

DREF operation n° MDRVN008
GLIDE n° EP-2011-000103-VNM
5 August 2011

The International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent (IFRC) 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 and Red Crescent emergency response. 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 127,221 has been allocated from the IFRC's Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF) to support the Viet Nam Red Cross Society in delivering immediate assistance to 113,625 beneficiaries over a period of four months from August to November 2011. Un-earmarked funds to repay DREF are encouraged.

Summary: Cases of hand, foot and mouth disease have increased significantly in the last two months in Viet Nam, affecting people in 49 provinces, mostly from the southern part of the country.

As of 1 August, 25,918 cases and 74 deaths have been reported to the Ministry of Health (MOH). Children under five years of age are the most vulnerable. Big cities are among the most affected areas and the Ministry is leading public health interventions to reduce infection and deaths.

As a member of the National Steering Committee on Infectious Diseases and Pandemics, Viet Nam Red Cross (VNRC) has participated in regular coordination meetings led by the Ministry of Health to keep a close watch on the situation. In July, guidance to reduce risks of HFMD was provided by Viet Nam Red Cross to its members, staff and volunteers in all 63 provinces. Provincial chapters, particularly the most affected regions in the South have mobilized volunteers to conduct community awareness-raising and education campaigns in support to HFMD prevention and control efforts of health authorities. Red Cross staff and volunteers have also strengthened cooperation with health authorities and other partner organizations in carrying out these efforts.

With DREF support, VNRC seeks to assist the most vulnerable communities in the five most severely-affected provinces of Viet Nam. Target beneficiaries are parents and caregivers of children under five years of age and those in primary school as well as their teachers. The DREF operation will focus on the communication of risks including measures to mitigate them, to prevent further transmission and to provide care to children who are infected by HFMD.



VNRC volunteers launching a campaign on the prevention of hand, foot and mouth disease in District 8, Hochiminh City in July 2011
(Photo: Viet Nam Red Cross)

VNRC will consult national and local health authorities in further defining its interventions, as well as carry out a rapid needs assessment in selected operation areas through those trained in pandemic preparedness programmes held previously before beginning the DREF operation. Existing materials on good hygiene such as hand-washing and coughing etiquette, home care and physical isolation of the sick (which were developed through the pandemic preparedness programme) will be adapted and utilized for this operation.

This operation is to be implemented for four months from August 2011, and will be completed by 30 November 2011; a final report will be made available three months after the end of the operation by 31 March 2012.

[<click for the DREF budget; contact details; or a map of the affected areas>](#)

The situation

A higher-than-normal incidence of HFMD has been noted in a number of provinces in southern Viet Nam starting April 2011. The sharp surge of HFMD cases was seen in June and continued in July. As of 1 August, the total number of reported HFMD cases has already reached 25,918, exceeding the annual total infections reported in the last three years: in particular, the cases are 2.5 times higher than the total number of cases reported in 2010. The total number of deaths due to HFMD recorded at the beginning of August also reached 74, which is 12 times higher compared to all reported deaths in 2010, and three times higher than all of 2009. Children under five years of age are the most vulnerable group, accounting for 97 per cent of all cases with 67 per cent of these being children between the ages of one and two years.

HFMD has been reported to be spreading in 49 provinces since the beginning of the year. In the week of 25 July 2011 alone, 39 provinces have reported 2,139 new cases and four deaths. As cases are reported by those who seek care in health facilities, the actual number of cases believed to be even higher since individuals infected by the virus may not show symptoms.

Reported in Viet Nam since 2003, HFMD is a common viral infection among infants and young children which can cause fever and blister-like eruptions in the mouth, on the palm of the hands and soles of the feet. It can also cause severe disease and sometimes results in death. Transmission can occur through direct contact with the virus found in nose and throat secretions, saliva, blister fluid and the stool of infected persons. There is no specific preventive measure for HFMD; hence, good hygiene practices are important in lowering the risk of infection.

The provinces of Hochiminh, Dong Nai, Dong Thap, Binh Duong, Tien Giang and Ben Tre have reported the highest number of infections among the southern provinces. About ten preschools in Hochiminh were closed in July in an attempt to stem the outbreaks. Further care is being taken in the dispensing of preventive medication after an unfortunate incident on 29 July where about 50 kindergarten children in Binh Duong were hospitalized due to mistaken prescriptions of chloramines-B, intended for school disinfection to prevent HFMD. The provincial general hospital in Quang Ngai has also been reported as being overwhelmed by the numbers of children infected by HFMD.

