

INFORMATION BULLETIN



International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies
Fédération internationale des Sociétés de la Croix-Rouge et du Croissant-Rouge
Federación Internacional de Sociedades de la Cruz Roja y de la Media Luna Roja
الاتحاد الدولي لجمعيات الصليب الأحمر والهلال الأحمر

RUSSIAN FEDERATION

22 May 2003

Information Bulletin N° 2/03 (Final)

Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF) allocated: CHF 15,000

This Bulletin is being issued based on information available related to the Russian Red Cross (RRC) response so far to this operation. A DREF allocation of CHF 15,000 was released. While the Federation did not anticipate further needs and therefore did not launch an appeal, unearmarked funds to repay DREF are needed.

The Situation

Severe fires occurred in two Russian Federation schools in the Republics of Yakutia and Dagestan on 7 and 10 April, killing 28 children in a boarding school for invalid children in Makhachkala, Dagestan, and 22 children in a secondary school in Sydybyl in Vyljusk Ulus (administrative unit) settlement, Yakutia. Both fires were extinguished by Emercom (Russian Federation Ministry of Emergencies) workers.

Dagestan: 166 children were sleeping in a boarding school for deaf and dumb children when the fire broke out at two o'clock in the morning. Twenty-eight children aged 7 to 14 years old were killed and 113 were hospitalised with severe burns, trauma and asphyxia. The two-storey building of the boarding school was burned down. An Emercom cargo plane delivered immediate assistance in the form of humanitarian aid to the fire victims, and State health authorities and other related services were alerted and provided urgently needed assistance. April 11th was the official mourning day in the Republic.

Yakutia: the fire broke out at 9.15am in the morning just as the children were starting classes. Over one hundred students and nine personnel were in the building at the time of the disaster. Twenty-two children aged 10 to 18 years old were killed, and 39 were hospitalised with burns and asphyxia. The school premises were burned down.

Red Cross and Red Crescent Action

CHF 15,000 was released from the Federation's DREF to support and provide assistance to children affected by the fire following a request for funding from the Russian Red Cross (RRC). DREF funds will be used to support children affected in Yakutia. The American Red Cross has provided support to those affected in Dagestan.

Yakutia

A preliminary needs assessment was conducted by the Executive Director of the local RRC branch in cooperation with the local department of the Russian Federation Ministry of Health. The immediate needs of the children affected by the fires were recognised and a plan formulated to distribute humanitarian aid. The RRC procured and distributed goods to approximately 85 beneficiaries (children affected by the fire) as detailed below:

Table 1. Plan of distribution of relief items in Yakutia

Relief items	Clothes					Shoes (pairs)		Hygienic kits*
	<i>Jacket</i>	<i>Sweater</i>	<i>Knitted hat</i>	<i>Adult trousers</i>	<i>Sports trousers</i>	<i>Girls</i>	<i>boys</i>	
Number of items	50	50	50	50	50	45	45	70

*Hygiene kit contents: toothpaste, toothbrush, towel, soap, laundry soap, shampoo.

The process of tendering and procuring goods was conducted in the Yakutia Republic. Relief items were stored in the regional RRC branch warehouse in Yakutsk, and, due to the inaccessibility of the area, transported to Vyljusk Ulus by airplane and onwards to Sydybyl by helicopter.

The distribution of goods to beneficiaries was completed on 13 May 2003. RRC headquarters is currently awaiting final reports on the distribution of relief items and beneficiary numbers from the RRC Yakutia branch. The RRC worked closely in cooperation with the local administration, the Ministry of Social Welfare and education department to complete distribution in a timely and efficient manner.

In addition to the DREF-funded distributions, RRC Yakutia has been actively involved in supporting victims of the fire. Yakutia RRC Committee volunteers and staff collected donations and allocated food aid for families of the affected children. Local funds raised by the RRC Yakutia and RRC Moscow have been used to purchase additional hygiene kits and first aid supplies. Second-hand clothes, shoes and educational materials have also been donated and distributed to victims of the fire.

Dagestan

American Red Cross-funded RRC operations continue in Dagestan. The process of tendering and procuring relief items for children affected by the fires has been completed following a needs assessment conducted by RRC Dagestan. Goods are currently at the RRC's national headquarters warehouse in Moscow. In addition to the items detailed below, the RRC is providing specialist educational materials for the deaf. Transport and distribution of all items is expected to take place within the next two weeks. Delays have been experienced in transporting and distributing goods due to late receipt of certain items in Moscow and problems in locating transport facilities.

Table 2. Plan of distribution of relief items in Dagestan

Relief items	Blankets	Bed linen	Hygiene kits	School kits	Clothing/ shoes (set)
Number of units	170	170	170	170	170

The process of tendering and procuring relief items for Dagestan did not take place in the region due to following:

- the lack of capacity of the local RRC branch.
- the hard currency for goods basis on which the majority of business in Dagestan Republic is conducted is inappropriate when carrying out long- distance procurement.

In addition to the distribution funded by the American Red Cross, RRC Dagestan continues to collect food items, second hand clothes, and donations to support people affected by the fires.

For a full description of the National Society profile, see www.ifrc.org

All International Federation Operations seek to adhere to the Code of Conduct and are committed to the Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Disaster Response (SPHERE Project) in delivering assistance to the most vulnerable. For support to or for further information concerning Federation operations in this or other countries, please access the Federation website at <http://www.ifrc.org>.

For longer-term programmes, please refer to the Federation's Annual Appeal.