This Emergency Appeal seeks CHF 1,062,295 (USD 991,697 or EUR 744,243) in cash, kind, or services to support the Mongolian Red Cross Society (MRCS) to assist 13,600 beneficiaries for six months and will be completed by the end of September 2010; a final report will be made available by 31 December 2010, three months after the end of the operation.

CHF 100,000 (USD 93,924 or EUR 70,006) was allocated from the Federation’s Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF) to support this operation. Unearmarked funds to replenish DREF are encouraged.

In addition to food and non-food items, the Mongolian Red Cross Society is providing psychosocial support to the herder families that have lost all of their livestock. Photo: MRCS

The long severe winter in Mongolia has impacted greatly on the resilience of herding communities across 19 of the country’s 21 provinces. In response to this situation, and at the request of the MRCS, the IFRC is launching this emergency appeal.
Analysis over the past two months indicates a deterioration in the coping capacities of the population, where the government’s latest reports indicate that approximately 4.5 million head of livestock have been lost (approximately 10 per cent of the total livestock in Mongolia). The impact is greatest for more than 3,000 herder families (12,000 people) who have lost their entire livestock reserve.

In response to the increasing needs of the most affected population, this Emergency Appeal supports MRCS in providing 3,400 herder families (up to 13,600 people) with the timely delivery of relief assistance through the distribution of food and non-food items as well as the provision of psychosocial support to the most vulnerable families affected by the severe winter. Additional support for herder families in rebuilding their livelihoods will be provided through recovery interventions, the details of which will be defined through further assessments defining targeted support.

The situation
More than ninety percent of Mongolia is experiencing severe winter conditions compounded by dzud, a natural occurring phenomenon resulting from continuous heavy snowfall combined with extreme cold and preceded by dry summers, resulting in the insufficient production of grazing pastures. The current conditions faced by the nomadic herding community are further influenced by the underlying causes of poverty and the accumulation of damaging natural hazards, undermining the welfare and food security of the herding community through large-scale death and debilitation of livestock.

The situation is further exacerbated by indirect causes of over-concentration of stock and overgrazing of pastures in some areas, leading to environmental degradation, the disappearance of abundant grass, and inadequate winter hay preparation. Extremes of climate and difficulties caused by social and economic transition have also contributed to the current crisis.

The government has declared a national disaster and reports 133 soums (districts) across 19 of the country’s 21 provinces are suffering from the harsh conditions with up to 507,000 people (126,750 families) affected by this event. In response to the initial call for assistance the Mongolia Red Cross Society requested assistance from the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies to support the immediate needs of 1,200 herder families in January 2010. Furthermore the government has appealed to the local and international community for food, medical and heating supplies as well as funds to procure fodder for livestock.

The 2009-10 winter in Mongolia is the most severe since the end of 2003 when the country experienced three cycles of dry summers and extreme cold (2000, 2001, 2002) that caused extreme poverty among the nomadic herders of the population. While many vulnerable communities have made progress in restoring their coping mechanisms, there still remain large portions of the population whose resilience to withstand such severe weather conditions is depleted.

In recent weeks the country has seen continuous snow falls and below average temperatures, placing immense stress on nomadic herding families and forcing them to reprioritize their limited resources toward solutions focused on preventing the death of vital livestock from the cold, exhaustion or starvation. There have been reports of herders taking their own lives, emphasising the trauma faced by this vulnerable population. Most at risk are herder families who own 100 to 300 livestock. These herders are constrained with regard to the recovery of their herds through the next reproduction cycle starting at the end
of February, with traditional income generation activities such as the sale of dairy products, cashmere and meat affected.

As a result there are substantial numbers of herder families with insufficient or no livestock to sustain livelihoods as a result of a dependence upon intensive herding practices; there is evidence of increasing destitution due to lack of assets and employment of ex-herders in bagh (sub-county), soum (county) and aimag (province) centres as well as the continuation of households migrating to Ulaanbaatar, where unemployment and high registration fees (barring access to welfare services) is causing severe destitution.

