DISASTER RELIEF EMERGENCY FUND (DREF)

Appeal no. AA00010
This appeal seeks a total of CHF 15,000,000 to fund programmes and activities to be implemented in 2006 and 2007. These programmes are aligned with the International Federation’s 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 and 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.

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The International Federation’s mission is to improve the lives of vulnerable people. The Federation is the world’s largest humanitarian organization, and its millions of volunteers are active in over 181 countries. All international assistance to support vulnerable communities seeks to adhere to the Code of Conduct and the Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Disaster Response, according to the SPHERE Project.

| Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF) | 2006   | 8,500,000 |
|                                       | 2007   | 6,500,000 |
| Total                                 |        | 15,000,000 |

Context

The Disaster Relief Emergency Fund is one of the International Federation’s main disaster response tools. It provides initial start-up funds and essential finance to national Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies allowing rapid response in the case of emergencies. It is an important tool for a humanitarian organization whose goal is to meet the needs of the most vulnerable, whether those needs are created by a sudden disaster highlighted by the world’s media or by disasters that the world has little interest in.

DREF is a flexible tool that provides finance for immediate action in the case of sudden onset disasters, without waiting for an appeal for funds to be launched. Quick response in emergencies is vital to saving lives. Beyond funding major disasters, DREF is also used to allow timely response and awareness-raising in the case of slow onset disasters, like droughts and food insecurity, and makes funds available for minor emergency response.

1 USD 11.6 million or EUR 9.7 million
operations that would otherwise be unfunded. Traditionally, in cases where an Emergency Appeal is launched DREF is used as a rolling fund, reimbursed by cash donations to the appeal. More recently, however, national societies responding to minor emergencies for which no appeal will be launched are also benefiting from allocations from the fund. These allocations empower them to manage response operations in their country, to mobilize assessment teams, release stocks, deploy volunteers and vehicles with the knowledge that the costs incurred will be covered and stocks replaced. Donor support to reimbursing minor emergency funding allows the International Federation as a whole to carry out its mandate of meeting the needs of the most vulnerable affected by disasters.

Requests for DREF allocations include a plan of action and a budget, and are reviewed on a case-by-case basis. Allocations to start-up operations in major disasters do not exceed 15% of an emergency appeal or CHF 1 million. The target level of the DREF is CHF 10 m with a forecasted balance at the end of 2005 of CHF 7.5m. The current appeal seeks to raise CHF 8.5 m in 2006 and CHF 6.5 m in 2007 for DREF to allow the reserve fund to remain at or near its mandated level while allowing for full funding for minor and forgotten emergencies and response preparedness activities.

Background and lessons to date
The International Federation has promoted the use of the DREF over the last two years, particularly to allow national societies to respond rapidly to minor emergencies in their countries. Since 2004 a change of policy with regard to minor emergencies no longer requires delegations and regional departments to repay allocations. The overall total of allocations has risen from CHF 3 m in 2003 to CHF 4.7 in 2004 and CHF 8.5 m by October 2005. Of these total allocations, in 2004 more than CHF 1.7 m or 36 % was used to finance minor emergency operations. By October 2005, this amount had risen to CHF 3.98 m or 47% of the total.

The impact of this funding has been significant in all geographical areas and in financing many different types of response operations. In Africa, to which over 30% of the minor emergency funding was allocated, response to food security, population movement, floods and epidemics was rapid and focussed, allowed the national societies concerned to bring immediate relief or take preventive measures rapidly where lack of funding could have had disastrous consequences. The national societies in Africa often have a strong volunteer base to carry out disaster response, but lack the funds to deploy them. In central Europe, severe winter weather followed by several waves of flooding since the spring has sorely stretched the resources and capacities of several national societies. DREF funding not only provided them with a vital lifeline to ensure immediate response but also ensured that their longer term response capacity was not compromised. It also allowed the timely deployment of Regional Disaster Response Teams (RDRT) to conduct immediate assessments ensuring a prompt, professional and quality response. This proactive approach to funding emergency response will be continued in 2006 and 2007.

DREF is supported by several donors, supplemented this year by Silent Emergencies funding from the Netherlands Red Cross and Government that by October had amounted to over CHF 1.3 m. This innovative and helpful donor support has allowed the Federation to bring response where it is needed rapidly. Given the impact of this funding, more non-earmarked donations to the DREF are sought in 2006 and 2007 to allow the reimbursement of operations not covered by an Emergency Appeal and to keep the fund at a level which allows it to remain responsive to the needs of the member national societies and their beneficiaries.
Statistics

Breakdown of DREF Allocations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Minor Emergency Appeals</th>
<th>Emergency Appeals</th>
<th>Disaster Preparedness</th>
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<tr>
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<td>2005</td>
<td>3,500,000</td>
<td>1,000,000</td>
<td>1,000,000</td>
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Goal: national societies benefit from sufficient and immediate funding to allow them to save lives and meet the immediate needs of those affected by disasters in a rapid and effective manner.

Overall Programme Objective 2006-2007: All national societies are aware of DREF, request funds when necessary to carry out their mandate of bringing rapid disaster response and the DREF is able to respond to all their requests.

Expected results: People affected by large and small scale disasters receive timely assistance from national societies, funded where required by DREF.

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