

DREF operation final report



International Federation
of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

Russian Federation: Assistance to the South Ossetia refugees

DREF operation n° MDRRU003
29 October 2009

The International Federation's Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF) is a source of un-earmarked money created by the Federation in 1985 to ensure that immediate financial support is available for Red Cross 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 250,000 was allocated from the Federation's Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF) on 22 August 2008 to support the Russian Red Cross deliver assistance to some 10,000 people.

The operation ran for nine and a half months. It was revised in February, extending the timeframe by four months. This community-based operation/project facilitated refugees' social adaptation, acceptance to their new life status, leisure activities for their children and thus improving their psychological well-being, ensuring their empowerment and expanding their possibilities.

The Russian Red Cross psychosocial workers provided assistance for more than 250 families- more than 800 people, including 443 children- through leisure clubs for children – puppet theatre, arts shops, and classes in the computer club. Psychosocial support programme (PSP) workers and volunteers carried out regular home visits to the refugee families and assisted them with meeting their legal, livelihood and psychological needs.

Of the total DREF allocation CHF 213,924 was used, with the remaining balance returned to DREF. Expenditure was lower than planned because the target group was much smaller than foreseen, as a considerable number of the refugees returned home within three months.

The Netherlands Red Cross through its Silent Emergency Fund contributed 30,000 euros (nearly 50,000 Swiss francs) towards the replenishment of the DREF. The major donors to the DREF are the Irish, Italian, Netherlands and Norwegian governments and ECHO. Details of all donors can be found on: <http://www.ifrc.org/what/disasters/responding/drs/tools/dref/donors.asp>



Gennady Kudukhov, 7, at the art therapy session in the Russian Red Cross Centre, Beslan.

[<click here for the final financial report, or here to view contact details>](#)

The situation

Tens of thousands of civilians were caught up in the armed conflict involving Georgian, South Ossetian and Russian forces in August 2008. According to the Russian government about 30,000 people, mainly women with children and elderly people fled to the neighbouring Russian Federation territories in the first days of the conflict. The Department of the Russian Federal Migration Service reported that more than 2,000 people from South Ossetia applied for refugee status in the Russian Federation. As a result, people's lives became very hard and they had to leave their homes to save their lives and those of their relatives. People felt perplexed and could not cope with the arising problems on their own.

The uncertain future threw many people off track. Unsatisfied needs for basic life essentials deprived them of any real possibility to make plans for their future. Some people were not included in the general list of refugees as they were not registered in time and therefore had no opportunity to get any humanitarian help.

Psychosocial needs were acute, as the refugees felt isolated, their children faced integration difficulties at school, their self-esteem was low and that made them feel like passive victims rather than active survivors. This prevented them from advocating for their rights. Stress, anxiety and fear lingered among them.

Red Cross and Red Crescent action

The Russian Red Cross regional branch in North Ossetia was among the first to help these people by distributing aid and offering psychosocial support (PSP).

Since 2004, Russian Red Cross psychosocial workers have accumulated deep experience in providing PSP to people. A Red Cross centre was created four years ago to help people affected by the hostage crisis in Beslan, involving around 7,000 people in psychosocial rehabilitation. During the first days after the arrival of refugees, some 16 staff and 50 volunteers from the centre were visiting 12 sites where people were accommodated. Experience of the Beslan programme and knowledge of the Ossetian language helped PSP workers to immediately respond to the situation and more easily to address the psychological needs.

Achievements against objectives

Psychosocial support and counseling
Objective: The effects of the war have been minimized among children and their families displaced from South Ossetia.
Activities planned
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Provide psychosocial support to about 5,000 affected individuals and families, both refugees and hosting families.• Conduct targeted assistance to the host families in order to reduce the negative impact of care for the refugees.• Organize teams of psychologists and nurses in Vladikavkaz and Beslan to accompany the affected families as they deal with needs or obligations related to the tragedy including visits to cemeteries, organizing activities, and the continuation of education.• Provide social support to the refugees, forced to stay for several months away from their homes, in order to maintain the conditions close to their usual life. They will be assisted in restoring missing documents, solving legal issues, admission to education, applying for government support or compensation.

Impact: The counselling and group sessions, leisure club activities, parties and community events that the Russian Red Cross ran in the course of this operation all helped the people affected by the fighting face their difficult situation. The home visits element of the operation was of high importance as well in reaching out to people. Positive dynamics in the emotional and psychological condition of South Ossetian refugee families has been observed:

- Around 3,000 people (newly arrived refugees along with the refugees of the "first wave" who played the role of host families) were supported by Russian Red Cross psychosocial workers during the first two months after their arrival, before the majority began to gradually return to South Ossetia.
- Refugees from the whole area of Pravoberezhny district (Beslan and neighbouring villages) and Vladikavkaz were visited and supported by Red Cross psychologists and trained volunteers.

