

DREF operation



International Federation
of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

Algeria: Floods in Ghardaia

DREF operation n° MDRDZ001
FF-2008-000178-DZA
15 October 2008

The International Federation's Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF) is a source of un-earmarked money created by the International Federation in 1985 to ensure that immediate financial support is available for Red Cross and 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.

CHF 187,166 (USD 165,800 or EUR 121,690) has been allocated from the International Federation's Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF) to support the Algerian Red Crescent (Algerian RC) in delivering immediate assistance to some 12,000 beneficiaries. Unearmarked funds to repay DREF are encouraged.

Summary:

Floods caused by heavy rains have killed 89 people, injured 50, and left many thousands homeless in and around the Algerian oasis town of Ghardaia on 2 October 2008. 11,800 families are estimated to have been affected by the worst floods the region has been experiencing since decades. Eight of the 13 districts of the surrounding Ghardaia province have been affected by the floods and thousands of homes have been inundated.

The National Society has benefited from in kind and cash donations from other actors and is seeking to complement the operation with this DREF request. The DREF will support the Algerian RC in assisting 2,513 families (12,000 beneficiaries) with relief items (kitchen sets, blankets, mattresses, and water pumps); in its search and rescue efforts; and in cleaning up of the streets and the houses. An Emergency Appeal for this operation will be launched soon.

This operation is expected to be implemented by 31 December 2008; a Final Report will be made available three months after the end of the operation (by 31 March, 2009).

[<click here for the DREF budget,](#)
[here for contact details,](#)
[or here to view the map of the affected area>](#)



Map of Algeria showing Ghardaia

The situation



An Algerian man carries his child as he walks by a destroyed vehicle (Source: AFP)

Following the heavy rains in the beginning of October, mudslides overrun the riverbanks of Oued M'Zab and invaded the villages. Search and rescue operations have not been easy to conduct due to the difficulty in accessing some remote areas (road cuts, bad weather, phone and electricity lines' cut). According to local witnesses, in some places, the amount of mud reached eight meters and some houses were buried up to the second floor. The authorities have confirmed the severity of the emergency situation and according to the last emergency cell coordination meeting on 11 October, 89 people were killed, 50 injured, 11,800 left homeless, and many other people are missing. A preliminary assessment reported at the emergency coordination cell in the wilaya indicated that more than 1,400 houses – often constructed with traditional stone walls bound by the mud – were flooded. In addition, the caves – the

place where all food reserves for the winter are stored – are either completely or partially destroyed, or inaccessible. The affected people have lost all their belongings. The return of residents will be allowed based on the expertise of technicians and engineers of the public technical housing committee (CTC).

The region of Ghardaia is located in the valley of M'Zab, and geographically situated in the centre of the country (600 km south of the capital Algiers). It is in the middle of a desert and thus, has a dry climate with being very hot during the day and cold at night. The wind causes frequent sandstorms.

Algerian RC, civilian protection, local non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and volunteers are organizing their intervention on the site in favor of thousands of affected people. The solidarity of the Algerian population has also been seen concretely with the arrival of caravans of aid to disaster victims (three semi-trailers of food were dispatched from Ayn Témouchent; several tonnes of food were carried by the wilaya of Jijel; four large tonnage trucks loaded with food and various items arrived in Ghardaia last Saturday), and more truckloads of mineral water and food are expected. As stated by the chief of staff of the wilaya of Jijel, these efforts accompanied the ones of volunteers including architects, engineers and administrators in civil engineering. The aid was collected by the wilaya with the assistance of the committee of Algerian RC as well as other local and district associations. Brigades from different sectors are still assessing the damage and all measures needed to complete this operation.

During the emergency phase, the National Society has launched public appeals and benefited from an effective resource mobilization which has been transformed into local in kind and cash donations. However, considering the importance of the losses and the number of homeless, the Algerian RC is seeking to continue to support the affected population during the post-emergency and rehabilitation phase.

Coordination and partnerships

Soon after the disaster, emergency cells were established at the headquarters level and in Ghardaia. The coordination with national and local authorities is effective and the National Society is part of the national disaster plan (NDP) - Plan Orsec. The revision of the NDP is still under completion.

