solely on the continuing flood relief activities in Hungary and Romania. The flood relief operation in the Ukraine has been completed as planned and a separate final report is being issued on that aspect of the appeal.

In Hungary and Romania, the delivery of flood assistance has been quick and efficient. Although just a small part of the appeal for each country has been covered, national societies have demonstrated their capacities to mobilize both human and material resources at a local level to meet the immediate needs of the most vulnerable. The most pressing need in those two societies is now to rebuild their DP emergency stocks in view of future disasters. Thanks to some recent donors contributions, this will be made possible.

Operational Developments:

Hungary

The Hungarian Red Cross (HRC) was able to generate considerable support for its flood appeal. In co-operation with local and national media, both funds and services (such as transportation of relief goods) were secured. Through the launch of a national appeal, the wide media coverage helped to attract support from the general public as well as from businesses. Additionally the HRC was able to recruit considerable numbers of new volunteers. Furthermore, due to the learning and experience gained from flood assistance over the previous years, the HRC was able to demonstrate a high degree of professionalism in this response. Unfortunately, damage to agricultural land means that cultivation will not be possible. The result is that most of the population in the flood affected area has been deprived of their main source of income. Consequently they will continue to need assistance and support. The government, through local municipalities, has requested that the civil society sector play an active role in providing basic living assistance to those affected by the floods.

Romania

Life has generally returned to normal in the flood affected areas. However, most of the people affected lost their food reserves. In addition to this, cultivation of land has not been possible this past growing season. As a result, those affected continue to face severe difficulties and an uncertain future. It will be necessary to continue providing assistance to these vulnerable people. The response during the emergency phase was well co-ordinated and effective. There were no deaths, and damage to infrastructure was limited. The disinfection process was also completed successfully, and all those displaced were able to return to their homes within a short period.

Red Cross Red Crescent Action:

Hungary

The Federation immediately released CHF 50,000 from its Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF) and the HRC used a part of it to distribute basic essential food and hygiene items to those affected. The remaining amount was used to continue supporting the people affected after the initial emergency phase was over. As an in kind response to the international appeal Swedish Red Cross offered 420 bales of good quality used clothing. Finnish Red Cross also contributed more than 18,000 kg of used clothing. The Bavarian Red Cross, a traditional partner of the Szabolcs Branch, offered large amounts of bed linen, blankets and new clothing from their own disaster stock in the very first week of the disaster. They also participated in the distribution of drinking water and relief parcels to the affected people. Thanks to cash contributions from several sister Red Cross societies (cf. list of pledges), part of the needs were covered.

Romania

The Federation released CHF 50,000 from the DREF to enable the RRC to provide immediate support to those most in need. In kind donations of good quality used clothing were received from the Finnish and the Swedish Red Cross. Cash contributions were also made by several sister Red Cross societies (cf. list of pledges).

Red Cross and Red Crescent Society:

Hungary

The Deputy Secretary General of the HRC co-ordinated Red Cross action from the disaster area. A total of 38 rescue workers were operating by boat, integrated into the government's national disaster response. Because of strict security measures they were allowed to operate only from the fourth day of the disaster, rescuing animals and goods and also providing food to some 1500 persons isolated in the water-surrounded Tarpa hills. Red Cross staff and volunteers assisted evacuees distributing food, bottled drinking water, hygiene articles, blankets and bedding material. Three Red Cross psycho-social support teams visited evacuees and others affected.

An HRC national appeal was issued on 7 March seeking support to people affected by the floods. Simultaneously, three regional disaster relief warehouses started to forward relief consignments. These were made up of 'survival kits' containing basic food and hygiene items, tinned food, mattresses, boots, blankets and

toiletries. These were directly distributed to the evacuees, reaching 2,250 persons. Non-stop disaster duty services started to operate both in the affected area and the national headquarters to provide information on needs as well as to offer help in terms of human, material resources and logistics. At national headquarters donations were prioritized with regards to contents of relief transports and the warehousing possibilities in co-ordination with the affected Szabolcs Branch.

