

DREF operation final report



International Federation
of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

Moldova: Food Insecurity

DREF operation n° MDRMD001
Glide No. DR-2007-000175-MDA
25 September, 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.

Summary: CHF 248,198 (USD 230,791 or EUR 154,803) was allocated from the International Federation's Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF) on 4 February to support the National Society in delivering immediate assistance to some 7,750 beneficiaries.

Extremely high temperatures and minimal rainfall during the 2007 summer led to widespread drought conditions in 28 of Moldova's 32 regions. Over 200,000 people were affected by drastically diminished harvests. The Moldova Red Cross Society, with the support of the International Federation, provided supplementary food assistance to 7,750 vulnerable families in 20 isolated rural farmsteads and villages. The food parcels were distributed to beneficiaries from large families, single-headed households and families with members with disabilities. The operation was completed by 30 May 2008.

The Netherlands Red Cross has contributed through its Silent Emergency Fund CHF 64,400 towards the replenishment of the DREF allocation for this operation.

[<click here for the final financial report,](#)
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A mother of five children receiving her food parcel from the Moldova Red Cross branch in the town of Bendery. Photo: International Federation

The situation

Moldova, since its independence in 1991, one of the poorest countries in the region, had enjoyed steady economic growth up to 2007, with 4.8 per cent growth recorded in 2006. Difficulties before the 2007 drought included a high increase in energy prices and a ban on wine exports to the Russian Federation. The country's economy was based on the agricultural sector, which provides livelihood to two thirds of its population, mainly through subsistence farming on small plots. The inflation rate had risen to 13 per cent and 100,000 jobs had been lost.

In 2007, Moldova was struck by the most severe drought since 1946. Several regions in the country went without rain for four consecutive months. About 84 per cent of the total area of agricultural land was affected and the cost of lost production was estimated at some 300 million US dollars. The government of Moldova, responding to the drought, launched an international emergency appeal, joined by the United Nations. The appeal for 11.3 million US dollars met with a response of 90 per cent from the governments of Austria, Sweden, Netherlands, Norway, Finland and Italy, as well as from the European Commission's Humanitarian Aid Office (ECHO). United Nations agencies involved were the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), the World Food Programme (WFP), the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), and the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA).



The UN system, in cooperation with the Moldovan government, as well as with civil society and non-governmental organizations, organized its response in three phases. In order to ensure that, after the drought planting would be possible, it distributed

over 20,000 packages of seeds and fertilizers. To prevent livestock from dying, it provided 9,000 metric tons of fodder to 20,000 farming households during the winter. To allow for spring planting, corn seed was procured for more than 30,000 farming households. All in all, more than 135,000 people received assistance.



Areas affected by drought in the Republic of Moldova

Coordination and partnerships

In order to achieve the programme goal of assisting the most vulnerable people, the Moldova Red Cross has worked in close partnership with the Ministry of Social Protection, Family and Children, the Department of Emergency Situations of the Ministry of Internal Affairs and with local authorities. The Red Cross actions have been also coordinated with other key actors in the field such as UNFPA and the Agency for Consultations and Studies in Agriculture in order to avoid duplications.

During the operation the Moldova Red Cross reported regularly to the International Federation offices in Chisinau and Kiev. The International Federation provided continuous technical support to the National Societies at all levels.

Red Cross and Red Crescent action

Based on a request from the Moldova Red Cross, an International Federation regional disaster response team (RDRT) was sent to Moldova in December to assess the situation. The team, which included representatives from the Bulgarian and Romanian Red Cross Societies, recommended that an immediate intervention - distribution of foodstuffs - was needed during the winter/spring period (February-March) until the next harvest.

The members of the assessment mission reported that the most acute needs of the country's rural population were for food, fodder, clothes for children, seeds, money to pay for rents and communal services, agricultural machinery and fertilizers.

Progress towards objectives

Relief distributions (food and basic non-food items)

Objective: To provide supplementary food rations for 7,750 vulnerable families in order to reduce the threat of malnutrition.

The beneficiaries of the relief distributions included rural farming families dependant on home gardens and dairy cattle as their main sources of nutrition. This category was not covered by any government financial support programme, although some do benefit from a United Nations and ECHO programme to provide animal fodder.

Activities:

- Complete a list of beneficiaries (Moldova Red Cross and Ministry of Social Protection, Family and Children)
- Procure, transport and distribute food supplies to the target population
- Monitor the provision of food parcels
- Gather information which highlights the operation and assists in longer-term planning

Impact:

Although the original budget envisaged support to 6,700 families, given the acute needs in Moldova the number of families was extended to 7,750. This was possible thanks to savings on transport costs. To provide assistance to an additional 1,000 families, the timeframe of the operation was extended by one month.

For the coordination of activities and resources the National Society established task force groups at headquarters and branch level. Coordination meetings with programme stakeholders (Ministry of Social Protection, Family and Child, and local authorities) were held where the parties agreed on the plan of implementation and distribution, and the selection of beneficiaries. Given that the number of affected people was very high, the selection of beneficiaries was strictly followed in order to meet the following criteria: to have two or more children under 15 years in the family; to have one or more persons who need special assistance (pensioner, with disabilities, social case); not to benefit from government or other donor assistance.