With support from IFRC, VNRC plans to assist 113,625¹ people with communication activities for HFMD prevention and control, focusing on good hygiene practices, and targeting parents and caregivers of children under five, primary school children and their teachers. The operation will be carried out at exactly the same time as when children go back to school in August.

Coordination and partnerships

As a member of the National Steering Committee on infectious diseases and pandemics, Viet Nam Red Cross has participated in a number of meetings and discussions on HFMD. Situation updates and guidance to chapters on implementing public education and prevention of HFMD was given by VNRC headquarters to all provinces to guide staff, members and volunteers. This cooperation has continued from previous experience in joint work on avian and pandemic influenza.

VNRC and the IFRC country office in Viet Nam meets daily in order to update and share information on the progress of the disease as well as map out activity plans for the VNRC response. On behalf of VNRC, IFRC has contacted with the World Health Organization (WHO) in-country in order to obtain further input and to

¹ Beneficiaries include 37,500 children under 6 years of age, 75,000 parents and 1,125 teachers/caregivers

plan for complementary activities in prevention and communication of risk as well as to strengthen on-site responses.

The government's response to the disease has escalated since May 2011 with intensified surveillance and monitoring. The HFMD situation is updated regularly at the National Steering Committee meetings on infectious diseases. In 4 July, the Minister of Health requested all provincial people's committees to strengthen prevention and control of HFMD. New guidance on surveillance, diagnosis and treatment of HFMD was developed and disseminated by the Ministry of Health. Up to 41 training courses on monitoring and prevention of HFMD and eight review meetings on disease prevention and control were organized in 17 provinces. Some 14,380 kg of chloramines-B have been delivered to provinces for disinfection activities. The Ministry of Health has also called for joint efforts from mass organizations, including VNRC, to respond to and prepare for possible worse case scenarios.

Red Cross and Red Crescent action

With recent experience in community-based pandemic preparedness and response and in addition to its lengthy and solid experience in disaster risk reduction, Viet Nam Red Cross is in a good position to carry out this operation in support of national and local HFMD prevention and control efforts. It has continued its cooperation and complementary role in public health by utilizing staff and volunteers as educators to disseminate messages to the general public, focusing on early detection and prevention.

In July, Red Cross staff and volunteers in those provinces with high infection rates quickly joined forces with health, education and other mass organizations in carrying out public campaigns and distributing prevention messages in outbreak areas. Among the active chapters, Hochiminh, Dong Nai, Binh Duong, Quang Ngai and Thanh Hoa have begun joint efforts with the public health sector in providing education to schools and households on HFMD prevention. The response team for infectious disease is also on high alert at the national headquarters to keep close watch on the situation and to prepare for response.

The following activities have been implemented at the community level by VNRC staff and volunteers:

- **Ho Chi Minh provincial chapter:** Red Cross staff and volunteers at district level have carried out HFMD prevention and control campaigns together with the centre of infectious disease, department of education and the Women's Union. Volunteers have also been mobilized to conduct awareness-raising activities in communities and distribute leaflets with key prevention messages.
- **Dong Nai provincial chapter:** Having received the guidelines from the VNRC national headquarters, the chapter immediately sent instructions to its network, including Red Cross staff members and volunteers, encouraging them to participate actively in community communication activities.

The needs

As described above, there is no vaccination and specific treatment for HFMD and the disease infecting mostly children under the age of five. Children in preschool and day care centres are at higher risk due to close proximity. From past year records, it is common for Southern provinces to have higher cases during March-May and September-December. As children will begin the new school year soon, it is therefore imperative that stronger public health interventions are carried out in provinces most in need.

Even though the Ministry of Health is actively providing instructions, guidelines and plans of activity on the HFMD, most of these activities are at upper level (i.e. national headquarters, provincial and district) and have insufficient support and intervention at community level. Preparedness and capacity building are mostly provided within the health sector itself, and to some extent, the education sector; however, gaps in knowledge and skills to respond are at community level. It is acknowledged that there is a significant absence of printed information, education and communication (IEC) materials specifically addressing HFMD for different user groups such as caregivers, school teachers and parents.

The proposed operation

VNRC proposes an immediate operation to provide assistance to 113,625 beneficiaries in prevention and reduction of impact due to HFMD. While the government's response to the HFMD situation is prompt, it requires the support and collaboration of health partners, such as VNRC to provide complementary

response, particularly community-level awareness-raising of HFMD prevention and control. In consideration of assessment results and priorities in the response of each province, VNRC will focus its response to this HFMD outbreak in the following:

- Distribution of printed IEC materials on HFMD prevention and control
- Distribution of disinfection materials and soap to preschools and day care centres
- Conducting of community sensitization, demonstration on HFMD prevention and control measures
- Training of trainers and volunteers on HFMD prevention

The intervention will be focused on five most affected provinces in the country, including those with the highest cases of infection and fatality as well as those with newly reported infections and fewer resources to respond. Priority provinces are Hochiminh, Dong Nai, Binh Duong, Quang Ngai and Thanh Hoa.

