

# Operations update



International Federation  
of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

## Central African Republic: Floods

Emergency appeal n° MDRCF006  
GLIDE n° FL-2009-000129-CAF  
Operations update n° 2  
11 January, 2010

**Period covered by this Ops Update:** 18 August to 20 October, 2009;

**Appeal target (current):** CHF 805,260 (USD 777,728 or EUR 532,262);

**Appeal coverage:** 19%; [<click here to go directly to the updated donor response report, or here to link to contact details >](#)

### Appeal history:

- This Emergency Appeal was initially launched on a preliminary basis on 6 August 2009 for CHF 805,260 (USD 777,728 or EUR 532,262) for 6 months to assist over 6,000 beneficiaries.
- **Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF):** CHF 35,302 was initially allocated from the Federation's DREF to support the Central African Red Cross Society (CARCS) to respond.



CAR Red Cross volunteers constructed shelters for the beneficiaries with support from UNHCR/IFRC

**Summary:** Since 17 July 2009, the Government of the Central African Republic (CAR), the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement present in Bangui (CARCS, ICRC and the International Federation), Partner National Societies (PNS) like the French Red Cross, local companies, embassies, United Nations (UN) agencies and other Non-governmental Organizations (NGOs) have been making joint efforts to assist the flood-affected persons in Bangui by providing financial, material and technical resources to reduce the impact of floods. The Government has made available three secured sites that are not liable to flooding. The first site is in the second subdivision of Bangui and can host 110 families; the second is on the premises of the agricultural council and can host at least 300 families, and the third is in the 6<sup>th</sup> subdivision of Bangui, the Kolongo Villa that can host at least 1,200 families.

The first two sites have been provided for the displaced people to be accommodated, and the third one is pending availability of funding. Presently, 381 families i.e. over 2,667 people are accommodated in the two first mentioned sites. Due to the available funding not being sufficient for the operation (19% of the emergency appeal budget has been covered so far); the International Federation identified some crucial activities that have all been carried out. These activities included the servicing of the sites, the construction of 284 shelters, the distribution of food and Non-Food Items (NFI) to some 7,000 flood-affected people, over 160 m<sup>3</sup> of safe water daily distributed. The promotion of hygiene and sanitation activities conducted. Although many of the planned activities are yet to be carried out, the action in the field has stopped due to lack of funding.

## The situation

From 16 June to 17 July, 2009, heavy rains poured on Bangui, the capital city of the Central African Republic (CAR), causing serious flooding which led to the destruction or damage of over 2,500 houses. Two children died, and almost 11,000 people were made homeless and lost their basic belongings, including household items,

clothes, school books for school children, and other essential properties. In response to the appeal launched by the Government to assist the flood-affected persons, the National Society supported by the International Federation first launched a DREF operation on 10 July 2009 to provide emergency assistance to vulnerable people. Considering the ever increasing scope of the disaster, this DREF operation was converted into an emergency appeal that was launched on 6 August 2009 to assist some 6,000 most vulnerable people for six months.

Immediately after the operation starts, more heavy rains occurred, thereby increasing the number of vulnerable people. So far, the Red Cross and its volunteers have been able to service two of the three sites that have been made available for the operation. Shelters have also been constructed in these first two sites for accommodating the vulnerable people. All the activities planned have been going on smoothly, but the operation has now been temporarily stopped because of insufficient funding. The Regional Disaster Response Team (RDRT) that was deployed in Bangui has been called back, and the CAR Red Cross society has since been monitoring the situation alone.

## Coordination and partnerships

The World Bank is currently considering the possibility of funding the urbanization of the areas that have been flooded, under the supervision of the Central African Republic Government. If the urbanization takes place, it will facilitate Red Cross and other stakeholders actions within the framework of the operation to assist the flood-affected people in the two sites that have already been prepared.

The World Health Organization (WHO) signed an agreement with the CARCS and the Ministry of Health (MoH) for the implementation of sanitation activities in Bangui second subdivision. These activities include the cleaning of gutters, the disinfection of water points, and the rehabilitation of a few water wells for one month.