In the field of the operation, the coordination of emergency cells at national and local level is chaired by the Ministry of Interior. Following assessments conducted and recommendations adopted, new structures were established to better meet the needs identified.

Proximity emergency cells (PEC) were established on the public sites, hosting affected people in all municipalities concerned. These cells are composed of a representative from the Ministry of Interior, a representative from the Algerian RC, a representative from the Civil Protection, and a representative from the Algerian Muslim Scouts (SMA). The mission of these PECs is to register, check, identify and coordinate the support provided to the affected families based on lists that were prepared and submitted by Algerian RC to the authorities.

Due to its large field experience in disaster management, its outreach work done by its intervention teams and volunteers, the role of the National Society in the management of the crisis was publicly acknowledged and recognized by local authorities within the crisis coordination meeting held at the presence of the wali of the wilaya of Ghardaia. In addition, the chairman of the PEC requested the Algerian RC representative and the National Society teams on the sites to coordinate and direct the work of local emergency cells chaired by representatives of the Ministry of Interior.

Neighbourhood home evaluation cells (NHEC) were established to assess the damages of the houses, their status of danger and the needs for re-settlement. These cells consist of the same representatives of the PECs, but also include a representative from the habitat department. The levels used to classify the damage were red mark (uninhabitable), orange mark (repairable), and green mark (inhabitable). 200 managers control experts' construction techniques and the architects, while 200 other local executives work on strengthening the local capacity. No construction is allowed in the future at the beds and banks of the river.

The government decided to help the victims by the release of an allocation for the reconstruction of the devastated areas of the wilaya. 2,000 houses will be built to alleviate the suffering of the affected people and those affected will be relocated no later than 31 December, 2008. A special programme for agriculture is to be established to enable the recovery of the agricultural sector. In addition, the chief of government also announced discounts to merchants for agricultural products (including fruits and vegetables) shipped from other wilayas of the country to the disaster areas. Public services are also on hand to quickly relieve the population in distress and 97% of the network of natural gas and 90% of the electricity grid in the valley M'Zab has already been restored.

The NGOs' network is well structured and very active. Since the outbreak of the emergency situation, a food distribution point was organised by local associations, helping in the management of local food donations and their distribution to the affected people. The local food donations are well accepted by the local population as they are in line with the habits and customs of the population. Donations of food continue to be received and can be easily mobilized in case of additional requirements.

731 rescue operations were carried out by teams of the Civil Protection which resulted in the rescue of 1,203 people and the release of 80 vehicles. Nearly 3,050 interventions have been carried out.

This large disaster was poorly reported in the international media and news. The North African regional representation was immediately in contact with the National Society and offered the support needed. The emergency phase was well covered thanks to a rapid deployment of the Algerian RC intervention teams, relief goods from other committees of the National Society (see details in the "RC Action" section), and to the large public solidarity. Algerian RC is the lead agency in this operation.

Red Cross and Red Crescent action

Activities conducted by Algerian RC (3-12 October, 2008):

17 sites are currently set up to support the affected population. Of all these sites, 10 are managed by Algerian RC and the SMA. In fact, National Society volunteers are leading the assistance team due to their extensive relief experience from previous disasters and their knowledge of and proximity to the population.

Search and rescue: Assistance to affected communities in restoring living conditions

Algerian RC teams worked closely with the Civil Defence in search and rescue activities. More than 100 houses were cleaned and streets opened to access - including the rehabilitation of four health posts, and draining and emptying flooded cellars (113) with the nine motorcycle pumps.

Residents with technical expertise joined the local committee and motorcycle pumps mobilized by the Algerian RC have been made available to work in some committees flooded and inaccessible to Civil Protection. Health professionals are put under the emblem of the Algerian RC and are working side by side with the volunteers. Control of water is systematically organized in parts restored.

Distribution of food and non food items

1,207 families are taken care of by the Algerian RC on the basis of the Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Disaster Response (SPHERE). The first days of the disaster, foodstuffs were sent to the regional warehouse of Algerian RC. In addition, several warehouses were made available by the local

authorities. The delivery of local donations to the affected population and transport of goods from the central to the secondary warehouses is managed by Algerian RC volunteers. Once the items are in the secondary warehouses, the distribution is carried out jointly by neighborhood committees and Algerian RC volunteers.

