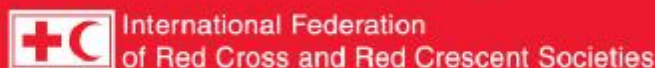


DREF operation final report



Benin: Fire

DREF operation n° MDRBJ002
GLIDE n° FRR-2008-000055-BEN

29 December 2008

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 64,000 (USD 55,788 or EUR 43,187) was allocated from the Federation's Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF) on 5 May, 2008 to support the national society in delivering assistance to some 1,000 beneficiaries.

In May, the Red Cross of Benin assisted about 996 victims of the fire in Donaten, a fishing settlement in Cotonou. The affected people received first-aid assistance, psychological support, health education and assistance in the reconstruction of their houses. For an effective intervention, the national society trained and deployed its volunteers in the community to carry out health education and assist some of the victims in the reconstruction of their houses.



Distribution of non food items to fire victims

The operation also showed the effectiveness of good collaboration between Red Cross, government services and the affected community. With the Red Cross intervention, community members have now started to understand the essence of good hygiene practices and preventive measures against such disaster.

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

The situation

The fire outbreak in the densely populated fishing village of Donaten in Cotonou during the night of 22 to 23 April, 2008 destroyed many houses and caused extensive material damage. According to the Red Cross of Benin, the fire whose cause was unknown resulted in five deaths, 32 injuries and about 1,000 people made homeless. The Red Cross of Benin mobilized and deployed its volunteers in the affected area. They assessed the situation and provided first aid, psychological support and good health and hygiene education to the victims. With support from the Federation's DREF, the Red Cross further strengthened its assistance to affected people. The Red Cross provided some 300 households with basic non-food items such as kitchen sets, plastic plates, buckets, bowls, soap and washing powder. Due to the high cost of tents and the non-

availability of important quantity at the time of the operation, the Red Cross opted to assisting 45 families in the reconstruction of their houses after consulting with the affected community and government authorities. The national society also opted for buckets with cover instead of jerry cans as initially planned. Red Cross volunteers have been retrained in carrying out health education and good hygiene practices among the affected community.

The intervention of the Red Cross assisted in rehabilitating many families and preventing outbreak of diseases as the raining season was just commencing. The Government of Benin, Cotonou Municipal Authority and the community commended the Red Cross for its good gesture. A letter of commendation was given to the national society by the Cotonou Municipal Authority. The beneficiary community also requested the Red Cross to assist them in constructing some latrines.

The Ministry of Family Affairs deployed its staff to assess the situation and provided limited food items to the affected families. The Cotonou Municipal Authority also provided some medical supplies and insecticide treated nets (ITN) to assist some of the victims. The government decided to temporarily relocate the inhabitants of the settlements to a more suitable environment. This decision was rejected by the affected community because of its fishing occupation. Some local Non-governmental Organizations (NGOs) also complemented the efforts of the government by providing assistance to the affected populations.

Red Cross and Red Crescent action

Progress towards objectives

Relief distributions (food and basic non-food items)

Objective: To reduce the vulnerability of the most affected people by providing basic relief items based on the outcome of the Red Cross assessment and on the Federation approved distribution strategy.

Activities planned	Expected outcomes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Purchase and distribute immediate non-food relief items to 300 families at the ratio of one tent and three blankets, one bucket, one kitchen set and one hygiene pack per household; • Train and retrain 30 Red Cross volunteers to convey health and good hygiene messages to the affected community; • Carry out awareness campaign on the risks of diseases associated with the disaster in the affected community; • Sensitize the community on fire preventive measures; • Monitor and evaluate relief activities and report on relief distribution activities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Affected populations have received necessary immediate non-food relief items to sustain them during the rainy season; • Target populations have been sensitized on the risks of diseases associated with the disaster, and have acquired knowledge on good hygiene practices and preventive measures; • All necessary support is provided to government agencies involved in the sensitization of affected community members; • The community is sensitized on the prevention of possible fire.

