

DREF operation final report



International Federation
of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

Czech Republic: Floods

DREF operation n° MDRCZ001
GLIDE n° FL-2009-000121-CZE
24 February 2010

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 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.

Summary: CHF 295,187 was allocated from the International Federation's Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF) on 3 July 2009 to support the Czech Red Cross in delivering assistance to some 5,000 beneficiaries.

Heavy rainfall led to local floods on 25 June 2009. 13 people died in the flooding in the Silesian, Olomouc and South Bohemia regions of Moravia in the Czech Republic. Over 1,528 houses were seriously damaged, with infrastructure and agriculture also affected.

The Czech Red Cross local branches assisted the people affected by the floods with the cleaning of wells. Out of the 929 application forms for the financial contribution to clean well, 815 application forms satisfying all the conditions were paid out. Therefore 815 wells were cleaned out of the initially estimated 1,000 wells, and consequently some 3,150 people benefited from clean drinking water.

The Czech Red Cross has been supported in its response technically by the Europe zone office as well as the Austrian Red Cross that had some experience in implementing cash projects in the past.

Lessons learnt with regard to this innovative approach of cash distribution had been gathered and are further elaborated [here](#).

The remaining balance of CHF 47,752 will be reimbursed to DREF.

The major donors to the DREF are the Irish, Italian, Netherlands and Norwegian governments and ECHO. Details of all donors can be found on <http://www.ifrc.org/what/disasters/responding/drs/tools/dref/donors.asp>

[<click here for the final financial report, or here to view contact details>](#)



Czech Red Cross volunteers in action after the floods.

The situation

Heavy rainfall resulted in severe flooding in three regions of the Czech Republic- Silesia, Olomouc and South Bohemia in late June 2009. The rainfall was sudden and extremely heavy, quickly leading to flash

floods. A total of 13 people lost their lives. Across the three regions officials put the number of people whose houses had been seriously damaged at around 14,450.

In the immediate aftermath of the flooding, most people were able to stay with their neighbours or relatives. Others were accommodated in schools and gymnasiums. The south of Bohemia suffered further flooding in early July, complicating the initial clean-up efforts and action plans for recovery because it flooded already cleaned wells and also those which were not flooded in the first place. The hold-up meant that the water analysis could not be done. The hygienists did analyses also of well of citizens who did not need them as a source of drinking water.

Some three months after the floods, the situation was stable, with rivers back to their normal levels.

Red Cross and Red Crescent action

The Red Cross branches in the affected areas and the headquarters monitored reports coming from the meteorological centre, updated every 30 minutes. As the rains descended quickly, there was no advance warning to prepare. Local branches started working immediately addressing the needs of people for drinking water, and occasionally with accommodation, but often not required because people prefer living with friends or relatives. The volunteers and staff also assisted in distributing food, disinfectants and cleaning materials. More than tens of thousand of litres of drinking water was distributed, as well as 200 blankets, 20 tons of disinfectants and about 250 kg of clothing,

The main crisis emergency unit of the Czech Red Cross consisting of 55 members immediately after the first flooding began providing first aid, advice and monitoring the relief operations. Approximately 500 volunteers and staff were involved.

One of the priorities identified early on, in consultation with the authorities and people affected was to clean the wells used by the households as the only source of drinking water. The wells had been flooded and contaminated, limiting the access and availability to potable water. The Czech Red Cross had had limited experience with cash distributions, and called upon support from the International Federation to assist them draw up a plan of action and the financial means to clean 1,000 wells in the most affected areas, thereby returning the drinking water supply to an estimated 5,000 people.

Achievements against objectives

Water, sanitation, and hygiene promotion	
Objective: Cleaning of 1,000 wells for 5,000 people.	
Expected results	Activities planned
The families in the affected regions have access to clean water as a result of well cleaning.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assess the existing coverage with a view of ensuring availability of an adequate water supply. Provide potable water and appropriate sanitation. Set up the cash distribution procedure. Deliver the fee to people to use for well cleaning by a specialized company. Monitor the distributions and use of the money. This final accounting and evaluation will take about three months.