- The level of the children's aggression has decreased as they integrated into school communities.
- Gradually children's coping mechanisms related to their fears (darkness, closed spaces, sudden noises, unfamiliar people, conflicts, depression, trauma of separation with relatives, isolation) have improved.
- A credit of trust in the Red Cross PSP workers has been established.
- A tolerant environment at schools has been created to promote better integration into the community.
- A belief in positive future life scenarios has reappeared.
- Refugees are able to communicate openly with each other and in the local community; they have become an integral part of the communities where they reside.
- South Ossetia refugee women are demonstrating an emotional capacity and skills to support and organize themselves; they form self-support groups and become volunteers of the Red Cross.
- A possibility of interaction of the leaders and participants of the operation through the North Ossetia Red Cross regional branch with representatives of the local and republican authorities allowed local Red Cross workers to bring "the voice" of the participants to the authorities.
- Host families were worked with to maintain peace and understanding in the hard living conditions they were facing.

Svetlana Gochashvili, 62, a member of the target group: *"I will never forget how much care and attention we received from you. Thank you for your understanding and participation in our lives and problems. When I came to Beslan 9 months ago I thought I wouldn't cope with it all. But there were you, kind and selfless people, who were with us through all this and helped us survive these hardest of times."*

Capacity building in psychosocial support delivery

Objective: The capacity of the Russian Red Cross and its branches to continue and expand the service following the evolving needs of the refugees, and to train volunteers among the refugees to facilitate self-care has increased.

Activities planned

- Create PSP and self-support groups for those affected by the hostilities.
- Train selected volunteers to continue the activities related to psychosocial support.

Impact:

- A network of 25 volunteers has been established and trained.
- PSP capacity of the local branch has deepened and widened due to regular training and work with this particular target group with specific needs.
- The operation emphasised equity towards refugees' empowerment.
- Local teachers were trained in the field of psychosocial support to provide further support to the school children, and therefore their families, in integrating into the local community.
- The operation has strengthened collaboration and coordination with locally based NGOs, UN bodies and state authorities.
- The operation has added to a strong and trustworthy image of the local Red Cross branch, the concept of Red Cross work and the Movement in general. The branch's activities are visible and appreciated by local communities, administration and are interesting for the local media.

Constraints or Challenges:

The main challenge was attracting refugee women to the Red Cross activities. In many cases they had problems leaving their temporary homes as they had no shoes or warm clothing, that – in early stages of the operation – prevented them from becoming volunteers, though their enthusiasm was high.

The other constraint was that many refugees only spoke Georgian and very few Red Cross workers knew the language.

The most unexpected challenge was facing the fact that most of the host families were the refugees of the "first wave" who fled Georgia in the early 1990s. Their living conditions are still very poor and anxiety still lingers among them. They became part of the target group though the programme was designed for supporting the "new" refugees.

The operation ended on 30 June 2009. The Russian Red Cross is now searching for possible donors to continue PSP activities for the refugees as well as people affected by the Beslan tragedy.

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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International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

MDRRU003 - Russia - Refugees in North Ossetia

Final Financial Report

Selected Parameters	
Reporting Timeframe	2008/8-2009/9
Budget Timeframe	2008/8-2009/6
Appeal	MDRRU003
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	250,000					250,000
B. Opening Balance	0					0
Income						
<u>Other Income</u>						
<i>Voluntary Income</i>	250,000					250,000
C5. Other Income	250,000					250,000
C. Total Income = SUM(C1..C5)	250,000					250,000
D. Total Funding = B + C	250,000					250,000
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	250,000					250,000
E. Expenditure	-213,924					-213,924
F. Closing Balance = (B + C + E)	36,076					36,076

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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)	250,000						250,000	
Supplies								
Food		1,325					1,325	-1,325
Teaching Materials	1,800	610					610	1,190
Utensils & Tools	370	522					522	-152
Other Supplies & Services	600	939					939	-339
Total Supplies	2,770	3,397					3,397	-627
Land, vehicles & equipment								
Computers & Telecom	1,700	1,417					1,417	283
Total Land, vehicles & equipment	1,700	1,417					1,417	283
Transport & Storage								
Storage		1,148					1,148	-1,148
Transport & Vehicle Costs	8,100	13,074					13,074	-4,974
Total Transport & Storage	8,100	14,223					14,223	-6,123
Personnel								
National Staff	5,984	2,048					2,048	3,936
National Society Staff	52,036	71,013					71,013	-18,977
Consultants	26,320	3,831					3,831	22,489
Total Personnel	84,340	76,892					76,892	7,448
Workshops & Training								
Workshops & Training	64,500	23,114					23,114	41,386
Total Workshops & Training	64,500	23,114					23,114	41,386
General Expenditure								
Travel	15,200	6,289					6,289	8,911
Information & Public Relation	32,000	153					153	31,847
Office Costs	16,500	9,047					9,047	7,453
Communications	8,640	11,123					11,123	-2,483
Financial Charges		35,765					35,765	-35,765
Other General Expenses		18,601					18,601	-18,601
Total General Expenditure	72,340	80,978					80,978	-8,638
Programme Support								
Program Support	16,250	13,905					13,905	2,345
Total Programme Support	16,250	13,905					13,905	2,345
TOTAL EXPENDITURE (D)	250,000	213,924					213,924	36,076
VARIANCE (C - D)		36,076					36,076	