In line with the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) that was signed with the CAR Red Cross, the World Food Programme (WFP) made available food items to be distributed until October 2009.

Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF) treated patients installed in temporary sites. They also contributed to the adjustment of sensitization messages aimed at promoting the adoption of good hygiene behaviours.

The French Red Cross coordinated the installation of water and sanitation facilities in the two sites that have been prepared.

In collaboration with the CAR Red Cross Society that updated the list of beneficiaries. Caritas, a Non-governmental Organization (NGO), distributed construction materials to flood-affected people. The materials included nails, rafters, laths, sheet metals and cement to support the construction of shelters for the extremely vulnerable affected people in the 4<sup>th</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> subdivisions in Bangui.

### National Society Capacity Building:

In addition to continued training in the field, CAR Red Cross volunteers have been briefed twice on the techniques for the smooth implementation of activities within the framework of this operation. In fact, the technical services of the MoH trained 10 Red Cross volunteers on water point chlorination techniques. The International Federation briefed CAR Red Cross volunteers on food items distribution techniques. The International Federation's Head of operation provided continued training on water and sanitation to ensure that minimum standards are followed.

## Red Cross and Red Crescent action

### Overview

Although several PNS promised to contribute to the implementation of this operation, the appeal budget coverage rate remains very low so far (19%). This situation has led to the redefinition of priorities that were initially identified in the plan of action.

In the first hours of the operation, ICRC provided logistics means (trucks and vehicles) for the purchase and transportation of food items to the temporary sites where flood-affected people were accommodated. Under the

supervision of the French Red Cross and the International Federation 80 CARCS volunteers were mobilized for the installation of water and sanitation systems in the first two sites.

## Progress towards objectives:

### Relief distributions (food and basic non-food items)

**Objective: To distribute non-food items to over 6,000 most vulnerable people accommodated in the identified temporary camp sites to cover their initial basic needs.**

Expected results	Activities planned
The targeted six flood-affected people have received basic household items that are essential for allowing re-establishing family life.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop beneficiary targeting strategy and registration system to deliver intended assistance;</li> <li>• Distribute relief supplies and control supply movements from point of dispatch to end user;</li> <li>• Procure and distribute non-food items, including mosquito nets, blankets, mats, kitchen sets, and clothes to 1,200 targeted families;</li> <li>• Monitor and evaluate the relief activities and provide reporting on relief distributions.</li> </ul>

### Progress:

The extension of the MoU between WFP and the CAR Red Cross Society to October enabled the National Society to distribute food items to some 7,000 flood-affected people in Bangui. A total of 15 Red Cross volunteers were trained on distribution techniques to facilitate the distribution process. The volunteers developed as well updated and computerized lists of affected people to facilitate the distribution. The foodstuffs distributed included, cooking oil, beans, salt, sugar, and 12.56 tones of rice.

### Challenges:

The shortage of some foodstuffs caused the extension of the distribution period in September 2009, which lasted for two weeks instead of the planned five days. For space and security reasons, the distribution took place in the premises of the National Society, under the supervision of WFP. It stopped because of limited funding.

### Emergency shelter

**Objective: To provide temporary shelter to 6,000 of the affected people in a site (comprising two camps) made available by CAR Government for six months.**

Expected results	Activities planned
Appropriate site is identified and developed with temporary shelters built to accommodate the 6,000 affected people (1,200 families) with dignity, in collaboration with Government, local authorities and the beneficiaries.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assess the extent of the shelter needs and ideal shelter solutions;</li> <li>• The site identified is protected from the risks of flooding through embankment work and appropriate canalization to ensure automatic evacuation of rain and used waters;</li> <li>• Ensure shelter and settlement programming i.e. access to required water and sanitation services and communal facilities, including health services;</li> <li>• Construction of 1,200 appropriate temporary shelters with local materials;</li> <li>• Promote increased awareness and understanding of safe and adequate shelter response with the National Society and affected communities.</li> </ul>

### Progress:

It has been jointly agreed with the beneficiaries to build wooden community houses with plastic tarpaulins. The United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR) and United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) provided the tarpaulins through the Government, and the Red Cross constructed 284 shelters and installed the beneficiaries in the two available sites. The Red Cross erected fences with local wooden materials and installed security posts at the entrance of the sites. In addition, Red Cross volunteers have been trained on how to ensure security within the sites.