The impact on the country’s vital livestock reserves has increased dramatically in the past month, with more than 3,300 herder families (approximately 13,000 people) having lost their entire livestock. As of 22 March 2010, the government reports that overall figures of deceased animals increased from 1 million to 4.5 million animals in less than a month, approximately 10 per cent of the country’s 43.6 million livestock in total. It should be noted that animal husbandry accounts for 88 per cent of the agricultural sector of the country, which in turn, accounts for 19 per cent of Mongolia’s GDP. In addition, the World Bank reports indicate that animal husbandry accounts for around 35 per cent of employment in Mongolia.

Reports from consultations with authorities and affected herders families undertaken by the Food and Agricultural Organisation (FAO) indicate the country’s remaining livestock are under a constant threat of further decline. The risk of additional late season snows will continue to hamper relief efforts, and could cause further stress on the sustainability and recovery of livestock numbers through the lambing and kidding period from late February to early March to April.

In addition to the loss of livestock, the most vulnerable herder families with limited available resources are also facing difficulty in securing adequate food to feed their families and fuel to heat their gers. This is compounded by the increasing costs, reported to be three times the normal price, for the limited supplies of animal feed, transport and machinery.

According to UNICEF (food cluster lead in Mongolia), to date, only a few thousand families of the estimated 507,000 affected by the dzud have received food assistance. In addition 5,000 families (approximately 20,000 people) are expected to migrate to Ulaanbaatar from the affected areas to access food and health services as well as to rebuild their livelihoods in the coming months. The arrival of the estimated 20,000 people will place further burden on the deteriorating health and hygiene conditions in a number of districts (khoros) in Ulaanbaatar.

**Coordination and partnerships**

Overall coordination in response to disasters is guided by the Mongolian government. The minister in charge of emergency management directs disaster management activities at the state level and is supported by the

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1 Traditional tent-like dwelling structure
governors of territorial units who organize and manage the disaster management activities in their respective aimag (province), capital city, soum (county) and khoros (district). The National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA) is responsible for the implementation of the state disaster management policy, legislation on disaster management and the organization of nationwide disaster management activities.

The Mongolian Red Cross Society (MRCS) is a member of the Emergency Commission and is coordinating closely with the government authorities at all levels (national, provincial, county).

The IFRC is also supporting MRCS to coordinate with donors and will continue to provide support to lead the coordination with Red Cross Red Crescent partners and external international organizations. MRCS is currently supported by the operations coordinator from the IFRC’s Asia Pacific disaster management unit, and the new IFRC country representative will arrive in Ulaanbaator on 1 April.

Red Cross and Red Crescent action

Since the cycle of three successive response operations to support the coping capacity of the nation’s herding community, the MRCS has continually supported the development of resilience and increased disaster preparedness of vulnerable communities. This has involved risk reduction programmes to raise awareness of the changing climate and increased impact of dry summers and severe winters, distribution of radios for accessing information and knowledge, and the production of fodder to help sustain animals during winter periods. While these programmes have been successful, the recent weather conditions have been more severe than predicted or planned for.

In understanding the impact of the current crisis, the MRCS has been actively engaging with the herding population through its branches and volunteers. Regular field visits and consultations with herding communities, as well as monitoring visits which have been carried out over the past four months.

MRCS continues to monitor the impact on the most affected herder families through an experienced team and branch staff who have been supervising the distribution process and conducting spot-checks during monitoring visits to households following the distributions.

In support of the planned activities under this appeal, the MRCS has updated its health and hygiene education material and produced a series of information communication and education materials for distribution to affected herder families including:

- Health advice for herders
- Traditional herding methodologies
- Psychosocial recommendations for herders
- Red Cross comics for children (first aid and disaster preparedness for children)

These materials have been compiled into a box called “gift from the heart” and are included in the relief packages distributed to affected herder families. Furthermore, MRCS is disseminating messages to prevent an outbreak of disease from deceased animals in coordination with the United Nations Development Programme’s cash-for-work programme for the burial of carcasses for millions of animals scattered around the country.