Achievements:

The Red Cross of Benin procured and distributed plastic buckets, bowls, kitchen sets, hygiene packs including bars of soap and washing powder to 300 households according to Federation standards. About 25 Red Cross volunteers (21 male and 4 female) had earlier been trained in Federation approved selection, registration and distribution techniques. The criteria used in the selection included families with children from zero to five years, pregnant women, nursing mothers and the elderly. The quantity of bars of soap, plates and washing powder distributed was based on the number of persons per household. Some families were composed of three people while others have 13.

Volunteers were also trained in delivering good hygiene practice and awareness messages through group discussions and door-to-door visits. They seized the opportunity to educate community people on the fundamental principles of the Movement and other Red Cross activities. The Red Cross of Benin in collaboration with the government also enlightened populations on preventive measures against fire especially during the dry season. People were advised to avoid constructing houses too close to one another. About 1,500 people were reached with these messages.

Impact:

Assessment carried out has shown that community people are beginning to understand the importance of good hygiene practices. The national society strengthened the capacity and knowledge of its volunteers in community based good hygiene practices. Community members are requesting the assistance of the Red Cross in the construction of latrines.

Challenges:

No major challenge was recorded as activities planned were effectively carried out. However, to sustain good hygiene practices in the community, there is the need for the construction of latrines, to prevent outbreak of diseases as it was noticed that people defecate in the open.

Non-food items (NFI) distributed by the Red Cross of Benin

Items	Aluminium bowl	Plastic bucket with cover	Saucepan with handle and cover	*Plate	*Toilet soap (15 g)	*Washing powder 350 g
Quantity/household (average)	1	1	1	6	6	6
Total	300	300	300	2,700	2,700	2,700

*Distributed according to number of persons per household.

Recovery and Rehabilitation

Objective: To reduce the vulnerability of most affected people by assisting them to rebuild their houses.

Activities planned	Expected outcomes
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Procure and distribute some building materials to rebuild 45 most affected houses;Train 25 Red Cross volunteers on building techniques;Assist 45 households in the reconstruction of their houses.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Reconstruction materials are procured and distributed to beneficiaries;Red Cross volunteers have enhanced their knowledge in shelter;45 houses have been reconstructed and handed over to beneficiaries.

Achievement:

The Red Cross of Benin procured and distributed construction materials like roofing iron sheets, nails and wood to 45 households for the reconstruction of their houses. Criteria like the extent of damage, age, financial capacity and the size of each family were used during the selection process. With the technical support of a volunteer who had benefited from a Federation shelter workshop in 2007, 25 other volunteers were retrained on the techniques of construction. Most of these volunteers were involved in the construction of shelter during the Togolese refugees operation in Benin in 2005. After the refresher programme, they were deployed in the affected community to assist in the reconstruction of houses using locally procured

materials. Five volunteers assisted in reconstructing one house per day leading to the completion of five houses per day. The collaboration between the community, the government and the Red Cross facilitated the reconstruction process. The strategy adopted led to the timely completion of the 45 houses. Reconstructed houses have been handed over to the beneficiaries.

Impact:

The reconstructed houses have prevented parents from exposing their children to cold and other diseases associated with the raining season. Many of them had been staying in palm leaf made shelter. Community members and government authorities appreciated the support from the Red Cross as the only organization that fulfilled its promise of assisting the victims. Community members appreciated the participatory approach adopted by the Red Cross during this phase. Other victims are now using the Red Cross method to rebuild their houses. In appreciating the support of the Red Cross, the Ministry of Health sent a thank you message to the board and management of the Red Cross of Benin. This has enhanced the image of the national society in the country. The capacity of Red Cross volunteers in construction techniques and collaborative work was also strengthened.

Challenges:

One of the major challenges faced during this period was the high cost of building materials. This has limited the reconstruction assistance to only 45 households.

Conclusion

Lessons learned:

The good collaboration between Red Cross, government services and community members brings out good service delivery. Participatory approach enhances the capacity at community level as the beneficiaries were involved in the whole operation. It is imperative to carry out regular health education and good hygiene practices awareness activities in the communities.

