

DREF operation update



International Federation
of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

Benin: Floods

DREF operation n° MDRBJ007
GLIDE n° FL-2010-000202-
BEN
Update n°1
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The International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent (IFRC) 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 emergency response. 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: 8 to 28 October, 2010.

Summary: CHF 183,673 (USD 191,773 or EUR 137,332) was allocated from the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC)'s Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF) on 15 October, 2010 to support the National Society in delivering immediate assistance to 10,000 beneficiaries.



The Red Cross volunteers sensitize some of the beneficiaries on water treatment method/Red Cross of Benin

The torrential rainfall in Benin and the over flow of Mono and Ouémé Rivers have caused heavy human and material damages and lost across 2/3 of the national territory affecting more than 360,000 persons and displacing at least 95,000 with 43 deaths during the last week of September and early October 2010. The impact of the floods made the government to appeal to the international community to come to the assistance of the affected population. The government also set up crisis management committee (National Emergency Intervention System) to coordinate the intervention activities of all the humanitarian actors including the UN systems, Red Cross and government agencies. The committee carried out a preliminary assessment of the situation and the outcomes resulted in the assistance being given to the affected persons in terms of provision of food and non-food items, evacuation, temporary shelter, psychological counselling as well as hygiene and sanitation sensitization by the various actors including the Red Cross of Benin. The Red Cross of Benin also participated in other comprehensive joint assessments carried out to identify the extent of damages and the actual needs of the affected population in the country. The Red Cross of Benin with support from the International Federation DREF continued to assist some of the affected persons with non-food relief items and sensitization on good hygiene and sanitation practices. A total of 25,358 persons have benefited from the Red Cross intervention during this reporting period. The Red Cross is also collaborating with WFP in the distribution of food items to target population.

This operation is expected to be implemented over two months, and will therefore be completed by December, 2010; a Final Report will be made available three months after the end of the operation (by March, 2011).

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>

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The situation

“The disaster is causing more hardship with the number of affected persons on the increase, rains continue and at least 2/3 of the entire country is under water” said the Disaster Management Coordinator of the Red Cross of Benin during the last week of October 2010. More than 40 of the 77 districts of the country were affected by the recent floods in Benin. Many houses, school buildings, health centres and bridges were damaged while thousands of persons including children were rendered homeless while 43 lives have been reported lost to the recent floods in the country. Thousands of hectares of farmland have been submerged with crops and livestock worth millions of CFA (local currency) destroyed by flooding. The situation becomes more worrisome as the affected communities are at the risk of breakout of epidemics like cholera which had been affecting some of these communities even before the flooding. Though cholera cases had been stable with about 8 to 15 patients per day with cumulative total number of 807 patients as at week 41 in the country, Cotonou, the busy commercial centre of Benin accounts for 524 of these cases, according to report by MSF SPAIN, there is need to scale up activities in the area of water and sanitation as well as health education.

With many of the affected households having their means of livelihoods mainly farming and fishing destroyed by the floods, there is potential risk of food insecurity. With the extent of damage and the impact of the affected population, the government has made an urgent appeal to the international community to come to the aid of these affected populations. The UN has responded to the appeal of the government by deploying its UNDAC team in Benin and the team has been responding to the needs of some of the affected persons. The Red Cross of Benin in collaboration with local authorities carried out a preliminary assessment and also participated in other joint assessment with the government and other stakeholders including ICRC and UN systems in Benin. The outcomes of these assessments necessitated the assistance the National Society (NS) has been given to the affected population with funding and technical support from the International Federation.

Floods situation in Benin as at end of October 2010

Department	Commune	Affected persons	Displaced persons	Homeless	Injured	Deaths	Houses destroyed
Atlantique/Littoral	Ouidah	1,500	0	0	0	0	123
	Abomey/Calavi	3,000	0	0	0	2	0
	Sô-Ava	51,269	51,269	8,545	270	12	16,412
	Cotonou	20,000					
Borgou/Alibori	Tchaourou	2,514	2,514	2,514	0	6	795
	Pèrèrè	337	337	337	0	0	51
	Karimama	7,411	7,411	7,411	1	0	1,053
	Malanville	7,500	7,500	7,500	0	2	1,050
Ouémé/Plateau	Aguégué	35,693	6,822	6,822	0	4	6,723
	Dangbo	52,530	6,182	6,182	0	0	12,000
	Adjohoun	25,000	4,167	4,167	0	1	1,320
	Sèmé Kpodji	25,800	4,300	1,433			
	Bonou	4,761	4,761	4,761	296	3	2,392
Zou/Collines	Dassa-Zoumè			395	0	0	73
	Glazoué			937	14	1	390
	Zagnanando			15,447	0	1	2,950
	Zogbodomey			8,000	0	1	200
	Ouinhi	29,211		4,869	1	0	1,436
Mono/Couffo	Lokassa	27,000		440	0	0	655
	Dogbo					1	
	Grand-Popo	19,057		4,105	0	0	331
	Athiémé	38,500			0	0	
	Lalo			1,750	15	1	275
	Djakotomey					0	873
	Klouékamè					1	
	Bopa				3	2	636
	Houéyogbé	334		334	1	0	201
	Aplahoué	7,204		7,204	316	3	3,674

Total:	358,621	95,263	93,153	917	41	53,613
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Source: Rapide assessment CGC, October, 2010.