Each of the 20 HRC branches chose to assist one of the 20 evacuated villages. Each town branch introduced a 12-hour duty service while county branches maintained non-stop duty. The national appeal was completed by local appeals published in local media, allowing branches to collect considerable amounts of donations. The affected Szabolcs-Szatmár-Bereg Branch contracted three more staff and also managed 436 volunteers. At the national level 2383 volunteers assisted the flood relief program, out of which a total of 850 were newly recruited.

Romania

The RRC played a significant and leading role during the emergency. As the primary partner with the government, they distributed assistance from their own available resources (11 Disaster Preparedness stock warehouses throughout the country as well as a main warehouse in Bucharest). Altogether some 15,000 beneficiaries were assisted. The setting up of a water purification unit was also an important activity.

Health:

Hungary

The elderly and the sick were taken to nearby hospitals. A new rehabilitation department was set up in Fehérgyarmat hospital, where patients were looked after by nurses who were attending a training course organized by the HRC. Because of the potential danger of epidemics, inhabitants of the 20 affected villages were vaccinated with gamma globulin. For this reason it will not be possible to recruit blood donors in the area for the period of a year. A 3-month psychological support program was launched in the flood hit area to provide psychological help to affected families. Twenty-one psychologists and social workers participated in the program providing 10 sessions, reaching 630 families and individuals.

Romania

No activities reported.

Water-sanitation:

Hungary

No activities reported.

Romania

In Maramures county, the water in wells and in the retention basin area could no longer be safely used. In response to this, the RRC sent a water purification unit from the zonal disaster warehouse. Operated by four volunteers from the Bihor county Red Cross branch, it had the capacity to provide 500 litres of water per hour. The chief recipients of this water were located in Sighetul Marmatiei town and in the area of Maramures county.

Relief distributions:

Hungary

Relief goods were distributed in 35 villages. During the first stage of operations, evacuees arriving from 15 villages were provided with basic food, hygienic items and bedding material. Dam-reinforcing workers, rescue staff and volunteers were also provided with food. Special attention was paid to families with young children. Many evacuated families were lacking basic baby care items as well as food and medicine. These were immediately supplied by the local Red Cross.

The DREF made available by the International Federation was used in two parts. On March 16 2001 hygiene articles were purchased and were distributed among the inhabitants of 10 villages affected by the floods. The rest was used for the preparation of 4,300 food parcels, 1,500 hygienic and 1,200 bedding material parcels which were distributed to the same number of affected families. The total value of these items was HUF 14 million; out of this sum DREF support represented HUF 6,9 million while the remaining funds came from existing stock and donations. The costs related to storage, packing and transportation were also covered from this support. These altogether represented HUF 539,178. Humanitarian parcels were directly distributed to the affected families.

Throughout the relief operation there was a good level of co-operation with other charities. Foremost among these were Maltese Charity, Hungarian Caritas and Interchurch Aid. Together the HRC and the Maltese Charity implemented a program to replace ruined furniture for the rebuilt houses.

Constraints:

The lists of affected persons provided by the local governments were not necessarily accurate. Sometimes more than one family belonged to a household which made distribution more difficult. The total value of in-kind donations collected and distributed among the affected population between 6 March and 30 November 2001 was HUF 224,659,414. This translated into 270 relief consignments with a total weight of 682,353 kg.

Romania

Humanitarian relief was distributed and co-ordinated by the RRC. Some 5,532 beneficiaries in fifty villages received assistance. This was given after assessments made by the RRC together with the local authorities. Items distributed included: foodstuff, clothing, footwear, barracks equipment and building materials. Building materials were provided with the support of the local authorities after a thorough assessment of needs.

Humanitarian relief distribution was achieved through the work of 90 volunteers of the RRC together with the staff of local public administrations. The relief was given on an individual basis, and was based on lists drafted by the local city halls and approved by the Prefectures and the RRC branches.

Logistics:

Hungary

Both in Budapest and in the affected region warehousing capacity was expanded. A 1,300 square metre new storage facility place was hired by the Szabolcs Branch which in the course of the relief operation served as a central point of distribution. This facility at present is used for storing offered furniture, which is necessary until the time each family returns to their rebuilt homes.

