

Operations update



International Federation
of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

Moldova and Ukraine: Floods

Emergency appeal n° MDR67003
Glide n° FL-2008-000122-UKR/MDA
18 August 2008

Period covered by this Ops Update: 5-14 August 2008;

Appeal target: CHF 1,250,355 (USD 1,193,428 or EUR 765,881)

Appeal coverage: 33 per cent;

[<click here to go directly to the updated donor response report>](#)
[<here to link to contact details>](#)

Appeal history: This Emergency Appeal was initially launched on 5 August 2008 for CHF 1,250,355 (USD 1,193,428 or EUR 765,881) for eight months to assist 60,000 beneficiaries.

Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF): CHF 636,942 was initially allocated from the Federation's DREF to support the National Societies in the initial phase of operations in Ukraine (CHF 437,942) and Moldova (CHF 199,000) respectively.

Summary: Flooding on the Dniester and Prut rivers has resulted in around 40 deaths, some 30,000 people displaced and up to one billion dollars worth of damage, according to figures from the respective governments. Based on the situation, this Emergency Appeal responded to a request from the National Societies, and focuses on providing support to take an appropriate and timely response in delivering assistance and relief in the following sectors: water supply (filters), emergency food aid, hygiene supplies, household kits, bedding, mattresses, repair work and psychological support.

In the reporting period the National Red Cross Societies of Ukraine and Moldova have provided about 6,000 most vulnerable people affected by the disaster with basic emergency relief items (food products, bed linen, kitchen sets) and water filters.

Response to the operation from within and outside the International Federation has been encouraging. The Canadian Red Cross, Czech Red Cross, Spanish Red Cross, French Red Cross, Netherlands Red Cross, Swedish Red Cross, American Red Cross, Norwegian Red Cross and the Irish Government have responded to the appeal or donated directly to the National Societies. The Turkish Red Crescent, Hungarian Red Cross and 3-M private company in Ukraine contributed in kind.

This operation is expected to be implemented over eight months, and will therefore be completed by April 2009; a Final Report will be made available by July 2009 (three months after the end of the operation).



Moldova Red Cross volunteers distributing food, clothes and hygiene items to flood-affected villagers in Drepkauts, Northern Moldova. Photo: Joe Lowry /International Federation

The situation

The worst storms in over two centuries have led to devastating flooding in some of the most impoverished parts of Ukraine and Moldova. More than 38 lives were lost in western Ukraine, including eight children, with 2 dozen more people still missing. Thousands of homes were destroyed or made uninhabitable and the homes of more than 20,000 people had to be evacuated.

The governments will be providing assistance related to the rebuilding of the houses. Estimates put the damage at over one billion US dollars. Six regions were affected in western Ukraine: Ivano-Frankivsk, Chernivtsy, Zakarpattya, Lviv, Ternopil and Vinitsia. In these regions 862 settlements, with around 45,000 houses, more than 30,000 hectares of arable land and 680 kilometres of roads have been damaged.



Part of the mudslide that took away the upper village of Chernahusi in Western Ukraine.
Photo: Joe Lowry/International Federation

On 9 August, the second wave of heavy rains hit Zakarpats'ka region in the west of Ukraine, on the border with Slovakia and Hungary. As a result, 2,300 households 622 wells were flooded. As of 12 August, 32 households and 134 wells remain flooded in the region.

Prompt action by local authorities, backed up by the Red Cross response activities definitely saved lives, although the waters rose too quickly to enable people to save their possessions. Whole communities are severely traumatized by the loss of their homes and belongings. Many people have lost everything except the clothes they were wearing when they fled.

The Ukrainian government has declared a three-month state of emergency in the region to deal with the crisis. The government has set up a central headquarters, led by the first vice-prime minister to coordinate post-flood rehabilitation work in western

regions affected by devastating flooding.

At the present moment, the Ukraine Ministry of Emergencies is attempting to restore the water, electricity and gas supplies in the affected areas. More than 22,000 houses were dewatered. About 400,000 tones of food products and 6,000 tones of medicines were supplied by the government.

