

# DREF operation update



International Federation  
of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

## Central African Republic: Storm in Bangui

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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 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.

Period covered by this update: 02 to 20 February, 2009.

Summary: CHF 75,084 (USD 67,998 or EUR 49,816) was allocated from the Federation's Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF) on 30 January, 2009 to support the Central African Republic Red Cross Society in delivering assistance to some 1,390 beneficiaries.

Windstorm and torrential rain occurred in the second subdivision and other neighborhoods of Bangui, the capital of the Central African Republic (CAR), in the night of 17 to 18 January 2009, causing serious material damages and killing a 17-year old boy. A joint team from the Ministry of Family and Social Affairs, the CAR Red Cross Society (CAR RCS), local authorities and volunteers carried out an evaluation of the situation in the field and realized that most of the people affected were women, children and old persons. They also noticed that the victims had been sleeping on the floor and in a seriously mosquito-infected locality since the disaster occurred. These vulnerable people were exposed to malaria, respiratory and diarrheal diseases. The wells had been polluted by rain and other waste water. The level of vulnerability was such that there was an urgent need to provide non-food items like mosquito nets, blankets, and hygiene kits just to name these few, in order to avoid the deterioration of the situation. The International Federation allocated funds from its DREF to respond to the situation. This update highlights the achievements since the approval of the DREF. A final report will be made available by the end of July 2009.



Houses destroyed by the storm/CARRCS

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## The situation

After Bangui, the storm and torrential rains hit new localities in the Central African Republic, namely Berberati and Carnot barely two weeks after the initial DREF had been approved. Reports from the field announced that three people were killed including two children aged seven and nine respectively in Berberati, and an adult in Carnot. The number of the most vulnerable people registered increased from 1,390 to 2,472. An additional number of 144 houses were completely damaged and 72 were partially destroyed. The victims in Berberati included 134 household heads, 276 children below five years, 484 children from six to 15 years, 102 children from 15 to 20 years, 47 adults above 50 years, 18 pregnant women and 21 breastfeeding women. In Carnot, the disaster affected 60 household heads, 103 children below five years, 112 children from six to 15 years, 103 people from 15 to 50 years, 19 old persons, 16 pregnant women and 13 breastfeeding women. All of these affected people have been exposed to the risk of malaria, diarrhoea and other respiratory diseases. The following table summarizes the needs of affected people in Berberati and Carnot:

Needs for Berberati and Carnot	Unit	Number	Unit price in CFA	Total in CFA	Total in CHF
Blankets	piece	97	15,000	1,455,000	3,638
Impregnated mosquito nets	piece	97	13,000	1,261,000	3,153
taraulins	family	194	10,000	1,940,000	4,850
Cooking Kits	piece	194	10,000	1,940,000	4,850
Hygiene kits	piece	150	10,000	1,500,000	3,750
Water chlorination material	piece	8	50,000	400,000	1,000
1508 pieces of soap ( pieces Of 200g)	cartons	25	15,000	375,000	938
10-litres buckets	piece	8	2,000	16,000	40
Tape measure	piece	8	2,500	15,000	38
Plumb-line	piece	8	1,500	12,000	30
Graduated cups	piece	8	250	2,000	5
<b>Total</b>				<b>8,916,000</b>	<b>22,290</b>

The Central African Republic Red Cross Society mobilized 30 volunteers to carry out sensitization and hygiene promotion activities in Bangui. An early alert system was set up also in Bangui to help reduce the number of victims.

## Coordination and partnerships

Since the beginning of the disaster, Government and CAR Red Cross authorities worked in close collaboration to assess the situation and provide psychological support to affected people. The Government even appealed on humanitarian organizations and families that were not affected by the disaster to express solidarity by assisting vulnerable people. This assistance could involve accommodating the homeless persons.

## Red Cross and Red Crescent action

### Progress towards objectives

#### Relief distributions (basic non-food items)

**Objective: To contribute to improving the living conditions of the most vulnerable people affected by the windstorm in the second subdivision and other neighbourhoods of Bangui (1,390 beneficiaries).**

#### Activities planned:

- Purchasing the items to be distributed, namely 556 blankets, 278 impregnated mosquito nets, 278 tarpaulins, 278 cooking kits and transporting them to the affected localities;
- Distributing these items to the 1,390 vulnerable people identified;
- Reporting on the distribution.

### Progress and impact:

Necessary logistics measures were taken to ensure that the items to be distributed are purchased and transported to the distribution sites. Some of the items that were pre-positioned in Yaoundé (Cameroon) were sent to Bangui. These items included 300 cooking kits, 300 tarpaulins, 600 blankets, 300 mosquito nets, and 600 hygiene kits. The volunteers also conducted an evaluation in Berberati and Carnot to assess the needs of the affected people.

### Challenges:

The disaster initially affected only Bangui. Red Cross volunteers had then to cover Berberati and Carnot that were hit afterwards.

## Water, sanitation, and hygiene promotion

**Objective: To facilitate the access of the affected populations to potable water, and promote hygiene and sanitation rules in the areas of Bangui affected by the windstorm.**

### Activities planned:

- Purchase 591 hygienic kits for females above 17 years; 1,738 pieces of soap of 200g each and transporting sanitation kits to the affected localities;
- Retrain 30 Red Cross volunteers on water treatment;
- Treat water points;
- Sensitize the populations to hygiene and sanitation rules;
- Advocate before other actors on behalf of the affected populations;
- Report on the activities carried out.

### Progress and impact:

Red Cross volunteers were able to identify the water points to be treated. They have also launched the sensitization to hygiene in markets and other public squares like churches.

### Challenges:

The main challenge was to continue assisting affected people in Bangui, without neglecting those in Berberati and Carnot.

## 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:**

- In **Central African Republic**: Antoine Mbao Bogo, President, Central African Red Cross Society, Bangui; email : [sn\\_crca@yahoo.fr](mailto:sn_crca@yahoo.fr) ; phone : +236.75.50.14.11 / +236.77.09.18.00 or Albert Yomba Eyamo, Secretary General, phone : +236.75.50.27.54 / +236.21.61.26.09
- In **Cameroon**: Javier Medrano, Federation Regional Representative for Central Africa, Yaoundé, email: [javier.medrano@ifrc.org](mailto:javier.medrano@ifrc.org), phone: +237.22.21.74.37; +237.96.29.87.89, Fax: +237.22.21.74.39
- In **Senegal**: Alasan Senghore, Federation Head of West and Central Africa Zone Office, Dakar, email: [alasan.senghore@ifrc.org](mailto:alasan.senghore@ifrc.org); phone: +221.33.869.36.41, Fax: +221.33.820.25.34; Youcef Ait-Chellouche, Disaster Management Coordinator, email: [youcef.aitchellouche@ifrc.org](mailto:youcef.aitchellouche@ifrc.org), phone: +221.77.638.98.61
- In **Geneva**: David Lynch, Operations Coordinator, email: [david.lynch@ifrc.org](mailto:david.lynch@ifrc.org); phone: +41.227.30 46.75.

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