As many of the affected persons are displaced and temporarily sheltered in structures like school buildings, church premises and even in the open and by road sides and under trees, the Red Cross has commenced the process of erecting tents by identifying appropriate sites in collaboration with local authorities.

As most of the inhabitants of the affected communities are peasants; farmers, fishermen and fishmongers with the affected persons having their livelihoods destroyed or damaged by the floods, there is the need to support them in restarting their lives after the emergency relief phase more so that the planting season will soon commenced. Many of the affected households are also in need of assistance to rebuild their damaged houses.

Coordination and partnerships

The Red Cross of Benin is an active member of the National Emergency Intervention System set up to coordinate response activities towards the affected population. Other members of the system are the Ministries of Interior, Family Affairs, Decentralization and Health, UN systems and NGOs. At the local level, the Red Cross branches are also working in collaboration with government authorities at that level for effective management of the situation. The coordination mechanism adopted has been contributing to effectively minimize waste of resources and increased service delivery. The Red Cross has also been very active in the cluster activities where it was assigned tasks in shelter, health, water and sanitation, education, sensitization and logistics. The NS role is well acknowledged by all and this has strengthened its close collaboration with UNDAC. The UN systems supported the government with a donation of relief items like food, NFIs, medical supplies and tents worth USD 1 million. The government is also discussing with operators in the economic sector to come to the assistance of the affected persons.

The NS was part of the inter-agency joint and comprehensive assessment carried out during the last week of October 2010. The DM officials of the Red Cross of Benin also organized a field mission with a representative of ECHO in Benin with the objective for the representative to see the extent of the impact of the disaster and advocate for resources to support the Red Cross of Benin to scale up its actions to the vulnerable affected population. The representative also witnessed the distribution of NFIs to 6,625 beneficiaries by the Red Cross in Athiémé.

Red Cross and Red Crescent action

The Red Cross of Benin mobilized and deployed members of its National Disaster Response Team in watsan, relief and logistics in the field to complement the efforts of the Red Cross volunteers in the communities and better coordination of the Red Cross assistance to the affected population through sensitization on potable water, good hygiene and sanitation practices. The teams are also assisting in the distribution of relief items to target beneficiaries. The Red Cross of Benin commenced distribution of NFIs in Karimama and Malanville late September/early October with the financial support from the West Coast Regional Representation of the Federation. The NS has scaled up its intervention with the DREF by also carrying out distribution activities in the Mono Department.

The Red Cross of Benin in collaboration with the WFP distributed 23.2 tons of maize and 1.3 tons of vegetable cooking oil to 2,673 beneficiaries with the help of the Red Cross volunteers in the Commune of Zagnanado and distribution activities continuing in the Commune of Quinhi as at end of October 2010.



Some beneficiaries using canoe to reach distribution point/Red Cross of Benin

The Red Cross of Benin has prepositioned 100 tents in Zagnanado and the tents will be erected as soon as the local authorities identified temporary sites to accommodate some of the displaced persons who have been staying in the open and under trees since floods have damaged their homes. The Red Cross as member of the cluster shelter is working with other members to conduct a shelter assessment of households severely affected by the floods.

Progress towards outcomes

Relief distributions (food and basic non-food items)	
Outcome: 2,000 most vulnerable households have received basic non-food items based on the assessment and selection criteria of Red Cross of Benin.	
Outputs	Activities planned
Relief items are procured and distributed to 2,000 most affected households and selected through established Red Cross selection criteria.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mobilize and train 70 Red Cross volunteers on assessment and distribution strategies of the Red Cross; Make contact and establish a relationship with local authorities in the affected communities; Conduct assessment - compile and verify the list of the most affected population in each targeted community; Ensure the availability of a reliable beneficiary data base; Procure and distribute 4,000 blankets, 2,000 sleeping mats and 250 kitchen sets to the most affected households; Monitor the emergency activities and produce reports on the distribution of relief items.

Progress: Below is the table showing the NFIs distributed during this reporting period. The NS considered the real needs of the target beneficiaries using the criteria like number of persons in a family and the extent of vulnerability of the family. Each family received a set comprising blanket, mosquito treated bed net and sleeping mat. The NS sourced some items from its national contingency stock and some donations from local partners to complete the items procured with DREF allocation as the needs of beneficiaries are increasing.

NFIs distribution table from DREF support

Districts	Beneficiaries		Items distributed					Fairly used clothes for children (kits)
	N° of households reached	N° of beneficiaries	Blankets (pieces)	ITNs (pieces)	Aqua tabs (tablets)	Soap (bars)	Buckets (pieces)	
Grand-Popo	3,761	18,733	3,761	3,761	150,044	7,522	2,419	250
Athiémé	1,325	6,625	1,325	1,325	16,000	2,650	400	75
Total	5,086	25,358	5,086	5,086	166,044	10,172	2,819	325

“With these gifts, you have chased away malaria, cold and cholera in my family” said a smiling 23 years old mother of two children after receiving her NFIs.