How we work	
<p><i>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.</i></p>	
<p>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".</p>	<p>Global Agenda Goals:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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:

- **In Benin:** Hubert Chabi, Executive Secretary, Red Cross Society of Benin, Porto-Novo; phone: +229 97277975; email: chabihubert@yahoo.fr
- **In Nigeria:** Chinyere Emeka-Anuna, Acting Head of Federation West Coast Regional Office, Lagos; phone: +234 12. 695. 228; Fax: +234. 12. 695.229; email: chinyere.emekaanuna@ifrc.org
- **In Dakar:** Alasan Senghore, Head of Zone, West and Central Africa Zone, phone: +221 33 869 3640, Fax:+221 33 820 25 34, email: alasan.senghore@ifrc.org; Norbert Allale, Disaster Response Delegate, West and Central Africa Zone, email: norbert.allale@ifrc.org
- **In Geneva:** Niels Scott, Operations Coordinator for West Africa; phone: +41.22.730.4400; email: niels.scott@ifrc.org or Tunay Firat, Officer, Management Support Team, email: tunay.firat@ifrc.org; phone: +41.22.730.4415

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

International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

MDRBJ002 - Benin - Fires

Final Financial Report

Selected Parameters	
Reporting Timeframe	2008/5-2008/12
Budget Timeframe	2008/5-2008/7
Appeal	MDRBJ002
Budget	APPEAL

All figures are in Swiss Francs (CHF)

I. Consolidated Response to Appeal

	Goal 1: Disaster Management	Goal 2: Health and Care	Goal 3: Capacity Building	Goal 4: Principles and Values	Coordination	TOTAL
A. Budget	64,000					64,000
B. Opening Balance	0					0
Income						
<u>Other Income</u>						
<i>Voluntary Income</i>	57,032					57,032
C5. Other Income	57,032					57,032
C. Total Income = SUM(C1..C5)	57,032					57,032
D. Total Funding = B + C	57,032					57,032
Appeal Coverage	89%					89%

II. Balance of Funds

	Goal 1: Disaster Management	Goal 2: Health and Care	Goal 3: Capacity Building	Goal 4: Principles and Values	Coordination	TOTAL
B. Opening Balance	0					0
C. Income	57,032					57,032
E. Expenditure	-57,032					-57,032
F. Closing Balance = (B + C + E)	0					0

International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

MDRBJ002 - Benin - Fires

Final Financial Report

Selected Parameters	
Reporting Timeframe	2008/5-2008/12
Budget Timeframe	2008/5-2008/7
Appeal	MDRBJ002
Budget	APPEAL

All figures are in Swiss Francs (CHF)

III. Budget Analysis / Breakdown of Expenditure

Account Groups	Budget	Expenditure					TOTAL	Variance
		Goal 1: Disaster Management	Goal 2: Health and Care	Goal 3: Capacity Building	Goal 4: Principles and Values	Coordination		
A							B	A - B
BUDGET (C)		64,000					64,000	
Supplies								
Shelter - Relief	29,220	23,011					23,011	6,209
Water & Sanitation	12,000							12,000
Teaching Materials	750							750
Utensils & Tools		12,638					12,638	-12,638
Other Supplies & Services		4,763					4,763	-4,763
Total Supplies	41,970	40,411					40,411	1,559
Transport & Storage								
Distribution & Monitoring	2,000							2,000
Transport & Vehicle Costs	1,200	2,400					2,400	-1,200
Total Transport & Storage	3,200	2,400					2,400	800
Personnel								
National Staff	2,375	1,884					1,884	491
National Society Staff	6,935	233					233	6,703
Total Personnel	9,310	2,117					2,117	7,193
Workshops & Training								
Workshops & Training	820	5,164					5,164	-4,344
Total Workshops & Training	820	5,164					5,164	-4,344
General Expenditure								
Travel	1,160	1,272					1,272	-112
Office Costs	2,410	182					182	2,229
Communications	970	1,780					1,780	-810
Total General Expenditure	4,540	3,234					3,234	1,306
Programme Support								
Program Support	4,160	3,707					3,707	453
Total Programme Support	4,160	3,707					3,707	453
TOTAL EXPENDITURE (D)	64,000	57,032					57,032	6,968
VARIANCE (C - D)		6,968					6,968	