**Challenges:**

Because of limited funding, the Red Cross has not been able to improve the third site which is far from the centre of the town, and requires big improvement, sanitation and drainage work prior to being used for the accommodation of beneficiaries.

**Emergency health and care**

<b>Objective: The health risks of the emergency on the affected population is reduced through the provision of preventive, community-level and curative services to 1,200 families (6,000 beneficiaries) in the two camps and 4 subdivisions of Bangui, for six months.</b>	
<b>Expected results</b>	<b>Activities planned</b>
<p>The risks of communicable diseases and epidemics outbreak are reduced within the identified site for the vulnerable populations and in its surrounding localities.</p> <p>Itinerant patients are managed and referral services are provided to the serious cases.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assess the basic mortality and morbidity in the population during emergency;</li> <li>• Assess the health risks of the affected population in terms of health services, prevention, health needs and risk of communicable diseases;</li> <li>• Manage a first-aid post installed at the camp sites by CARCS;</li> <li>• Advocate for the supply of essential drugs in two targeted health centres for the treatment of the patients from the site identified for the purpose of the operation;</li> <li>• Sensitize affected people to the measures to be taken in order to avoid the spread of communicable diseases and epidemics;</li> <li>• Provide first aid and referral services for affected communities through 60 volunteers in the coming three months;</li> <li>• Train 60 volunteers on communicable disease surveillance in coordination with the Ministry of Health and district health offices.</li> </ul>

**Progress:**

MSF Holland, Belgium and Spain have been providing health care services to the affected people in the sites prepared for them. Consultations have been conducted twice per week. The National Society has been running a first aid post in the sites under the supervision of Medical doctor. The post is supervised by two nurses and Red Cross first-aid workers. These people have been managing a complete first-aid kit and a stock of first-aid anodyne and antiseptic drugs. So far, the first-aid post has welcomed and provided first aid to 198 affected persons. Serious cases have been referred to various hospitals of Bangui or to MSF mobile medical vans.

The Red Cross volunteers conducted four monthly educative talk sessions to encourage the populations to own the management of sanitation facilities and to provide them with key tips to avoid poor hygiene-related diseases.

Thanks to the good collaboration with MSF, the CARCS has been able to establish the figures of the most frequent pathologies within the sites, as well as the attendance of the first-aid post by beneficiaries. Those figures stand as follows: 398 affected people visited the first-aid post. They were suffering from malaria (189 cases), diarrhoea (38 cases), skin diseases (51 cases), and parasitosis (143 cases). Advocacy is ongoing for the case management of patients in the sites by Government.

**Water, sanitation, and hygiene promotion**

<b>Objective: To reduce the risk of waterborne and water-related diseases through the provision of safe water, adequate sanitation and hygiene promotion to 1,200 families at the displaced camps and to the neighbouring populations for six months.</b>	
<b>Expected results</b>	<b>Activities planned</b>
<p>Safe and adequate water supply has been provided to flood victims.</p> <p>The risk of further contamination of water has been reduced as well as the clogging of water drains in the affected areas and surroundings;</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Facilitate the access to potable water, sanitation and hygiene promotion of water and sanitation related diseases by the affected population;</li> <li>• Disinfect and rehabilitate polluted water wells in the flooded areas;</li> <li>• Train beneficiaries on environmental and personal hygiene and the use of the provided sanitation materials;</li> <li>• Sensitize communities on waste, drainage management and sanitation;</li> <li>• Conduct mass hygiene and clean-up campaigns to sensitize the populations of affected neighbourhoods on the use of public dustbins and avoid throwing garbage in gutters and streams;</li> </ul>

