

DREF operation update



Ghana: Floods

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Update n° 1
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The International Federation's 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 response to emergencies. 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: 9 July to 30 July, 2009.

Summary: CHF 101,314 was allocated from the Federation's Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF) on 11 July 2009 to support the Ghana Red Cross Society (GRCS) in delivering assistance to some 1,000 families.

Heavy rainfall along the coastal belt of Ghana on 19 June, 2009 and subsequent heavy downpours resulted in floods which caused massive destruction of public and private property in most communities.

Nationwide statistics from the National Disaster Management Organization (NADMO) indicate that 19,755 people have been affected. In Accra, Ghana Red Cross Society with support from the Federation is assisting a total of 1,000 vulnerable families affected by the floods in seven communities. The assistance consist of non-food items such as tarpaulins, blankets, kitchen sets, sleeping mats, bars of soap and water jerry cans. The GRCS mobilized and deployed 60 Red Cross volunteers for its intervention which include first-aid treatment, psychological and health education.



Distribution of non-food items/Ghana Red Cross Society

This operation is expected to be implemented in one month, and completed by 17 August, 2009. In line with Federation reporting standards, the Final Report (narrative and financial) is due 90 days after the end of the operation (by 30 September 2009).

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The situation

Continuous heavy rainfall between 6 and 8 July 2009 caused flooding in many parts of the country destroying public and private property worth thousands of US dollars. In Accra, many houses were flooded with rain water while personal belongings were washed away. The floods affected 8,000 families in the following 13 communities in Accra: Odorkor, Darkuman, Kaneshie, Mataheko, Mpramprom, Atico,

Bubuashie, Abossey Okai, Dansoman-Agege, Sakaman, Sukura, Awoshie and Santa Maria with Mataheko, Awoshie, Sakaman, First Light, Kaneshie, and Abosey Okai the most affected.

Ghana Red Cross Society immediately carried out an assessment of the situation and has procured and distributed immediate relief items such as tarpaulins, blankets, kitchen sets, sleeping mats, mosquito nets, bars of soap and water jerry cans in some of the affected communities.

The distribution of NFI which started on the 19 July, 2009 ended on 23 July 2009. However, there is still the need to cover more communities as the rain continues.

Coordination and partnerships

The Ghana Red Cross Society collaborated with NADMO through the Metropolitan, Municipal and District Assemblies to conduct rapid assessment. The Government distributed NFI which included blankets, foam mattresses, used clothing and food items such as rice. In communities not covered by Red Cross in Accra, the Inter Agency working group is planning to have another joint assessment mission in Accra to cover at least 80% of the community needs; although the government has not yet declared this flood crisis as an emergency.

Based on the information the GRCS shared with the Swiss Red Cross (data, registration sheet and ration card), the Swiss Red Cross decided to assist 1,000 affected families in the Central Region of the country with food items such as rice, cooking oil and some non-food items like sleeping mats, blankets and mosquito nets.

Red Cross and Red Crescent action

The Red Cross carried out a rapid assessment which shows that the main needs of the beneficiaries were mosquito nets and mats and these were exchanged with shelter kit and water purification tablets.

The distribution of the NFI was delayed by one day because IFRC items stocked in the UNHRD warehouse needed to be exempted from tax by the Ministries of Interior and Finance before the items could be released. It took some time before the tax exemption note was obtained.

Progress towards objectives

Relief distributions (food and basic non-food items)

Objective: To contribute to improving the lives of 1,000 most vulnerable families affected by the flood with the distribution of relief items.

Activities planned:

- Conduct rapid assessment;
- Distribute relief items to cover the immediate needs of the most vulnerable: 500 shelter kits for families whose houses were severely damaged or destroyed, 500 tarpaulins to those whose houses were damaged but still living inside; 2,000 blankets; 1,000 kitchen sets; 4,000 water purification tablets; 4,000 pieces of soap and 2,000 jerry cans;
- Coordinate with other partners and Government authorities;
- Advise on RC&RC future response and recovery strategy.

Progress and impact: The Ghana Red Cross Society with the support of an RDRT member has conducted emergency needs assessment in seven affected communities in Accra. The assessment was conducted through visual inspection and interviews in the affected communities. During the assessment mission, the team was able to assess the poor living conditions of the populations in the affected communities and the impact of the floods on the communities.

With assessment completed, the Red Cross carried out the identification and registration of the families and persons most affected by the disaster using the following criteria; families with children, pregnant women, elderly and the physically disabled. The GRCS has distributed relief items to 983 most affected families. Items distributed include tarpaulins, kitchen set, blankets, soap, mats water jerry can and mosquito nets. Beneficiaries of the tarpaulins were pregnant women, the elderly and families with children under five years old (see table below for the distribution statistics).

The Red Cross volunteers continue to provide first-aid treatment, psychological counseling and health education to the community people some of whom have moved to safer places for shelter.

The Ghana Red Cross Society continues to attend the coordination meetings where stakeholders receive update of the situation from NADMO. During one such meeting, it was discovered that some other affected communities still need assistance; hence a request was made to the Red Cross for any possibility to provide relief items to the affected persons in these communities.

The statistics showing Red Cross NFI distributed as at 22 July 2009

Localities	Numbers of households	Tarpaulins	Kitchen set	Blankets	*Soap	Mats	Jerry cans	Mosquito nets
Sakaman	120	78	120	207	643	207	120	207
Mataheko	80	21	80	178	400	178	80	178
1 st light 1	156	85	156	191	780	191	156	191
Kaneshie	240	101	240	550	1,600	550	240	550
Kaneshie 2	87	24	87	185	435	185	87	185
Abosey okai	50	18	50	88	250	88	50	88
Awoshie	250	136	250	560	1,790	560	250	560
Total	983	463	983	1,959	5,898	1,959	983	1,959

*Each bar of soap weight 1,100g and was cut into four pieces of 275g/piece.

Challenges: The Red Cross limited assistance could not reach all the affected persons in the communities. There is the need for other stakeholders to intervene in relief assistance. Many of the affected households are looking up to the Red Cross as the only humanitarian organization that can come to their assistance. There is the need to provide food items to some of the affected persons who kept on asking for them from the Red Cross volunteers during the distribution phase. Most of them have lost their means of livelihood to the floods.

The delay in the commencement of the distribution of the Red Cross relief items was due to the fact that the items needed to be exempted from tax by the government before they could be released from the UNHRD warehouse. The Ghana Red Cross Society will need to enter into agreement with the government for the tax exemption on relief items in the future.

Some of the lids of the water jerry cans were damaged while some bales of the blankets were short of 10 pieces. This contributed to shortage during the distribution phase.

How we work

All International Federation 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 is committed to the [Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Disaster Response](#) (Sphere) in delivering assistance to the most vulnerable.

The International Federation's activities are aligned with its Global Agenda, which sets out four broad goals to meet the Federation's mission to "improve the lives of vulnerable people by mobilizing the power of humanity".

Global Agenda Goals:

- Reduce the numbers of deaths, injuries and impact from disasters.
- Reduce the number of deaths, illnesses and impact from diseases and public health emergencies.
- Increase local community, civil society and Red Cross Red Crescent capacity to address the most urgent situations of vulnerability.
- Reduce intolerance, discrimination and social exclusion and promote respect for diversity and human dignity.

Contact information

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