The content of the parcel was the following:

Food	Quantity
Sugar	2 kg
Rice	2 kg
Buckweat	2 kg
Wheat flour	4 kg
Vegetable oil	2 sticle (0,9l)
Corn flour	4 kg
Canned pork meat	4 cans x 350gr

7,750 food parcels were distributed to 22,457 beneficiaries, out of which 679 parcels to orphans, 2,385 to people with disabilities, 1,077 to multi-child families, and 873 to families with one parent.

[Click here to read a news story about the Moldova Red Cross's assistance to the people affected by the food crisis.](#)

Distribution of food parcels by categories of beneficiaries

Nr.	Districts/ cities	Orphans	People with disabilities	Multi-child families	Elderly with pensions	people minimal	Single parent families with low income
1	Chisinau	88	364	34	629		35
2	Balti	55	74	12	57		102
3	Cahul	80	157	124	70		69
4	Comrat	18	332	137	310		33
5	Hîncesti	77	186	209	182		146
6	Leova	26	187	100	322		65

7	Rezina	22	189	39	219	31	
8	Tiraspol	137	62	7	180	14	
9	Tighina	46	107	97	229	71	
10	Taraclia	15	188	59	182	56	
11	Briceni	20	66	46	87	81	
12	Calarasi	15	107	38	39	51	
13	Falesti	2	10	10	8	20	
14	Vulcanesti	28	140	46	32	54	
15	Ceadir-Lunga	36	78	35	79	22	
16	Basarabeasca		42	47	8	3	
17	Donduseni	7	84	9	72	8	
18	Ungheni	3	5	7	10	5	
19	Soroca			14	16		
20	Anenii-Noi	4	7	7	5	7	
		Orphans	People with disabilities	Multi-child families	Elderly with pensions	people minimal	Single parent families with low income
	TOTAL	679	2,385	1,077	2,736	873	

Distributions were held at the mayor's office or in the Red Cross branches. Beneficiaries had been prior informed about the place and time of the distribution. The food parcels were distributed by the Moldova Red Cross staff and volunteers jointly with representatives of the local authorities.

Those 650 beneficiaries who could not collect parcels due to their disabilities received them at home.

A monitoring team consisting of National Society staff and Federation representatives conducted monitoring to ensure transparency and assess the programme's impact. During the monitoring visits the beneficiaries expressed their gratitude for the Red Cross humanitarian assistance and noted that it would help them survive until the new harvest. The distributions were broadly highlighted by national and local media, providing the National Society with visibility among the population.

Distribution of food parcels by districts/cities

Nr.	District/ City	Quantity/parcels	Nr. of beneficiaries
1	Chisinău	1,150	2,606
2	Balti	300	799
3	Cahul	500	2,149
4	Comrat	830	2,657
5	Hincesti	800	2,745
6	Leova	700	2,151
7	Rezina	500	1,216
8	Tiraspol	400	471
9	Tighina	550	1,262
10	Taraclia	500	1,543
11	Briceni	300	891
12	Calarasi	250	912
13	Falesti	50	107
14	Vulcanesti	300	1,136
15	Ceadir-Lunga	250	734
16	Basarabeasca	100	373

17	Donduseni	180	355
18	Ungheni	30	103
19	Soroca	30	141
20	Anenii-Noi	30	106
	TOTAL	7,750	22,457

Information gathering/ Assessment mission

The International Federation monitored the situation closely and offered to assist the Moldova Red Cross in response to the drought, as needed. Federation teams conducted monitoring and information missions during the project implementation to make the plight of rural people better understood and prepare a strategy on how to address this vulnerability in the future. In this regards meetings with representatives of local authorities from affected areas were held in order to establish long-term partnership that will allow responding immediately to the needs of vulnerable people.

Project dissemination activities through international information channels took place with the support of the International Federation's Europe zone office, and the National Society used this opportunity to involve several local media representatives such as radio, newspaper and in some regions local TVs.

Capacity building

In order to strengthen the capacities of the Moldova Red Cross in disaster management a workshop on relief distribution including types, mechanisms, recent developments and experience sharing, and International Federation disaster response tools was held for the Moldova Red Cross headquarters staff by a RDRT member from the disaster management department of the Armenian Red Cross. Besides skills refreshment in disaster management, the workshop also improved the interdepartmental cooperation within the headquarters of the National Society.

The head of the disaster management department of the Armenian Red Cross was deployed for a one-month mission to Moldova to monitor the distribution process, evaluate the current situation in the country and propose further activities to be taken in Moldova to meet the needs of the beneficiaries.

General conclusions based on the activities and evaluation is that the Moldova Red Cross has well-established coordination and cooperation with the government. This was demonstrated by the distribution being organized jointly with the regional and local authorities. However, the National Society has a relatively weak regional structure and high turnover of staff and volunteers. This is a major problem, and one that needs active attention by the Red Cross leadership.