Red Cross branches distributing receipts upon which the beneficiary receives a cash contribution is a new approach for the International Federation, so there was limited experience to tap into, although both the Czech and Austrian Red Cross Societies have implemented cash projects in the past. To ensure not only the smooth running of the operation but also to tackle possible challenges from the beginning, the Austrian Red Cross with its team of two experts was assisting and sharing its experience with the operation managers of the Czech Red Cross at headquarters and branch level. Such cooperation and sharing of experience and technical knowledge was much appreciated by the Czech Red Cross, especially as it came at a timely point in the design of the operation.

Impact: The local Czech Red Cross branches, in cooperation with the municipal offices and hygiene stations, collected the application forms for financial contribution for cleaning of the wells which were the only sources of drinking water for people affected by the floods. After judging legitimacy of the application forms and satisfying the conditions- cleaning of the well was documented by the analysis of water – this analysis confirmed that the water was drinkable again- the financial contribution was provided. Some of the vouchers

were not paid out for different reasons such as: people did not have necessary documents; or they changed their minds.

Location	Application forms received	Cash paid out to beneficiary
Jesenik	126	117
Novy Jicin	351	327
Prerov	117	117
Prachatice	161	85
Pisek	12	7
Strakonice	71	71
Ceske Krumlov	0	0
Tabor	0	0
Decin	31	31
Klatovy	0	0
Totals	929	815

Source: Czech Red Cross

Altogether the Czech Red Cross local branches registered 929 application forms for the financial contribution to clean well, according to terms of this project. 815 application forms satisfying all the conditions were paid out. Therefore 815 wells were cleaned out of the initially estimated 1,000 wells, and consequently some 3,150 people benefited from clean drinking water.

Through this operation, close cooperation has developed between the Czech Red Cross and the International Federation's Europe zone office. The disaster management coordinator has been in regular contact with the operation coordinator, providing much valued technical assistance and advice, while taking a keen interest in this highly innovative approach to meeting the needs of affected people to floods. Learning lessons and developing a bank of knowledge in this way of working is important and can be transferred to other National Societies in the zone who may meet similar situations in future. The zone's planning, monitoring, evaluation and reporting manager visited the Czech Red Cross in late September to help capture some of these lessons and also to introduce the society to the beneficiary satisfaction tool, *Are people reached listened to?*. The beneficiary satisfaction survey was conducted in October with a selection of people who received the financial assistance. The survey concluded that the immediate needs after the floods were for clean drinking water, food and at the very beginning also for psychosocial help. The majority of the people stated that the immediate help organized by the community, the Czech Red Cross and other stakeholders was well-organized and sufficient.

During a monitoring trip conducted in late September to Lcovice it was noted that the cooperation between the mayor of the village, the municipalities and the Red Cross branch directors was of great importance to the success of the project.

Challenges and lessons learnt:

- Meeting the criteria for distributions was a challenge, and took more time than expected to assemble a "full application" that could be paid out.
- Definition of "only source of water" and "private source of water" was tested as several villages have both a village water line, as well as private water sources in people's gardens. Public owned water lines were not available for Red Cross support, as other funds were available for cleaning. However, as the criteria stipulated that the private well must be the *only* source of water, there was some controversy. The lesson learnt here is twofold. Firstly, the criteria was felt to be just and fair and initial reviews suggest would be used as the basis of future operations. However, establishing effective communication channels, through the municipalities as well as through the Red Cross systems is vital to head off confusion that can translate into anger if not assuaged quickly by referring to the criteria and how they were respected. Printed copies of the criteria were distributed.
- The hygiene stations are often very busy, and the Red Cross is not the only client. Many of the hold-ups in completing the payouts to people lie with the hygiene stations not issuing the necessary paper verifying the contamination.
- However, a linked lesson learnt is that potential beneficiaries cannot always be relied upon to act in ways that serve their best interest. Anecdotal cases of people affected going shopping when the

hygiene stations came to take samples, or simply not completing the application forms in time have emerged and taken resources from the municipalities or Red Cross to help overcome.