Provinces	Planned activities	Target
Hochiminh, Dong Nai, Binh Duong Quang Ngai and Thanh Hoa	Distribution of IEC materials	150,000 copies*
	Distribution of disinfection materials to	225 preschools and day care centres,
	Training of caregivers, school teachers and parents	Approximately 76,125 target people
	Community sensitization, demonstration on HFMD prevention and control	3,765 sensitization meetings and demonstrations
	Training of trainers	30 trained instructors
	Training of volunteers	750 trained volunteers

*Remaining copies to be used in expansion of activities and forthcoming needs.

Overall goal for emergency health response:

To contribute to the reduction of illness, deaths and impact of HFMD in five severely-affected provinces in Viet Nam.

Specific objectives:

Emergency health
<p>Outcome: Targeted population in 75 communes in five severely affected provinces have improved knowledge and practices in the prevention and control of hand, foot and mouth disease (HFMD).</p>
<p>Activities planned:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Activate VNRC national and provincial emergency health teams • Conduct rapid needs assessment • Develop and circulate HFMD updates and guidelines on community-based responses, centred on non-pharmaceutical interventions to HFMD to Red Cross branches and priority communities • Train/update VNRC trainers and volunteers on HFMD, epidemic control and first aid • Disseminate HFMD prevention and control messages via mass media • Conduct HFMD prevention and control awareness-raising activities, including hand-washing demonstrations, in selected communities, preschool and day care centres, • Provide hygiene items along with HFMD prevention activities to selected preschools and households in outbreak areas • Monitor and evaluate operation (including beneficiary satisfaction surveys and lessons learned for volunteers and National Society staff)

Contact information

For further information specifically related to this operation please contact:

- **Viet Nam Red Cross:** Mr. Doan Van Thai, vice president, secretary general; phone: +84 913 216549 email: doanvanthai62@yahoo.com.vn
- **IFRC country office, Viet Nam:**

- Bhupinder Tomar, head of country office, phone +84 904 067 955, email: bhupinder.tomar@ifrc.org
- Ms. Thuan Nguyen, healthcare manager, phone +84 912 256 224, email: thuan.nguyen@ifrc.org
- **IFRC Southeast Asia regional office, Bangkok:** Anne Leclerc, head of regional office, phone: +662 661 8201; email: anne.leclerc@ifrc.org
- **IFRC Asia Pacific zone, Kuala Lumpur:**
 - Al Panico, head of operations, phone: +603 9207 5700, email: al.panico@ifrc.org :
 - Heikki Väättämoinen, operations coordinator, phone: +6012 2307895, email: heikki.vaatamoinen@ifrc.org
 - Jim Catampongan, emergency health coordinator, phone: +603 9207 5779, email: jim.catampongan@ifrc.org
 - Alan Bradbury, head of resource mobilization and PMER, phone: +603 9207 5775, email: alan.bradbury@ifrc.org
Please send all pledges of funding to zonerm.asiapacific@ifrc.org



[Click here](#)

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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 \(NGOs\) 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.

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Saving lives, changing minds.



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.
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DREF OPERATION

