

OPERATIONS UPDATE



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

HUNGARY, ROMANIA, UKRAINE: FLOODS

11 May, 2001

This Ops Update is intended for reporting on emergency appeals.

Appeal No. 13/01

Launched on 9 March 2001 for CHF 1,574,048 for 2 months. Budget revised in Situation Report no. 1, increased to CHF 2,185,764, and the timeframe increased to 30 September 2001.

DREF Allocated: CHF 150,000 (CHF 50,000 for each country).

Beneficiaries: 53,000

Operations Update No. 2; Period covered: 28 March 2001 to 25 April 2001 (last Ops Update issued: Situation Report no. 1 issued on 2 April 2001); Next Ops Update No. 3 expected by end June 2001.

“At a Glance”

Appeal coverage: 47.3%

Related Appeals: 01.52/2001: Central Europe Regional Programmes; 01.61/2001: Ukraine

Outstanding needs: CHF 1,152,864

The Disaster/Situation: The delivery of flood assistance has been quick and efficient, particularly in the Ukraine where strong donor support has facilitated the response. In Hungary and Romania where just a small part of the appeal has been covered, the Red Cross could make a considerable difference by providing the planned activities with improved donor support. In the Ukraine the most pressing need is reconstruction of houses, but relief supplies, shelter materials, food, and hygiene parcels are also needed.

Operational Developments:

Hungary

The reconstruction committee set up by the government has collected information on infrastructure and housing damages. As indicated earlier the government will do its best to build replacement housing or repair damage by September, 2001. Negotiations with local building companies have started.

Damage to agricultural land will preclude cultivation this year, leaving most of the population in the flood affected area without their main source of income. The government, through local municipalities, has requested the civil society sector to play an active role in providing basic living assistance to people affected by the floods.

Romania

Although life has returned to normal in all the flood affected areas, most of those affected by the floods have lost their food reserves and are not able to cultivate their land in this agricultural season.

Ukraine

Flood-waters have subsided in Zakarpathia, an impoverished agricultural region which borders Poland, Slovakia, Hungary and Romania. The area remains devastated, with wells contaminated in some areas and thousands of homes flood-damaged or completely destroyed. The government has started to demolish at-risk buildings and the army is assisting with very limited reconstruction work. All areas are now accessible although roads are badly damaged in places. An excellent response from donors for the Ukraine section of this appeal together with substantial budget savings due to local purchase has enabled the National Society to increase the quantities of aid given and to consider adding extra relief items for a later stage of distributions. Almost all of the 10,000 people who were given emergency temporary accommodation have now moved out of communal shelters and are lodging with family or friends. Some have returned to their properties and are living in barns, outhouses or other shelter as they either fear for what property escaped the floods or have no desire to remain away from their homesteads any longer.

Red Cross Red Crescent action

Hungary

The Federation released CHF 50,000 from its Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF) and the Hungarian Red Cross used a part of it to distribute some basic food and hygiene items to the evacuated people right after the disaster occurred. The remaining amount, together with local donations, is funding the present distribution of food and hygiene items and bedding sets.

Romania

The Federation released CHF 50,000 from the DREF to enable the Romanian Red Cross to provide immediate support to the flood victims.

Ukraine

The Federation released CHF 50,000 from the DREF and the Ukraine Red Cross Society is now procuring 6,200 hygiene parcels (washing powder, soap, shampoo, disinfectants, toothbrushes and paste) and 3,000 well disinfection cartridges. Support to the appeal has allowed procurement to begin, and 25 MT of clothes and shoes from the Danish Red Cross and have been distributed. The Swiss Red Cross has provided 2,000 sleeping bags, 9,500 blankets, clothes and hygiene items which is being transported to the target areas.

An application for EUR200,000 was submitted to ECHO on April 20, mainly to fund the restocking of disaster preparedness items such as blankets, mattresses, jerry cans, tents and bed linen. One of the main reasons the URCS has received credit from local authorities is the speed with which it disbursed DP stocks collected after the 1998 floods.