- The solidarity within the communities that was praised also had a negative side. People from unaffected areas came to flooded villages directly offering support, both material and labour, rather than through organisations. This led to cases of the more vocal amongst the affected receiving lots of help and goods, and others being left to go without. Such “unprofessional” assistance goes on and is maybe inevitable, but it heightens the emphasis Red Cross branches place on getting reliable, credible data from authorities and other sources to ensure wide, fair distribution of its services.
- Using transfers to bank accounts was considered as it would have been easier for the Red Cross than cash distributions. Additionally, though not considered, it would have been more secure as large amounts of cash would not have had to be kept and transported. The decision to go with cash stems from the local culture and familiarity of making transactions with cash rather than through banks. It was felt that departing from this accepted way of dealing would be an innovation too far and could damage the success of the operation and people’s willingness to be part. However, in other localities, such a bank-centred approach could work and would bring advantages of speed and automatic accountability trails, rather than the current paperwork-heavy system of signed receipts.
- Experience from the 2002 floods was used in this response, showing that collective memory is being developed. The leadership of the Czech Red Cross, aware of how reflecting back had informed some of their current practices that are well regarded within the country and with the authorities, are taking steps to add this operation to that bank of knowledge and are willing to share with sister National Societies. Floods are not new to the Czech Republic, or indeed to Central Europe, so taking the time to learn from the lessons emerging from this innovative operation is much needed.

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 the [Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Disaster Response \(Sphere\)](#) in delivering assistance to the most vulnerable.

The International Federation’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 International Federation’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

For further information specifically related to this operation please contact:

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[<final financial report below; click here to return to the title page>](#)

International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

MDRCZ001 - Czech Republic Floods 2009

Final Financial Report

Selected Parameters	
Reporting Timeframe	2009/7-2010/1
Budget Timeframe	2009/7-2009/11
Appeal	MDRCZ001
Budget	APPEAL

All figures are in Swiss Francs (CHF)

I. Consolidated Response to Appeal

	Disaster Management	Health and Social Services	National Society Development	Principles and Values	Coordination	TOTAL
A. Budget	295,187					295,187
B. Opening Balance	0					0
Income						
<u>Other Income</u>						
Voluntary Income	295,187					295,187
C5. Other Income	295,187					295,187
C. Total Income = SUM(C1..C5)	295,187					295,187
D. Total Funding = B + C	295,187					295,187
Appeal Coverage	100%					100%

II. Balance of Funds

	Disaster Management	Health and Social Services	National Society Development	Principles and Values	Coordination	TOTAL
B. Opening Balance	0					0
C. Income	295,187					295,187
E. Expenditure	-247,435					-247,435
F. Closing Balance = (B + C + E)	47,752					47,752

III. Budget Analysis / Breakdown of Expenditure

Account Groups	Budget	Expenditure					TOTAL	Variance A - B
		Disaster Management	Health and Social Services	National Society Development	Principles and Values	Coordination		
A		B					A - B	
BUDGET (C)		295,187					295,187	
Supplies								
Water & Sanitation	266,000							266,000
Other Supplies & Services		216,957					216,957	-216,957
Total Supplies	266,000	216,957					216,957	49,043
Workshops & Training								
Workshops & Training		3,600					3,600	-3,600
Total Workshops & Training		3,600					3,600	-3,600
General Expenditure								
Travel		394					394	-394
Office Costs	10,000	10,396					10,396	-396
Financial Charges		12					12	-12
Total General Expenditure	10,000	10,803					10,803	-803
Programme Support								
Program Support	19,187	16,075					16,075	3,112
Total Programme Support	19,187	16,075					16,075	3,112
TOTAL EXPENDITURE (D)	295,187	247,435					247,435	47,752
VARIANCE (C - D)		47,752					47,752	