Romania

The RRC has a system of seven zonal warehouses in place. These are to provide rapid intervention in the case of disaster, and are kept equipped with necessary basic items. They are stocked and operational in Alba Iulia, Oradea, Tirgoviste, Tulcea, Bacau, Iasi and Bucharest. Each warehouse serves the needs of six to seven branches. In response to the serious flooding, large quantities of warehouse stocks have been distributed. Items involved include sleeping bags, blankets, rubber boots and clothing.

The humanitarian transports were organized with RRC-supplied trucks from both the central warehouse as well as from the zonal warehouses, including those warehouses located in areas not affected by the flood. With regards to the building materials, the means of transport was provided by the public authorities. It is important to note that following the distribution of materials from the warehouses, the remaining stock is seriously depleted. New quantities of goods (clothes and footwear) have been purchased through donations and sponsorship. These are necessary to cover the needs of large communities during the emergency phase of any future disaster.

Shelter:

Hungary

Evacuees were accommodated in host families in neighbouring villages and towns, as well as in community buildings. Due to this the establishment of shelters was not necessary.

Romania

Following the floods in Maramures, 90 people were accommodated in a shelter organized at a primary school in Sighetul Marmatiei town. The shelter was operational for seven days, after which time the people were able to return to their homes. At the shelter, warm food was provided. In the same county, 150 people whose homes were flooded were provided accommodation in the homes of friends and relatives. This lasted from seven to ten days.

Telecommunications:

Hungary

No support was offered to develop the telecommunication system. Town secretaries were provided cell phones to ease communication from their own funds. However, telecommunication companies contributed cash to the relief operation.

Romania

No activities reported.

Tracing:

Hungary

No activities reported.

Romania

No activities reported.

National Society Capacity Building:

Hungary

Since this was the third consecutive natural disaster in the region the response capacity was more efficient. Because of the scale of the disaster three new qualified staff were employed. The management of volunteers was very successful. One fourth of the volunteers were newly recruited.

Romania

The RRC was the sole organization providing relief to the flood affected. The experience and capacity of the national society is well acknowledged, and the government considers the RRC to be its primary partner in disaster response operations.

The RRC was able to generate additional funds. This was done through co-operation with both local and national media. Of particular note is the water purification unit that was fully manned by four volunteers.

Federation Delegation:

Hungary/Romania

An effective use of human resources in the region was introduced. Two delegates from country delegations who are specialists in the related field were sent to Hungary and Romania. This expert team carried out a needs assessment and also assisted in mobilizing international resources.

Coordination:

Hungary

While the HRC is the main provider of relief, several other important players were also active in this operation. As much as possible, relief efforts were co-ordinated between agencies. The main organizations involved in this programme were the Hungarian Maltese Cross, Hungarian Caritas and Hungarian Interchurch.

Romania

The co-ordination of the assistance programme was made through the Disaster Preparedness and First Aid Department within the RRC. The implementation of the programme was achieved through the work of local RRC branches, together with volunteers and local administration authorities in the affected counties.

Outstanding needs:

Hungary

The Hungarian Red Cross severely depleted its warehouse stocks during the relief operations. Funds procured from the appeal and received lately are to be used to replenish these stocks so that any future disaster can be readily dealt with. Additional funds, if available, will be used to continue assisting those whose livelihoods have been so severely disrupted by the flooding. Activities such as one off distribution of food and hygiene parcels have been identified as likely needs, as well as the purchase and distribution of basic furniture items, sheets and bedding.

Romania

There is a necessity to continue the assistance programme for which the original appeal was launched. Those affected by the floods remain in a state of need. The RRC needs to replenish its depleted warehouse stocks in order to be in a state of preparedness for any possible future disaster. With this in mind, funds from the Luxembourg Red Cross will be used to replenish stocks as well as to continue aiding those affected by the floods (distribution of food parcels).

For further details please contact: Penny Elghady, Phone: 41 22 730 4319; Fax: 41 22 733 03 95; e-mail: elghady@ifrc.org

Donors providing in-kind relief in response to large-scale emergencies are urged to contact Goran Boljanovic, ifrchu12@ifrc.org, and 36 1 319 3423 in the Federation's Logistics Unit of the Regional Delegation to avoid any unnecessary delays in the clearance and delivery of emergency relief assistance.