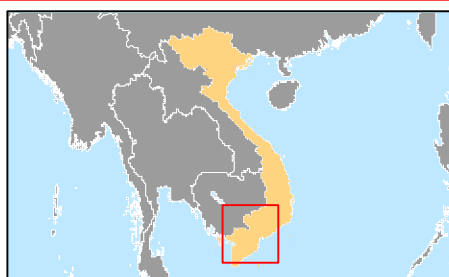
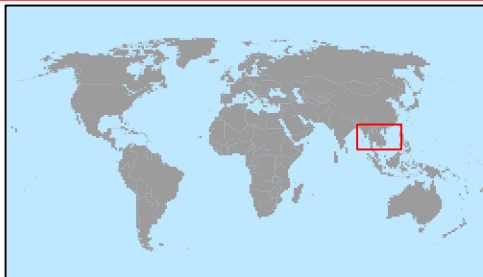
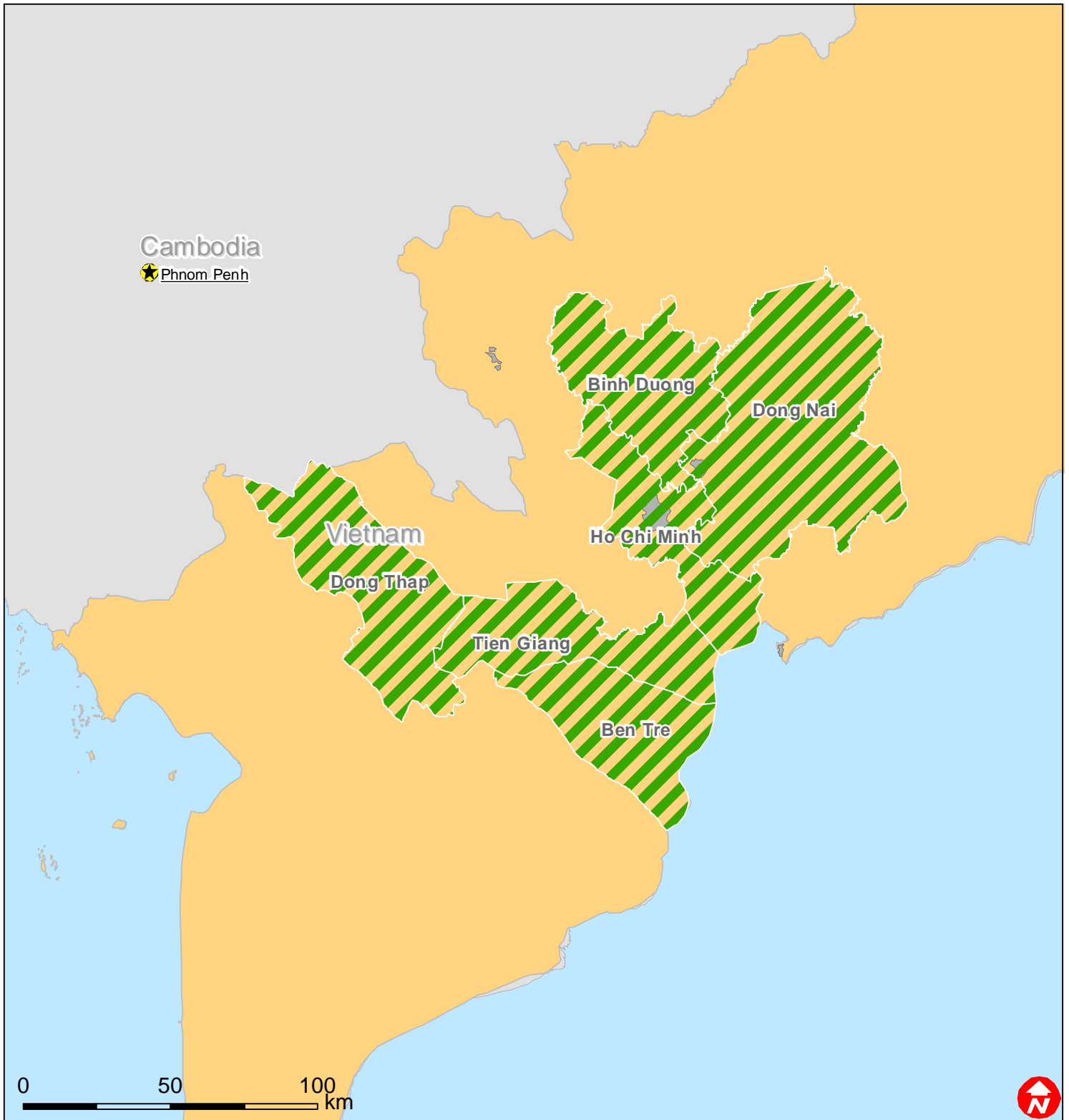
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MDRVN008 Viet Nam : Hand, Foot and Mouth Disease

Budget Group	DREF Grant Budget CHF
Water, Sanitation & Hygiene	8,870
Total RELIEF ITEMS, CONSTRUCTION AND SUPPLIES	8,870
Distribution & Monitoring	10,000
Total LOGISTICS, TRANSPORT AND STORAGE	10,000
National Society Staff	9,539
Volunteers	14,674
Total PERSONNEL	24,213
Consultants	2,000
Total CONSULTANTS & PROFESSIONAL FEES	2,000
Workshops & Training	34,303
Total WORKSHOPS & TRAINING	34,303
Travel	5,900
Information & Public Relations	31,870
Communications	2,300
Total GENERAL EXPENDITURES	40,070
Programme and Supplementary Services Recovery	7,765
Total INDIRECT COSTS	7,765
TOTAL BUDGET	127,221



Vietnam: Epidemic



 Most affected districts