Distributions of food and relief items are conducted in the presence of an official designated by the municipal administration, a representative of the NGOs' network and the head of the National Society team implemented locally. Currently, all donations are received in a central warehouse managed by the Civil Defence, the Algerian RC and SMA.

Food support is provided in different manners depending on the status of the affected families. Daily food parcels are distributed to the heads of families hosted by relatives or who are back home. For displaced families (housed in schools or public sites) or for the ones who do not have autonomy (no kits or kitchen stoves), hot meals are prepared by Algerian RC local committees or associations of elders and distributed by Algerian RC volunteers. In addition, 600 camp beds and 6,400 blankets have been distributed.

Daily coordination meetings continue to be held at Algerian RC and at partners' level to debrief properly on the activities run, adjust the plan according to the needs assessed, and decide on appropriate measures to be taken. Strong culture of solidarity and great capacity for resilience are strong social factors.

For all these reasons, despite the heavy involvement of the Algerian RC team in the food management and distribution, no financial needs are requested. The National Society will continue in partnership with the local associations and mosques to provide the necessary support to the affected population in this area.

Health and care

In collaboration with the Ministry of Health, immunization and vaccination campaigns - polio vaccination and anti-meningococci for children under six years old (newly introduced into the national immunization schedule) - are being prepared. In order to alleviate psycho-social trauma, active listening by volunteers and intervention of Algerian RC psychologists trained in disaster management are organised. Preparation of psycho-social programme (PSP) interventions in schools is underway. In addition, volunteers who are paramedics provide basic health and care services.

During the first week of the floods, 513 vaccinations and 464 medical consultations were conducted by the public health services of Algerian RC. 58 people under distress were directed to the hospital and 255 people were supported psychologically.

School Programme

As of 12 October, the Algerian RC psychologists have started visiting students in the morning classes of schools, colleges and high schools for psycho-social support.

Disaster risk awareness and environmental programme

This programme of the National Society aims to mitigate the risks of water-borne diseases, food poisoning, and the risks of landslides, rockslides and electrical hazards. The disaster risk reduction awareness school programme focuses on floods (based on the experience of an earthquake awareness programme).

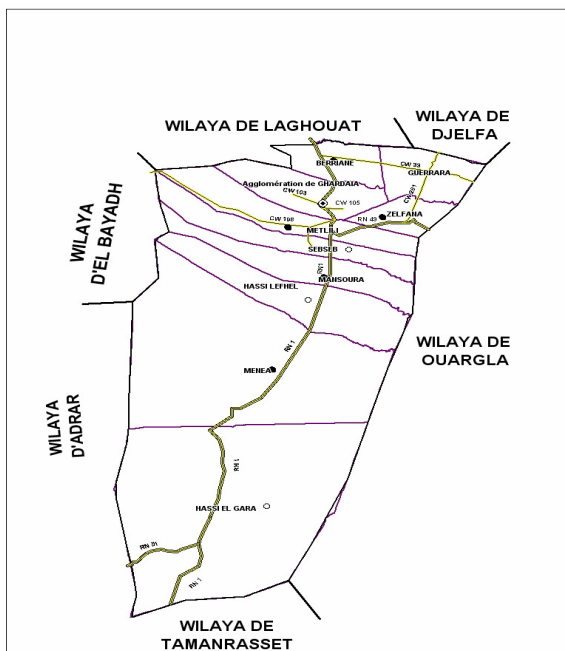
The needs

Beneficiary selection: Beneficiary selection is done in close cooperation with the local authorities. On basis of the lists of beneficiaries, Algerian RC was requested to be in charge of 2,513 families (approximately 12,000 beneficiaries) in the provision of food, relief items, health and care, awareness programmes, relocation, and restoring community livelihood. The number of families is increasing on a daily basis, but the Algerian RC is very cautious of their resources and capacities to deliver the needed services. The National Society also helps in cleaning up the houses in order to allow the affected people return to their houses as soon as possible.

