

DREF operation



International Federation
of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

Palestine: Flash Floods

DREF operation n° MDRPS003
9 November 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.

CHF 117,783 (USD 100,325 or EUR 78,500) has been allocated from the International Federation's Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF) to support the Palestine Red Crescent Society (Palestine RC) in delivering immediate assistance to some 2,423 beneficiaries. Unearmarked funds to repay DREF are encouraged.

Summary: The operation is planned to enable the Palestine RC to ensure initial humanitarian response to the most vulnerable among the flood victims in Gaza. The DREF support will focus on basic relief needs through the provision of relief items such as blankets, tarpaulins, hygiene kits, and first aid kits.

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

[<click here for the DREF budget, or here for contact details>](#)



Floods destroyed houses in Gaza

The situation

From the early afternoon of 27 October 2008 and the following 36 hours, torrential rains hit the Gaza Strip, causing heavy floods in huge parts of this densely populated and poor area. After summer-long drought, the ground was not able to absorb the huge mass of water, which washed away sand, dust, and garbage from streets and dumping places, merging with sewage from underground reservoirs, and filling the ground floors of the homes with mud, garbage, and contaminated dirty water. Among the worst hit areas was where the poorest of the poor people in the Gaza Strip were located, living in their simple shelters and poor houses. In the northern part of the Strip, dozens of houses were under water and mud. In the southern city of Khan Younis, where there is no functioning or very poor drainage and sewage systems, the dirty and contaminated water has found its way through streets, into homes, and everywhere. One of the sewage treatment plants in the north of the Gaza Strip is filled up to the brink of its banks, creating fears that these might burst, and

sewage water completely bury residential areas, like what happened last year with another dam, bursting its banks, submerging a number of houses, and even drowning some people.

The Gaza Strip along the south-eastern coast of the Mediterranean Sea is a flat landscape with the size of only 365 km², of which a broad area all along the border to Israel is inaccessible for the Palestinian people. On this tiny small land, more than 1.5 million Palestinians live, of whom more than 1 million are registered as refugees who for most of them live in camps. For more than a year, tight closure has been imposed on the Gaza Strip which has led to severe shortage of fuel, medicine, food, building materials, and all kind of commodities, even such as spare parts, maintenance equipment, and pumps for the sewage systems. This has created a general vulnerability to any smaller or bigger disaster, making it impossible for the municipalities, the authorities, and people to be prepared for and cope with the rainy season and this kind of extraordinary weather. Wherever there is an underground sewage reservoir, these were already filled up before the rainfall due to lack of sufficient pumping systems. With the Gaza Strip being under closure for years, the economy is close to complete collapse, and there are no means available in the municipalities or among the poor people to meet other demands than the most essential items for survival. Therefore this kind of weather has such dramatic and devastating impact on those being hit the worst.

Coordination and partnerships

The Red Cross/Red Crescent Movement partners, as well as United Nations (UN) agencies and governmental bodies, have only limited resources for bigger relief operations. However, over the last months a very good and close cooperation has developed between all those able and willing to respond to urgent needs in the community. A detailed mapping of available resources has been conducted, where the Palestine RC was one of the driving forces, collecting information and preparing a complete overview. In the current relief operation, the Palestine RC is taking the lead in close cooperation with the UN agencies and the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC). Apart from the ICRC, the Palestine RC is the only component of the RC/RC Movement with permanent presence in the Gaza Strip.

Red Cross and Red Crescent action

From its branches in Rafah, Khan Younis, Deir El Balah, Gaza City, and Jabalya, the Palestine RC has from the early hours of 28 October been deploying staff and volunteers to carry out assessments and help the most affected families. With relief items from its stock in the different branches, the National Society was able to distribute family hygiene kits and blankets to 140 families in the north of the Gaza Strip. Families of whom houses were destroyed have been receiving tents or tarpaulins, hygiene kits, kitchen sets, and blankets. Volunteers were also working throughout the last days with opening sewage and drainage systems where available, and trying to reroute the biggest mass of water and mud, which are floating everywhere.



Families of whom houses were destroyed have been receiving tents or tarpaulins

The three assessment teams have registered 160 families in the north of the Strip heavily affected by the floods, with the total number of 1,274 persons. In the same area, there are 11 houses destroyed, accommodating 25 families. In the southern part of Gaza Strip, the teams registered 155 families with 1,149 persons heavily affected, and seven destroyed houses accommodating 15 families. These will all in the course of the relief operation be receiving different items according to the most urgent needs.

In the relief operation, the Palestine RC has deployed some 150 volunteers in the field, evacuating elderly, sick, and disabled people from the affected areas. The operation has been coordinated from the operational room at the Palestine RC Gaza City branch. For the first four days the volunteers were working 24 hours a day. Training has been provided to in total 90 volunteers with the focus being particular on

health problems, refreshment of first aid knowledge, safety, and camp management. As this is the first time in memory that torrential rains have caused floods, volunteers and the vulnerable people were prepared and did not have experience in what to do.

The needs

Beneficiary selection: The operation will focus on the most vulnerable of the affected population.

The proposed operation

The operation will focus on distribution of basic relief items.

Relief distributions

Objective: Palestine RC ensured timely response based on the priority needs of the beneficiaries and provided basic relief items according to the results of the initial assessment conducted by the National Society.



Relief items are distributed by National Society staff and volunteers

Activities planned

- Preposition relief supplies and human resources
- Procure, transport and distribute relief items (blankets, tarpaulins, hygiene kits, first aid kits).
- Train volunteers on relief distribution
- Mobilise and equip volunteers
- Conduct monitoring and evaluation of the relief operation (including beneficiary satisfaction surveys and lessons learned for volunteers and National Society staff) and decide on next steps

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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DREF OPERATION BUDGET SUMMARY**Annex I
MDRPS003****Flash Floods****BUDGET CHF****RELIEF NEEDS**

Shelter	8,927
Construction Materials	
Clothing & Textiles	13,986
Food	
Seeds & Plants	
Water & Sanitation	48,953
Medical & First Aid	23,311
Teaching Materials	
Utensils & Tools	
Other Supplies & Services	4,600
Total Relief Needs	99,777

CAPITAL EQUIPMENT

Land & Buildings	
Vehicles Purchase	
Computers & Telecom Equipment	
Office/Household Furniture & Equip.	
Medical Equipment	
Other Machinery & Equipment	

TRANSPORT, STORAGE & VEHICLES

Storage - Warehouse	
Distribution & Monitoring	
Transport & Vehicles Costs	1,725

PERSONNEL

International Staff	
Regionally Deployed Staff	
National Staff	
National Society Staff	5,750
Consultants	

WORKSHOPS & TRAINING

Workshops & Training	575
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GENERAL EXPENSES

Travel	
Information & Public Relations	
Office running costs	
Communication Costs	1,150
Professional Fees	
Financial Charges	
Other General Expenses	1,150

SERVICE FEES

Service Fees	
PROGRAMME SUPPORT	
Programme Support - PSR	7,656

Total Operational Needs 18,006**DREF ALLOCATION 117,783**