The hygiene promotion has been improved.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work in close collaboration with the city council of Bangui, Government authorities and other partners to ensure the disposal of collected garbage in an appropriate rubbish dump on a regular basis.</li> </ul>
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**Progress:**

The French Red Cross deployed four technicians in the field to install a water and sanitation system. The system included a water treatment module for 5,000 people composed of two water storage and distribution systems, and a laboratory for analyzing water quality. Some units of these systems (10 m<sup>3</sup> bladder, distribution water wash manifold) have been installed in the sites of the operation after the prior acceptance of the improvement plans by the National Society. The government through SODECA (the water supply company) has been ensuring that water is distributed free of charge in the sites of the operation. Over 160 m<sup>3</sup> have been daily distributed, i.e. 16 litres per person per day. It has been planned that before the end of 2009, the French Red Cross, possibly in collaboration with the International Federation, would train the Red Cross volunteers on how to use the water and sanitation module for 5,000 people, which has been prepositioned in the premises of ICRC in Bangui. Thirty one latrines have been constructed in the site of the Council of the second sub division of Bangui for 1,169 persons, on the basis of 38 persons per latrine. In addition, 14 showers have been constructed, i.e. eight for women and six for men. In the site of the agricultural council, 25 latrines (15 for women and 10 for men) and 10 showers have been built (five for women and five for men). A flexible 10 m<sup>3</sup> storage bladder has been installed to serve as a spare system in the event of water shortage. Two distribution manifolds with six taps each have been installed for 98 persons per water point. A flexible 10 m<sup>3</sup> storage bladder and three distribution manifolds with 36 taps have been installed. As far as the garbage disposal, vector control and waste water management are concerned, Red Cross volunteers sensitized the beneficiaries to the good use of water and sanitation facilities. They have been disinfecting the latrines with cresol once per week following the needs expressed in each site. Drains have been installed to avoid water borne diseases. Dustbins and pits have been made available in each of the sites for the collection and disposal of garbage, and Red Cross volunteers have been sensitizing the populations on how to use them.

Cleanup campaigns have been organized on a monthly basis in the sub divisions that have been affected. Thirty five CAR Red Cross volunteers disinfected 65 water wells within the framework of this operation, and 40 within the framework of the Ministry of Health project in the 2<sup>nd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> subdivisions of Bangui. The activities were supervised by technicians from the MoH.

**Challenges:**

It has been difficult to build large pits for the disposal of garbage because of the bad quality of the soil, and the municipal garbage collection system has been very limited.

**Logistics**

<b>Objective: To ensure good logistics coordination to ease the implementation of the operation as described in the above sections.</b>	
<b>Expected results</b>	<b>Activities planned</b>
<p>Timely delivery of quality relief goods has been ensured at low cost;</p> <p>The CARCS logistics capacity has been increased with a functional warehouse;</p> <p>The coordinated mobilization of relief goods is achieved.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Logistic capacity building of the CARCS with management and logistics tools (motorbikes, computers, a printer and accessories);</li> <li>• In-depth training of the logistics and finance officers of the CARCS, especially on the management of the resources made available for the purpose of this operation;</li> <li>• Mobilization of relief items through the Regional Logistics Unit (RLU) and zonal warehouse network;</li> <li>• Rehabilitation of the National Society warehouse;</li> <li>• Provision of rental vehicles from regional VRP stocks.</li> </ul>

**Progress:**

The CAR Red Cross benefited from the logistics support of the International Federation in the form of a vehicle that was made available for the operation from Yaoundé office. An additional two vehicles from the West and Central Africa Zone Office were sent to Bangui to facilitate the management of the operation.

**Challenges:**

The International Federation withdrew from the operation because of limited funding, and all three vehicles have been sent to the Yaoundé Regional representation.

## Communications – Advocacy and Public Information

The International Federation published press releases to inform the public about the level of implementation in the field. Media briefings have also been organized in Bangui to ensure smooth media coverage of the operation. Advocacy work is ongoing to encourage increased involvement of partners in the operation.

### 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

#### For further information specifically related to this operation please contact:

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