Based on its previous experience regarding the social support needs of vulnerable communities who live with the constant struggle to build resilience, the MRCS has also invested in the development of volunteer capacity to provide psychosocial support to herder families through household visits. To meet the increased needs additional trainings have been planned by MRCS in order to expand the number
of trained volunteers to provide psychosocial support to the herder families.

The MRCS’s community-based social care project, which operates in four of the affected provinces of Bayan-Ulgii, Bayankhongor, Khentii and Khovd is providing beneficiaries of the programme that are affected by dzud with clothes, hygiene kits, and food assistance. This additional support built into the existing programme will help reduce the risk of starvation and frostbite for the urban poor in the centres of these four provinces, as a part of MRCS’s regular social care programme.

The needs

MRCS, supported by the IFRC, have identified a need to increase support for immediate relief assistance and to define recovery interventions for herder families who continue to be affected by the ongoing dzud conditions. Needs identified are based on assessment data from MRCS branches monitoring relief distributions, government statistics and information from cluster reports.

The trauma of losing large numbers of livestock and the subsequent loss of livelihoods has resulted in extreme psychological stress for herder families, especially children. Compounding the stress faced in losing the families livestock wealth, many families have taken loans to support their remaining animals to stay alive and are now heavily in debt. MRCS have observed the following:

- many herder families are experiencing depression as a result of livestock loss which is their main source of wealth and potential future income;
- a low level of basic health knowledge among herder families reduces their resilience to the impact of dzud, i.e. limited first aid knowledge has resulted in increased incidences of frostbites; and
- the presence of animal carcasses left to rot near gers will pose an increased public health risk when the temperatures become milder.

The dramatic increase in loss of livestock which will result in loss of income generation through the sale of dairy products, cashmere wool and animals in the coming months, clearly indicates a reduction in the coping capacities of the most affected population. It is clear that if the Red Cross does not take immediate action now, the situation will continue to deteriorate for the most vulnerable families, and successful mitigation of the affects of this disaster will be increasingly difficult.

As a result, a detailed livelihoods needs and capacity assessment is planned for April, the outcomes of which will form the basis for defining modalities and means for assisting herder families such as the diversification of agricultural and animal husbandry techniques and access to income generating activities. It is important that any livelihood intervention reinforces the traditional coping mechanisms of the herder population and as such it is anticipated that a mix of strategies including cash distribution, animal husbandry and access to economic markets will be undertaken.

Further assistance for herder families who have migrated to urban centres include awareness-raising on available government social services, sensitization to their new environment and small grants for the application for identification cards.

As a result, the following eight provinces have been identified for relief and recovery assistance, which will be implemented through the MRCS regional disaster preparedness centres: Bayankhongor, Dundgobi, Khentii, Khovd, Sukhbaatar, Tuv, Umnogobi, and Uvs.

In providing immediate assistance to enable vulnerable herding families to maintain a minimum level of resilience, the MRCS is drawing on its strengths in disaster management and auxiliary role to its government. These actions have been defined in consideration of the programmes being implemented by the government with support from other international humanitarian agencies including UNDP, UNICEF and FAO. Furthermore, MRCS, through its regular disaster preparedness and social welfare programming (outside the scope of the appeal), will further contribute to addressing the underlying causes of poverty and the strengthening of community safety and resilience.

In identifying the target areas to increase assistance, several factors were taken in to consideration, including:

- NEMA classification of dzud impact in aimags (provinces),
- The poverty index of aimags;^2^;
- The percentage of rural population living in aimags;^3^; and

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^2^ Source: Mongolian Statistical Yearbook 2008
^3^ Source: Mongolian Statistical Yearbook 2008
The dzud response activities undertaken in aimags by other organizations.