Red Cross and Red Crescent Society Action

Hungary

Relief distributions

During the period from 6 March to 26 April, the Hungarian Red Cross had received locally 135 MT of food, 112 MT of clothes and 112 MT of various other items with a value of CHF 780,000. In addition to that the national society received CHF 95,000 in cash from private individuals and companies in the country. A distribution of food (7,000 parcels) and hygiene parcels (2,000) together with bedding sets (600) has taken place in 12 affected districts. Further distributions were planned between 7-9 May. With the planned distribution of 4,100 food parcels all the affected families will be provided support. The food parcels contain canned meat, sugar, flour, oil, pasta, chocolate, juice, cookies, soup, and tea. The hygiene parcels contain 3 kgs washing powder, 1 litre of cleaning fluid, toilet paper, and soap. With the funding support pledged but not yet received, a similar distribution of food parcels will take place in July. Used clothes will be distributed over the following two months.

Romania

Relief distributions

Some 1,500 beneficiaries in the most severely affected areas in the districts of Bistrita-Nasaud (500) and Maramures (1,000) have been assisted with the provision of food parcels including basic food items (rice, sugar, edible oil, and meat cans). Pending the level of further support, the Romanian Red Cross will distribute food parcels (using the remaining half of the amount released from DREF) to the same beneficiaries in May.

Ukraine

The URCS responded rapidly to the floods, providing immediate assistance to those affected. Many Red Cross volunteers themselves were flood victims which heightened the sense of solidarity between the flood affected and the National Society, and underscored the community nature of the Red Cross in Ukraine. Psycho-social/trauma counseling was also given in the days after the floods, which was a great value. When travelling in the region it is immediately clear how members of the URCS local branches are recognised and respected, and how well local structures are organised.

Health

The local authorities report that there have been no major outbreaks of transmittable diseases. However, doctors warn against complacency - hepatitis and respiratory disease outbreaks are always possible. Hospitals were also affected by floods and have lost vital equipment.

Water-sanitation

Running water has been reconnected (where it existed in the first place) but in many areas wells have still not been treated. Locals are using open wells in the absence of deliveries of clean water to all areas. The URCS is completing procurement of 3,000 disinfectant cartridges for wells and will distribute these as an urgent priority.

Relief distributions

The last situation report gave a complete breakdown of distributions in the days after the floods. Since then 25 MT of clothes and shoes (men, women and children) from the Danish Red Cross have been distributed, along with 2 MT of whites for hospital workers.

Logistics

All villages are now accessible although some roads are still impassable and alternatives across mountains have to be used. The rail network in the area is back to normal. Flights are theoretically possible each day, but demand is low and scheduled flights from Kiev (2 hours) are rare.

Shelter

The shelter situation in Zakarpathia is alarming. Brick houses, by and large, survived the floods, although water entered every house in the area, often to a depth of one metre or more, meaning bedding, furniture, electric fittings, and clothing have been ruined. Many brick houses (stone or cement) also suffered severe structural damage, particularly those that were joined to older mud/straw brick houses. The mud and straw brick houses simply dissolved in the floods. Flood prevention preparations are at a very low level in this region as it has never been prone to flooding in the past. However the combination of rainfall, snowmelt and deforestation means that the area is now prone to floods at any time. There is no evidence of any organised distribution of shelter material.

Those who were living in mud and straw brick houses have moved into barns, erected temporary wooden shacks (where wood can be found), or moved in with relatives and friends. Ninety per cent of the 10,000 people evacuated to temporary communal accommodation have since returned to what is left of their homes, and the others are expected to return within the coming days.

National Society Capacity Building

The Ukraine Red Cross is leading most of the logistical aspects of this operation, relying on the small Federation office for technical support. The URCS branch in Zakarpathia is one of the best prepared in the region, having coped with similar devastating floods three years ago.

Coordination

Hungary

While the Red Cross is the main provider of relief, there are several other important players in the field of humanitarian assistance in the country. Hungarian Caritas, Hungarian Interchurch, and Hungarian Maltese have also supported the floods victims, coordinating activities as much as possible in the process.