Conclusion

The Moldova Red Cross Society has gained some experience in disaster management during the implementation of relief assistance projects in 2005 and 2006; it has disaster management documents and materials developed although these remain more theory than real capacities in disaster management. Therefore it is important that Red Cross staff and volunteers at national and branch levels are trained in logistics, needs assessment, emergency planning, and reporting. That said, this operation has given an opportunity for some National Society staff and volunteers to put into practice the knowledge they had gained from previous trainings and workshops. In addition, some 100 new volunteers were recruited during the operation who are now supporting the floods operation launched in August 2008.

Thanks to the Norwegian Red Cross support for 2008–2009, the Moldova Red Cross will organize further trainings for staff and volunteers jointly with experts from the Department of Emergency Situations of the Ministry of Internal Affairs. It will also conduct disaster management self assessment in order to identify its strengths and weaknesses.

The main challenge encountered by the National Society is that many vulnerable people cannot be covered simply through recovery operation. Due to the continuous rise of prices for food and public utilities the people affected by drought still remain vulnerable. Although the government and other organizations are trying to continue their support, this still mostly will not target the beneficiary group selected by the Red Cross. Therefore, there is a demonstrable need for the Red Cross to launch development programmes with a long-term perspective to address the root causes of people's vulnerability, especially considering that droughts have been frequent in recent years. Four out of five harvests have been diminished by drought, leading to spiralling prices for staple foods and pushing many vulnerable people further into poverty and hunger.

The situation was aggravated by the flooding caused by heavy rains in late July in Moldova and western Ukraine, which led to an emergency appeal launched by the International Federation to support the two National Societies in providing emergency food aid, non-food items and psychosocial support to the people in need. [To read more about the response operation, click here.](#) This operation is another opportunity for National Society staff and volunteers to develop their skills and experience.

The DREF operation also highlighted the need to build up the National Society's organizational capacity. The society was short-listed for the Intensified Capacity Building (ICB) Fund and designed its three-year plan with support of the zone office and the regional representation in Moscow, and subsequently submitted it to the ICB Committee.

The first priority is to revise its disaster preparedness and response plan, to develop a contingency plan for specific scenarios, to develop the concept of national disaster response teams/ national intervention teams within the National Society through updating the existing training package, training new volunteers and establishing appropriate teams. If the Red Cross Society is not successful in its application for ICB support it will need to find support from other sources/ partners.

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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International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

MDRMD001 - Moldova - Food Insecurity

Final Financial Report

Selected Parameters	
Reporting Timeframe	2008/2-2008/8
Budget Timeframe	2008/2-2008/8
Appeal	MDRMD001
Budget	APPEAL

All figures are in Swiss Francs (CHF)

I. Consolidated Response to Appeal

	Goal 1: Disaster Management	Goal 2: Health and Care	Goal 3: Capacity Building	Goal 4: Principles and Values	Coordination	TOTAL
A. Budget	248,198					248,198
B. Opening Balance	0					0
Income						
<u>Other Income</u>						
<i>Voluntary Income</i>	248,193					248,193
C5. Other Income	248,193					248,193
C. Total Income = SUM(C1..C5)	248,193					248,193
D. Total Funding = B + C	248,193					248,193
Appeal Coverage	100%					100%

II. Balance of Funds

	Goal 1: Disaster Management	Goal 2: Health and Care	Goal 3: Capacity Building	Goal 4: Principles and Values	Coordination	TOTAL
B. Opening Balance	0					0
C. Income	248,193					248,193
E. Expenditure	-248,193					-248,193
F. Closing Balance = (B + C + E)	0					0

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III. Budget Analysis / Breakdown of Expenditure

Account Groups	Budget	Expenditure					TOTAL	Variance
		Goal 1: Disaster Management	Goal 2: Health and Care	Goal 3: Capacity Building	Goal 4: Principles and Values	Coordination		
A							B	A - B
BUDGET (C)		248,198					248,198	
Supplies								
Food	201,000	205,940					205,940	-4,940
Total Supplies	201,000	205,940					205,940	-4,940
Transport & Storage								
Storage		766					766	-766
Transport & Vehicle Costs	8,400	5,366					5,366	3,034
Total Transport & Storage	8,400	6,133					6,133	2,267
Personnel								
International Staff		1,811					1,811	-1,811
Regionally Deployed Staff	8,000	999					999	7,001
National Staff		1,855					1,855	-1,855
National Society Staff	9,500	5,839					5,839	3,661
Total Personnel	17,500	10,505					10,505	6,995
General Expenditure								
Travel	1,500	6,857					6,857	-5,357
Information & Public Relation	2,000	1,426					1,426	574
Office Costs	1,365	2,007					2,007	-642
Communications	300	1,844					1,844	-1,544
Financial Charges		-2,698					-2,698	2,698
Other General Expenses		46					46	-46
Total General Expenditure	5,165	9,483					9,483	-4,318
Programme Support								
Program Support	16,133	16,133					16,133	0
Total Programme Support	16,133	16,133					16,133	0
TOTAL EXPENDITURE (D)	248,198	248,193					248,193	4
VARIANCE (C - D)		4					4	