The selection of the most affected and remote soums (counties) within the eight targeted provinces will be conducted by MRCS branches in coordination with the provincial emergency management agencies and under the supervision of MRCS headquarters. This operation will focus on the most vulnerable households and will take into consideration the following groups:

- Families who are not living in soum centres;
- Families who have lost all their livestock;
- Families with members from socially vulnerable groups (elderly, with many children under 18, with members with disabilities, women-headed households)

MRCS will continuously monitor the evolving situation and will generate regular reports outlining the evolving situation in the targeted aimags. This information will feed into a detailed assessment that is planned for April, aimed at evaluating the ongoing impact on the coping capacity of herder families and identifying further recovery strategies to be supported by MRCS under this appeal and the longer-term disaster risk reduction annual programming.

Immediate needs: the MRCS response will focus on meeting the immediate needs of the most affected herder families. The following priorities have been identified:

1. food assistance including floor, rice, sugar, vegetable oil, tea and salt;
2. non-food items including warm clothes and boots.

Additional psychological support and health education will be provided to support individuals maintain a minimum level of resilience from which their longer term recovery and resilience building can be supported.

Longer-term needs: A detailed assessment focusing on the restoration or development of alternative livelihoods is being prepared to identify the longer-term needs of the affected herder families. With more than 3,300 herders families having lost their entire livestock, MRCS and IFRC have initially identified a significant impact on the future income generation opportunities of many families whose primary source of income is from the sale of cashmere wool in April and livestock October/November. In support of this assessment, cash programming and complementary livelihoods strategies will be analysed and incorporated into agreed longer-term actions. In addition the operation will provide, small grants for herder families who have migrated to urban centres to register for the government’s social services.

The proposed operation

MRCS, supported by IFRC, will provide immediate relief assistance in the form of food and non-food items, psychological support and health education to 1,800 most affected herder families in eight provinces across Mongolia. In addition 1,600 herder families will be supported with livelihood interventions to assist in their recovery and the initial reduction of secondary risk resulting from the loss of livestock and income generating activities.

Relief distributions (food and basic non-food items)

| Outcome: To ensure up to 1,800 herder families (7,200 people) in eight provinces (Bayankhongor, Dundgobi, Khentii, Khovd, Sukhbaatar, Tuv, Umnogobi, andUvs) receive essential food and non-food items to meet their immediate needs for up to three months. |
|---|---|
| 1,800 vulnerable families (7,200 people) are assisted in maintaining a minimum level of resilience | Activities planned |
| • Develop selection criteria of target locations; | • Develop selection criteria of beneficiaries; |
| • Develop selection criteria of beneficiaries; | • Identify and register most affected herder families; |
| • Procure food and non-food items in accordance with IFRC procurement standards; | • Distribute food and non-food items to identified beneficiaries; |
| • Contuously monitor the relief activities and reporting on relief distributions; | • Conduct ongoing assessments and review support strategies; |
| • Organize an impact evaluation including beneficiary consultation at the end of the operation. |
The content of the relief assistance has been developed based on the outcomes of the previous experience of MRCS and feedback from herder families from previous operations as well as recent field consultations.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Quantity per family</th>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Quantity per family</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Wheat flour</td>
<td>25 kg</td>
<td>Warm coat for adult</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rice</td>
<td>5 kg</td>
<td>Warm coat for child</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sugar</td>
<td>1 kg</td>
<td>Boots for adult</td>
<td>1 pair</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cooking oil</td>
<td>1 litre</td>
<td>Boots for child</td>
<td>2 pairs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Salt</td>
<td>1 kg</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tea</td>
<td>1 block</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Health**

**Outcome**: To ensure the health status of 1,800 most affected herder families (7,200 people) in eight provinces (Bayankhongor, Dundgobi, Khentii, Khovd, Sukhbaatar, Tuv, Umnogobi, and Uvs) is improved through the provision of psychological support and health education (including hygiene promotion) over the next six months.