Moldova, while less affected, suffered similar conditions resulting in considerable flood damage to 23 districts in the north of the country. Three people drowned in the capital, Chisinau. Although no final assessment of the damage inflicted by the floods has been made so far, according to the Moldovan Ministry of Emergencies, more than 40 settlements were hit by the disaster, 667 private houses and 471 buildings, such as schools and kindergartens were flooded, including 131 destroyed completely. An estimated 6,525 hectares of agricultural land and 1,085 wells have been flooded. Three villages- Criva, Drepcăuți and Lipcani in Briceni district were at the centre of the disaster that destroyed 31 and flooded about 200 houses. In the Oknitsa district the river Dniester flooded 15 houses. Rescue teams from the department for emergency situations of the Ministry of Internal Affairs have rescued hundreds of people. This includes over one thousand children from summer camps in the municipality of Chisinau and 18 children from a boarding centre in Soroca district.

On Monday, 4 August, high water struck Transnistria, overflowing a critical dam and forcing the evacuation of much of Tiraspol. More than 90 per cent of the central streets of the city, and the entire Dniestr bank throughout Tiraspol, were under water, forcing the evacuation of residents. Less substantial flooding was reported in the cities of Dubossari and Bendery. In total, according to the authorities in Transnistria, 800 houses in the province were flooded and 3 completely destroyed by the floods.

Floods in Ukraine and Moldova have generated a strong response by the international community. Various countries, international organizations, NGOs and private companies have supplied humanitarian aid to those affected by the disaster.

Coordination and partnerships

Both National Societies work very closely with government authorities at all levels – national, regional and local – in their auxiliary role. The government of Moldova is facilitating the relief effort with a “green light” at the customs for the trucks with humanitarian assistance. Transportation of humanitarian assistance to the affected regions is also being assisted and the government is helping with the selection of beneficiaries. Authorities in Transnistria have agreed to facilitate aid from Chisinau entering the province.

The International Federation, via its offices in Kiev, Chisinau, Moscow and Budapest leads the coordination of international relief assistance, including the mobilization of financial resources and technical expertise where required.

Red Cross and Red Crescent action

The Ukraine Red Cross has carried out an assessment of the situation and initiated relief efforts. In the days immediately following the disaster Red Cross staff and volunteers provided hot meals and tea, as well as distributing food parcels and clothing from their emergency stocks. Volunteers have even been sheltering those who lost their houses in their own homes. The National Society appealed to its branches to collect humanitarian assistance for the affected regions. In Ivano-Frankivsk region, the local branches started to distribute 7,000 food parcels from locally raised funds.

Red Cross volunteers have distributed 275 tones of hygiene items, worth USD 390,000 that Procter and Gamble donated. In addition, 7 tones of food (worth CHF 60,000) was distributed by helicopter to the Kosovo and Verhovina districts of the Ivano-Frankivsk region. This operation was run together with the Development of Ukraine Foundation.

Based on the information received from the Briceni Red Cross branch, the Moldova Red Cross conducted a needs assessment in Briceni and, subsequently, provided immediate support to the two most affected villages of Drepcauti and Criva. An evaluation was also done by the Red Cross branches in Soroca, Anenii Noi, Tighina, Criuleni, Rezina and Stefan – Voda.

Needs assessments are ongoing and larger distributions have started. The International Federation’s country representative for Belarus, Moldova and Ukraine, the representation’s programme coordinator for Ukraine and the Ukraine Red Cross’s head of humanitarian department visited the disaster zone in Ukraine and Moldova.

Allocations from the International Federation’s Disaster Response Emergency Fund (DREF) have enabled both National Societies to move ahead with their plans – within minutes of the DREF being announced Ukraine Red Cross had ordered the first of 10,000 membrane water filters. Following the DREF bulletin, a list of beneficiaries was completed, suppliers and tender documents prepared. An amount of 30,000 Euro has been allocated to the Moldova Red Cross for the flood response operation by the French Embassy.



Ukraine Red Cross Head of Humanitarian department, Natalia Karina, listens to 70 year old Hannah Berelyak telling how she lost her crops and how her house was damaged in the recent heavy floods. Photo: Joe Lowry /International Federation

Relief distributions (food and basic non-food items)	
Objective: To provide emergency relief (food parcels and basic non-food items) to a total of 12,000 families (60,000 people)	
Expected results	Activities planned

12,000 most-affected families receive emergency food aid, bedding, hygiene supplies and/or household sets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Beneficiary lists will be supplied by local branches in conjunction with the local authorities at village level • Distribution of relief supplies to 12000 most affected families. • Replenishment of essential stock already distributed • Basic relief training for selected staff and volunteers where required • Monitor and evaluate the relief activities and provide reporting on relief distributions • Carry out beneficiary satisfaction surveys to determine follow-up, and to guide future operations
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Progress: The Ukraine Red Cross Society conducted a detailed assessment of the needs among the branches of the affected regions, signed operational contracts with the International Federation and now is in the process of procuring the necessary relief items (food parcels, bed linen and kitchen sets).