Challenges: One of the main challenges faced by the NS during the operation is logistics. Only 2 off-road vehicles are available at the National Society for the field operation whereas access to the communities is very difficult because of the bad road conditions worsened by the floods.

Emergency health

Objective: To contribute to the prevention of communicable diseases among 2,000 most vulnerable families.	
Outputs	Activities planned
The risk of communicable diseases spread among the affected communities is reduced	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Train 50 volunteers on prevention of diarrheal and communicable diseases;

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Produce and distribute information, education and communication (IEC) materials on health, water, sanitation and risk reduction sensitization activities. • Conduct health sensitization activities among the affected communities.
Objective: To reduce the morbidity and mortality due to malaria among 1,500 flood affected families.	
Outputs	Activities planned
1,500 most affected families are reached by volunteers through the dissemination of messages on malaria prevention and control, distribution of LLIN and assisting with the correct hanging.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Procure and distribute 3,000 mosquito nets for 1,500 most affected families; • Procure nail and strings for mosquito nets (LLIN) hang-up campaign for 1,500 affected families. • Disseminate key messages concerning use of LLIN and malaria, targeting pregnant women and children under five years' households.

Progress: At least 50 Red Cross volunteers have been trained to sensitize and supervise the distribution of 5,086 LLINs to the affected communities both in Grand Popo and Athiémé. Volunteers showed beneficiaries, through demonstration, how to use the nets and also assisted them on hanging the nets with ropes and nails. Dissemination of messages through loud speakers is being done to complement the house-to-house visitations on the importance of bed nets received.

Challenges: Some of the communities are still in public places which disable them to properly hang their LLINs and prefer to keep them for their next relocation. Mobilizing enough volunteers to ensure that all distributed nets have been used appropriately with house-to-house follow-up was another challenge the NS is facing.

Water, sanitation, and hygiene promotion

Objective: To reduce the risk of waterborne diseases through provision of drinking water, health education and sensitization on good hygiene practices to the flood affected communities.	
Outputs	Activities planned
2,000 most affected households in the flood affected communities have access to potable water, hygiene and sanitation facilities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strengthen the capacity of 70 volunteers in water treatment, use of water treatment tablets and hygiene promotion; • Procure and distribute 100,000 water treatment tablets and 2,000 jerry cans for 2,000 most affected households; • Procure and distribute 8,000 bars of soap to 2,000 most affected households • Disinfect water wells in the target communities; • Sensitize the population on good hygiene and sanitation practices and • Conduct a cleanup campaign.

Progress: The Red Cross has distributed 1,325 hygiene kits to 5,086 identified and registered households in the targeted communities during this reporting period. The kit contains aqua tabs, plastic bucket, bucket and bars of soap. The Red Cross volunteers through demonstration and using local languages sensitized the beneficiaries on how to use the aqua tabs to treat water. The 70 trained Red Cross volunteers have been sensitizing the target communities on good hygiene and sanitation practices reaching a total of 11,000 persons as at end of October 2010.

Challenges: Difficulty in accessing some of the communities during the house-to-house sensitization because of the bad road conditions has been a major challenge. The lack of adapted vehicles to the terrain and also accessibility to water points for the population makes it difficult to effectively use the items provided.

Communications – Advocacy and Public information

The Red Cross intervention is being given prominence by the media both electronic and print across the country. The collaboration with local media in the dissemination of Red Cross good hygiene and sanitation messages in local languages are the fruit of good partnership between the communication department of the NS and the media in Benin. Communication with other stakeholders and the international media is also enhanced through the West Coast Regional Representation.

Looking ahead

The distribution of NFIs continues in the target communities not reached yet as at this reporting period especially in the Mono and Atlantique Departments while the Red Cross volunteers also continue with the community sensitization activities on good hygiene and sanitation practices. The Red Cross plans to erect tents in Zagnanado to temporarily accommodate the persons affected in the area. The NS will continue to collaborate with WFP in the distribution of food items in other target communities affected by the floods. The operation is being considered to be scaled up based on the increased needs in water and sanitation as well as shelter in the affected communities.

The Red Cross of Benin will continue to actively participate in coordination meetings and cluster activities for experience and statistics sharing, avoidance of duplication of tasks and for better service delivery to the target vulnerable populations affected by the recent floods in Benin.

How we work

All IFRC 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 the [Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Disaster Response \(Sphere\)](#) in delivering assistance to the most vulnerable.

The IFRC's vision is to inspire, encourage, facilitate and promote at all times all forms of humanitarian activities by National Societies, with a view to preventing and alleviating human suffering, and thereby contributing to the maintenance and promotion of human dignity and peace in the world.

The IFRC's work is guided by [Strategy 2020](#) which puts forward three strategic aims:

1. Save lives, protect livelihoods, and strengthen recovery from disaster and crises.
2. Enable healthy and safe living.
3. Promote social inclusion and a culture of non-violence and peace.

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