Needs assessments are still ongoing in some remote areas. Plans are daily reviewed and adjusted accordingly based on the new information provided by the Algerian RC teams deployed in the affected sites or collected from affected people accommodated in the schools, public buildings, tents or with relatives.

Persons with disabilities who have lost their medical aids are being registered and most of them have been moved outside the affected region.

National Society capacity:



Map of the affected areas

Facts and figures of the Algerian RC committees in the Ghardaia region can be found below:

- 3,553 volunteers
- 31 monitors in first aid
- 1,892 first aiders
- Three intervention teams
- A trained vulnerability and capacity assessment (VCA) team of two trainers and six volunteers
- One restoring family links team
- Three voluntary clinical psychologists in order to provide psycho-social support
- Two logisticians
- One communication officer
- One vehicle destroyed by the floods. Algerian RC volunteers and coordinators are using their own vehicles.
- 459 volunteers (daily fluctuation) mobilized for this specific emergency.

The Algerian RC intervention teams have a national coordinator for disaster management and a coordination committee at the headquarters of the local committee. The teams of volunteers are available, including a team of intervention by site. In addition, a logistics team is in place for unforeseen needs and redeployment of pumps.

The proposed operation

Algerian RC volunteers (excluding the ones from Ghardaia local committee) are located in the most affected areas (see map above) and several warehouses were made available by the local authorities. Aid recipients are listed jointly by the municipal authorities and neighborhood associations; and the lists are consolidated by the Algerian RC teams. The registration of information related to the families affected is computerized by Algerian RC volunteers at regional headquarters.

Relief distributions (food and basic non-food items)

Objective: The specific quantity and quality of goods are distributed to 2,513 families, according to the assessment and selection criteria.

Activities planned:

- Distribute relief supplies (kitchen sets, blankets, and mattresses) in order to let the families return back to their normal life.

Water, sanitation, and hygiene promotion

Objective: The flooded houses are cleaned and the mud in the street removed.

The water in the houses has to be removed by motor pumps. The access to several districts remains difficult since the areas are covered by mud, and the vehicles are damaged due to the detritus brought by the water. The area has to be cleaned up in order to let the first aid teams reach the families and provide the basic health and care.

Activities planned:

- Pump up the water from the flooded houses.
- Clean up the area from the mud.

Psycho-social support and restoring family links

Objective: Psycho-social support is provided to the affected families and family links are restored.

Activities planned:

- Establish a psycho-social support cell in order to provide the necessary support to the affected people and to their families.
- Reinforce a restoring family links (RFL) unit to support the affected people to inform their families living in other provinces and governorates.

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

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".

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.