Two days after the disaster, on 30 July, the Moldova Red Cross distributed from its own emergency stock relief items and food products worth CHF 27,000 to 233 affected families (546 people) in Criva and Drepcăuți villages, Briceni district.

In addition, out of the four trucks with CHF 166,600 worth of humanitarian assistance from the Turkish Red Crescent which arrived on 7 August, the Moldova Red Cross has already distributed items with an estimated value of CHF 9,850 to 52 affected families (117 people) in Lipcani village of Briceni district.

Item	Moldova Red Cross emergency stocks	Turkish Red Crescent	Total
Blankets pc.	252	100	352
Bed linen pc.	252		252
Mattresses pc.		34	34
Jerry cans pc.	233	52	285
Kitchen sets pc.		52	52
Shaving sets pc.	5400		5400
Soap kg.	655.2		655.2
Pasta kg.	600	104	704
Rice kg.	300	130	430
Sugar kg.	300	156	456
Beans kg.		104	104
Peas kg.		260	260
Wheat flour kg.		260	260
Shoes pairs	325		325

Table 1 Total amount of relief items and food products distributed by the Moldova Red Cross

Settlements	Number of families	Elderly people		Disabled		Multi-child families	One parent families	Other groups	Total number of people
		female	male	female	male				
Criva	85	43	35	23	29	31	12	39	212
Drepcăuți	148	57	41	37	42	39	25	93	334
Lipcani	52	13	7	2	5	1	2	87	117
	285	113	83	62	76	71	39	219	663

Table 2 Beneficiaries of the Moldova Red Cross emergency relief operation in Briceni district

Challenges: Distribution of relief items in Ukraine is complicated because of the lack of transport means in the regional and district branches and also because of the damaged roads and bridges.

Water, sanitation, and hygiene promotion

Objective: The risk of waterborne and water related diseases has been reduced through the provision of safe water, adequate sanitation as well as hygiene promotion to 12,000 families in seven areas for three months.	
Expected results	Activities planned
Safe water is provided to 12,000 families through distribution of inexpensive water filters.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Distribute 12,000 locally-made membrane mini-filters which have a working life on one year and require minimal maintenance (weekly cleaning). • Promote hygiene awareness and basic sanitation, and provide guidance on maintenance/cleaning of filters
Wells in the affected regions are tested to determine clean-up needs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deploy a water and sanitation technician to assess the water and sanitation needs • To advise on the need for clean-up of contaminated wells in affected areas
Capacity of National Society in conducting water and sanitation assessments on usability of wells and chlorination is boosted.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Train National Society volunteers and staff on well safety, using water and sanitation technicians • Monitor the progress of those trained so they can be used as resources in future emergency operations of this kind within Europe.

The Ukraine Red Cross has distributed one water filter to each of 5,000 families in all the six affected regions in Ukraine: Ivano-Frankivsk, Chernivtsy, Zakarpattya, Lviv, Ternopil and Vinitsia. In addition, 3,500 filters were provided by the Development of Ukraine Foundation. Beneficiaries were selected among the people who were already under the patronage of the Red Cross such as elderly people living alone, multi-child families, single parents with small children and low-income families.

Communications – Advocacy and Public Information

On 29 July, national TV and radio channels in Ukraine transmitted the Red Cross appeal to collect money and relief items for the people affected by the floods. The President of the Ukraine Red Cross and heads of regional branches in Ivano-Frankivsk and Chernivtsy were interviewed by the national radio. At the regional level, heads of the branches stay in regular contact with the media. The National Societies have done many interviews for all media; Moldova Red Cross did four in one morning, including Radio Free Liberty.

The distribution process in Moldova is broadly highlighted by national and local media. The International Federation's office in Kiev is working closely with the media department in Geneva to raise media attention and public awareness about the Red Cross response to the floods in Ukraine and Moldova. The country representative did an interview for Moldovan TV, for Vatican Radio and for Associated Press.

Assistance provided by the Red Cross is very much welcomed by the affected population. Attention to the needs of each affected person and the individual character of the systemic problem solving approach to the operations strengthen its status as a serious partner both at the local community level and at the regional level.

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

For further information specifically related to this operation please contact:

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