



MADAGASCAR: CYCLONE PREPAREDNESS

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The Federation's mission is to improve the lives of vulnerable people by mobilizing the power of humanity. It is the world's largest humanitarian organization and its millions of volunteers are active in over 185 countries.

In Brief

This DREF Bulletin is being issued based on the situation described below reflecting the information available at this time. 35,000 (USD 28,689 or EUR 21,739) was allocated from the Federation's Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF) on 7 March 2007 to respond to the needs in this operation. This operation is expected to be implemented over 3 months, and will be completed by 7 June 2007; a Final Report will be made available three months after the end of the operation. Unearmarked funds to repay DREF are encouraged.

This operation is 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 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.

Background and current situation



Extensive Flooding following the cyclones.

In the last 3 months, three cyclones have struck the mainland and coastal areas of Madagascar. These include cyclone Bondo that struck on 25 December 2006, Clovis on 3 January 2007 and Favio on 18 January 2007. In addition, seasonal rains that occurred from end December 2006 to end February 2007 were aggravated by the inter-tropical convergence zone that moved slightly south and caused continuous rains. The accumulated impact of these climatic episodes resulted in flooding and landslides, which in turn led to damage of infrastructure and crops as well as displacement of local communities in the affected areas. The government of Madagascar has reported that, as of 19 February 2007, 78,000 people have been affected, among which 33,000 have been displaced and 7 lives have been lost.

On 20 February 2007, the government conducted a needs assessment and, based on the findings, issued an international donor appeal for USD 242 million. If granted, the funds would be used mainly for infrastructure reconstruction and agricultural rehabilitation. The United Nations (UN) is still discussing the relevance of launching an appeal for Madagascar. In case an appeal is launched, the national society is expected to review the data provided by the government and formulate a set of proposals for immediate assistance.

Red Cross and Red Crescent action

In order to have a more conclusive assessment of the humanitarian situation as a result of the cyclones, and to determine the capacity of the Malagasy Red Cross Society (MRCS) to address the existing and future gaps, a decision has been made to place a disaster management specialist – chosen from the Regional Disaster Response Team (RDRT) – with the national society for a period of six weeks. The specialist is expected to work closely with the MRCS and the International Federation staff in Madagascar.

To this effect, the International Federation has allocated CHF 35,000 to assist the Malagasy Red Cross Society in deploying the rescue team, conducting assessments as well as in purchasing and distributing materials for building houses and latrines.

Coordination

The MRCS actively participated in coordination meetings with the National Office for Risks and Disaster Management. The national society also established a crisis committee at the head office and held meetings twice per day.

A comprehensive human resources inventory, with contacts of volunteers from the MRCS head office, regions and districts as well as the French Red Cross/Indian Ocean Regional Intervention Platform (PIROI¹) and the International Federation has been compiled and circulated for information sharing during emergencies. The existing MRCS/PIROI stocks comprising of two water treatment units based at Antananarivo have also been re-evaluated.

The Federation, in collaboration with the Indian Ocean sub-regional office, the organizational development delegate in Madagascar and the disaster management specialist will work closely with the MRCS, the government of Madagascar and other stakeholders in ensuring a coordinated approach to the provision of technical support and assistance.

The needs

As a priority, the affected communities need food items, non-food items (NFIs), first aid services and shelter. The national society has also proposed that, due to the needs that have arisen from the recent cyclones, the pre-positioned stocks need to be released. There is also a need to address the damage to livelihoods and the possibility of future cyclones during the current season.

Plan of action

General objective: To reduce the vulnerability of families to cyclones in Madagascar.

Capacity building

Specific objective 1: To increase the Malagasy Red Cross Society (MRCS) preparedness and response capacities for cyclones.

Planned activities

- Assess the humanitarian situation at present, taking into account assessments conducted by other stakeholders.
- Assess the response and preparedness capacity of the MRCS and recommend strategic measures for improvement.
- Recommend a strategy to respond to the current emergency situation appropriately.

Expected result

- The MRCS is able to respond to cyclone disasters in a timely effective manner.

¹In French: Plate-forme d'Intervention Regionale pour l'Océan Indien (PIROI).

Health

Specific objective 2: To create awareness on waterborne diseases among Mahabo community members.

Planned activities

- Develop a hygiene information and communication mobilization strategy.
- Conduct training sessions for volunteers in hygiene information and communication.
- Purchase and distribute soap to the most vulnerable families.
- Organize hygiene sessions and home visits.

Expected result

- Cases of waterborne diseases in the community and household level are minimized.

Shelter

Specific objective 3: To provide assistance to 77 of the most affected families in building their houses and latrines in Mahabo area of Menabe Region.

Planned activities

- Purchase materials to build houses and latrines.
- Mobilize volunteers to build the houses and latrines.

Expected result

- 77 of the most affected families benefited from appropriate shelter and sanitation facilities.

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