Contact information

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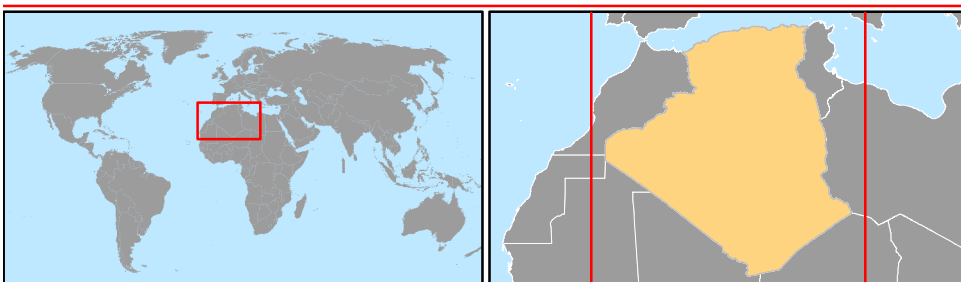
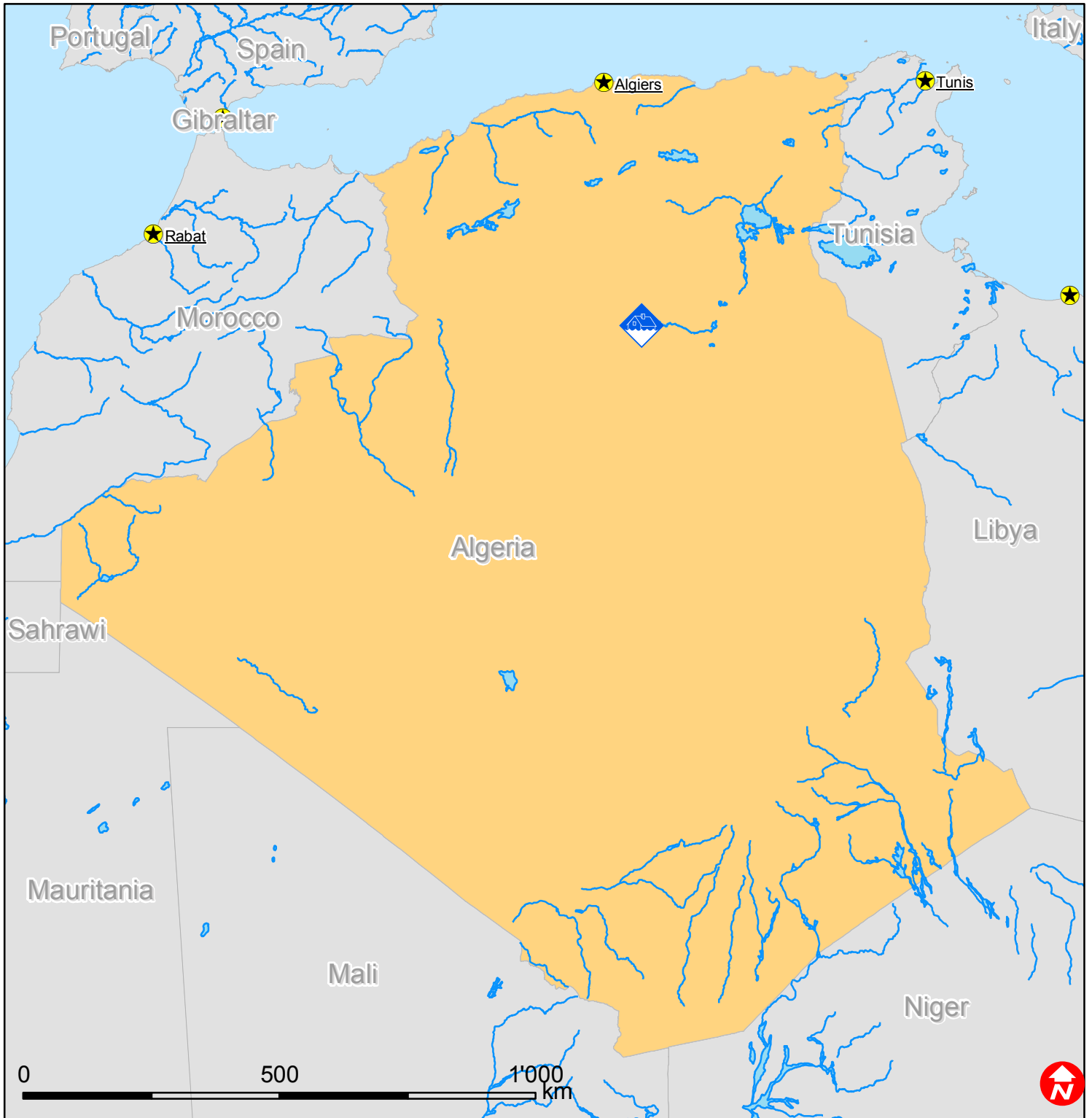
[<DREF budget and map below; click here to return to the title page>](#)

DREF Budget Summary – Algeria: Floods in Ghardaia (MDRDZ001)

Items	Quantity	Unit Price	Total Costs (CHF)
Supplies			140,000
Kitchen sets (cutlers, pots)	2,500	20	50,000
Blankets	1,000	15	15,000
Bed mattresses	1,000	50	50,000
Water and sanitation equipment- water pumps	50	500	25,000
Transport			25,000
1 Vehicle (Toyota Hilux 4x4) for Ghardaia ARCS Regional committee	1	25,000	25,000
Personnel			5,000
Incentives (transport, food) for the NS 10 drivers, 15 coordinators, 100 volunteers X 3 months			5,000
Administration			5,000
Project administration costs			5,000
Program Management Support (6.5%)			12,166
Total CHF			187,166



Algeria: Floods



Floods in Ghardaïa