**Activities planned**
- Mobilization of MRCS psychosocial support and first aid volunteers;
- Psychosocial support training for MRCS volunteers;
- Provision of first aid training and psychosocial support to affected families;
- Review, update and production of MRCS information, education and communication materials (IEC);
- Purchase of first aid kits;
- Herder family visits by volunteers to support affected families and disseminate information;
- Production of mass media messages (public service announcements and special programmes on TV and radio) and regular broadcasting;
- Promotion of clean-up activities and the burial of dead animals; and
- Continuous monitoring of the health situation in coordination with local health authorities.

**Livelihoods**

**Outcome**: Up to 1,600 families (6,400 people) who have lost their livestock will be assisted in recovery and in building resilience for a period of up to six months.

**Activities planned**
- Conduct a detailed assessment to define livelihood needs and capacity;
- Study the capacity of MRCS and IFRC to deliver a variety of livelihood initiatives such as cash grants, cash for work and other recovery initiatives for vulnerable families reinforcing economic and social security;
- Finalize the modalities and means for supporting livelihood continuity;
- Develop selection criteria of target locations;
- Develop beneficiary identification strategy and registration system with herder families for delivery of identified assistance;
- Distribute resources according to plans emanating from the livelihoods assessments;
- Awareness and sensitization of social services for families who have migrated to urban centres;
- Share best practices between herder families;
- Monitor and evaluate the activities; and
- Develop an exit strategy.

**Logistics**

Logistics support will be provided following IFRC procurement standards for the identified relief items and to ensure the efficient and timely delivery of these items for the success of the operation. The procurement of...
relief items will continue to be conducted locally in Mongolia as all items are available in local markets. MRCS, with support from the IFRC, will carry out the necessary procurement, building on last year’s experience in response to floods.

Logistics is a challenge in Mongolia, where roads are usually blocked by snow and targeted communities are difficult to reach. Of the eight targeted provinces, MRCS has vehicles in six. Two vehicles are included in this appeal to support MRCS to deliver appropriate service to the most affected families. Of the two vehicles, one will be for Khuvsgul province, the biggest populated aigma with very difficult topography and poor roads. Reliable vehicles are necessary to work in the field, where the main roads are often blocked and non-functional. Temporary warehouses will be rented during this operation and technical logistics support will be provided to assist delegate will be deployed to support the logistics set-up of MRCS, their logistics resources and strategy, as well as to propose recommendations on how to strengthen it.

Communications – Advocacy and Public information

The steady flow of information between those working in the field and other major stakeholders will support the programme objectives of this emergency appeal, increase the profile, funding and other support for MRCS and the IFRC, and provide a basis on which to advocate for the interests of vulnerable populations.

In close collaboration with the MRCS, those affected by this emergency will continue to receive information to support their recovery. Donors and partner national societies will also receive information and materials they can use to promote this operation, and communications initiatives over the duration of this operation will help to build the information and public relations capacity of the MRCS for future emergencies.

Domestic and global media interest in this operation has been extremely low despite the magnitude of the disaster. MRCS have invited some national and international media to communicate information on their activities related to the dzud response as well as to assist the affected population. A number of videos and material have been produced with support from MRCS and are available for stakeholders. For example, Sky News was invited by MRCS to produce a video to explain about the dzud disaster, available here.

A communications delegate from the IFRC East Asia regional office will be deployed to support the MRCS in advocacy and public information.

Capacity of the National Society

The MRCS is established under Mongolian Law and is the leading humanitarian organization in providing relief, health and welfare assistance to the most vulnerable sectors of society. It aims to serve the most vulnerable through a volunteer-based network, providing key services to targeted populations while promoting the values of humanitarianism and volunteerism. With 31 mid-level branches and 902 primary level branches working all over Mongolia, the MRCS network extends to communities nationwide.