Romania

The Romanian Red Cross is the sole organization providing relief assistance to the flood-affected persons in the country. The experience and capacity of the national society is well acknowledged and appreciated by the government. The government considers the national society its primary partner in disaster response operations.

Ukraine

The Ukraine Red Cross Society is the main provider of humanitarian aid in the region, a fact that has been recognised and widely acknowledged by the authorities. Local government and the Red Cross are working well together, registering beneficiaries and assessing their level of need. Caritas and the Salvation Army, as well as local church groups and NGOs have also made distributions, mainly of clothes.

Outstanding needs

Hungary and Romania

The portion of the appeal for Hungary and Romania has received limited coverage, and considerably more support is needed to carry out the planned activities.

Ukraine

The appeal has been well covered and donors reacted with suitable speed. The most pressing need is for the reconstruction of houses, but further quantities of relief supplies, shelter materials, food and hygiene parcels are also needed.

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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.

This operation seeks to administer to the immediate requirements of those affected by this disaster. Subsequent operations to promote sustainable development or longer-term capacity building will require additional support, and these programmes are outlined on the Federation's website.

For further information concerning Federation operations in this or other countries, please access the Federation website at www.ifrc.org.

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Hungary, Romanian and Ukraine Floods						ANNEX 1
APPEAL No. 13/2001		PLEDGES RECEIVED			05/08/01	
DONOR	CATEGORY	QUANTITY	UNIT	VALUE CHF	DATE	COMMENT
CASH						TOTAL COVERAGE
REQUESTED IN APPEAL CHF ----->				2,185,764	47.3%	
CASH CARRIED FORWARD						
AMERICAN PRIVATE		15,000	USD	25,698	09.04.01	HUNGARY
AUSTRIAN - GOVT		145,340	EUR	223,591	29.03.01	HUNGARY AND UKRAINE
BRITISH - GOVT/DFID		98,040	GBP	236,276	15.03.01	UKRAINE
BRITISH - PRIVATE/RC		387	GBP	933	02.04.01	HUNGARY, ROMANIA, UKRAINE
DANISH - RC		65,000	DKK	13,390	27.03.01	UKRAINE
LIECHTENSTEIN - RC				10,000	22.03.01	HUNGARY
MONACO - RC		40,000	FRF	9,264	09.03.01	HUNGARY, ROMANIA, UKRAINE
NORWAY - RC		323,625	NOK	60,548	22.03.01	UKRAINE
SPANISH - RC		2,500,000	ESP	23,115	19.03.01	DIRECT TO UKRAINIAN NS
SPANISH - RC		2,500,000	ESP	23,115	21.03.01	DIRECT TO ROMANIAN NS
SPANISH - RC		2,500,000	ESP	23,115	21.03.01	DIRECT TO HUNGARIAN NS
SWEDISH - RC		4,000	SEK	695	09.03.01	PSC USED CLOTHES
SUB/TOTAL RECEIVED IN CASH				649,740	CHF	29.7%
KIND AND SERVICES (INCLUDING PERSONNEL)						
DONOR	CATEGORY	QUANTITY	UNIT	VALUE CHF	DATE	COMMENT
DANISH - GOVT		300,000	DKK	103,088	27.03.01	UKRAINE, 27'000 KG USED CLOTHES & TRANSPORTATION
SWEDISH - RC		118,800	SEK	20,636	09.03.01	16'000 KG USED CLOTHES & TRANSPORTATION
SWISS - RC				259,412	29.03.01	UKRAINE, 9'500 BLANKETS, 2'000 SLEEPING-BAGS, 40 TONNES CLOTHES HYGIENE-ARTICLES, FOOD ITEMS
SUB/TOTAL RECEIVED IN KIND/SERVICES				383,136	CHF	17.5%
ADDITIONAL TO APPEAL BUDGET						
DONOR	CATEGORY	QUANTITY	UNIT	VALUE CHF	DATE	COMMENT
SUB/TOTAL RECEIVED				0	CHF	
THE FOLLOWING PROJECTS ARE LINKED TO THIS APPEAL:						