All International Federation Operations seek to adhere to the Code of Conduct and are committed to the Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Disaster Response (SPHERE Project) in delivering assistance to the most vulnerable.

This operation seeks to administer to the immediate requirements of the victims of this disaster. Subsequent operations to promote sustainable development or longer-term capacity building will require additional support, and these programmes are outlined on the Federation's website.

For further information concerning Federation operations in this or other countries, please access the Federation website at <http://www.ifrc.org>.

Peter Rees-Gildea
Head a.i.
Relationship Management Department

Lynette Lowndes
Head
Europe Department

Hungary, Romanian and Ukraine Floods						ANNEX 1
APPEAL No. 13/2001		PLEDGES RECEIVED			08.01.2002	
DONOR	CATEGORY	QUANTITY	UNIT	VALUE CHF	DATE	COMMENT
CASH						TOTAL COVERAGE
REQUESTED IN APPEAL CHF ----->				2'185'764	81.4%	
CASH CARRIED FORWARD						
AMERICAN PRIVATE		15'000	USD	25'698	09.04.01	HUNGARY
AMERICAN - PRIVATE/RC		15'000	USD	25'698	09.03.2001	HUNGARY, ROMANIA, UKRAINE
AUSTRIAN - GOVT		145'340	EUR	223'591	29.03.01	HUNGARY AND UKRAINE
BRITISH - GOVT/DFID		98'040	GBP	236'276	15.03.01	UKRAINE
BRITISH - PRIVATE/RC		387	GBP	933	02.04.01	HUNGARY, ROMANIA, UKRAINE
CANADIAN - GOVT		79'200	CAD	86'977	17.04.2001	HUNGARY, ROMANIA, UKRAINE
DANISH - RC		65'000	DKK	13'390	27.03.01	UKRAINE
ECHO (09002)		200'000	EUR	306'380	30.05.2001	ASSISTANCE TO FLOODS VICTIMS IN ZAKARPATIA
FINNISH - RC		12'806	EUR	19'531	13.07.2001	DELIVERY EXPENSES, PSB
LIECHTENSTEIN - RC				10'000	22.03.01	HUNGARY
LUXEMBURG - GOVT				100'000	24.08.2001	ROMANIA
MONACO - RC		40'000	FRF	9'264	09.03.01	HUNGARY, ROMANIA, UKRAINE
NORWAY - RC		323'625	NOK	60'548	22.03.01	UKRAINE
PRIVATE ON LINE		100	USD	163	23.10.2001	UKRAINE
SPANISH - RC		2'500'000	ESP	23'115	19.03.01	DIRECT TO UKRAINIAN NS
SPANISH - RC		2'500'000	ESP	23'115	21.03.01	DIRECT TO ROMANIAN NS
SPANISH - RC		2'500'000	ESP	23'115	21.03.01	DIRECT TO HUNGARIAN NS
SWEDISH - RC		4'000	SEK	695	09.03.01	PSC USED CLOTHES
SWISS - RC				12'970	29.03.2001	PROGRAMME MGT & CONTROL
SUB/TOTAL RECEIVED IN CASH				1'201'459	CHF	55.0%
KIND AND SERVICES (INCLUDING PERSONNEL)						
DONOR	CATEGORY	QUANTITY	UNIT	VALUE CHF	DATE	COMMENT
DANISH - GOVT		300'000	DKK	103'088	27.03.01	UKRAINE, 27'000 KG USED CLOTHES & TPT
FINNISH - RC		128'247	EUR	195'588	13.07.2001	36'140.8 KG S. HAND CLOTHES, TPT
SWEDISH - RC		118'800	SEK	20'636	09.03.01	16'000 KG USED CLOTHES & TPT
SWISS - RC				259'412	29.03.01	UKRAINE, 9'500 BLANKETS, 2'000 SLEEPING-BAGS, 40 TONNES CLOTHES, HYGIENE-ARTICLES, FOOD ITEMS
SUB/TOTAL RECEIVED IN KIND/SERVICES				578'724	CHF	26.5%
ADDITIONAL TO APPEAL BUDGET						
DONOR	CATEGORY	QUANTITY	UNIT	VALUE CHF	DATE	COMMENT
SUB/TOTAL RECEIVED				0	CHF	