MRCS’s key strengths are its overall human resource base in the form of 309,532 supporters, 93,572 paying members, 2,409 special members, 12,712 specialized volunteers, 37 mid-level (provincial) branches, 70,000 youth members, and 605 organizations which are member organizations. In addition, MRCS has seven established regional disaster management centres across the country (see locations below) which are further supported by small numbers of family kits and locally mobilized stocks at all provincial branches.
At the national level, MRCS has a disaster management officer who is responsible for overall coordination of disaster relief, working together with the logistics and finance departments. Further supporting this team are full-time staff in aimag branches and part time staff at the soum and bagh level.

The MRCS works in partnership with the government and non-government agencies to achieve effective networking and implementation of services. It is also in partnership with a number of partner national societies in various programmes such as community-based disaster preparedness and disaster risk reduction, social care, CBHFA, youth and organizational development, and HIV prevention programmes.

The IFRC, in support of MRCS, disbursed funds from the disaster relief emergency funds (DREF) in 2008 and 2009 and launched three emergency appeals between the years 1999 and 2002. These appeals provided relief assistance to herders who lost their assets, and herders with unsustainable herds of less than one hundred animals. Assistance was also provided to support the new urban poor that often comprised of failed herders who had migrated to Ulaanbaatar and other urban centres in search of an alternative living. MRCS has defined this operation based on this previous experience.

### Capacity of the International Federation

The IFRC is represented by an experienced head of country office who will arrive on 1 April 2010. The Federation’s country office comprises a team of highly experienced and committed national staff who support the MRCS in monitoring and implementation of ongoing disaster operations and disaster risk reduction/disaster preparedness programmes, health initiatives and organizational development of the National Society.

To further reinforce support for this operation, an operations coordinator from the Asia Pacific disaster management unit (AP DMU) and the health coordinator from the East Asia regional office supported MRCS in conducting the rapid assessment in January 2010. In addition a short term logistics delegate from the Finnish Red Cross and a second operations coordinator from the AP DMU was deployed to assist MRCS in implementation, planning and monitoring the ongoing relief operation. Further human resource needs are incorporated into this emergency appeal, including the deployment of livelihoods expertise to support the planned assessment, a communications delegate and the recruitment of a disaster management delegate to provide assistance to support the ongoing operation for three months.

The AP DMU in Kuala Lumpur is coordinating international support for this operation. The Mongolian country office is further supported by the East Asia regional office in Beijing and the Asia Pacific zone office in Kuala Lumpur in disaster management; health and care; water and sanitation; organizational development; logistics; resource mobilization; planning, monitoring, evaluation and reporting; and communications.

### Budget summary

See attached budget (Annex 1) for details.

Yasemin Aysan  
Under Secretary General  
Disaster Response and Early Recovery Division

Bekele Geleta  
Secretary General
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

For further information specifically related to this operation please contact:

- Mongolia Red Cross Society
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  - Mr. Qinghui Gu, regional disaster management coordinator, email: qinghui.gu@ifrc.org; phone:

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  - Mr. Jeremy Francis, regional logistics coordinator; email: jeremy.francis@ifrc.org;
    phone: +603 9207 5753, fax: +603 2168 8573
  - Ms. Penny Elghady, resource mobilization & PMER coordinator; email: penny.elghady@ifrc.org;
    phone: +603 9207 5775, fax +603 2164 1857
  - Please send all pledges of funding to: zonerm.asiapacific@ifrc.org

- Mr Patrick Fuller, communications coordinator; email: patrick.fuller@ifrc.org
  Phone: +603 9207 5705, fax +603 2164 1857

<Emergency Appeal budget and map below; click here to return to the title page>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Budget Group</th>
<th>Multilateral Response</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>Clothing &amp; Textiles</td>
<td>152,802</td>
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<td>Food</td>
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<td><strong>Total Land, vehicles &amp; equipment</strong></td>
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<td><strong>TOTAL BUDGET</strong></td>
<td><strong>1,062,295</strong></td>
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The maps used do not imply the expression of any opinion on the part of the International Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies or National Societies concerning the legal status of a territory or of its authorities.

Map data sources: ESRI, DEVINFO, Federation - MDRMN004.mxd