

DREF operation update



International Federation
of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

Palestine: Flash Floods

DREF operation n° MDRPS004
GLIDE n° FL-2010-000015-PSE
Update n° 1
30 March 2010

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: 27 January to 28 February 2010.

Summary: CHF 68,271 was allocated from the IFRC's Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF) on 27 January 2010 to support the National Society in delivering assistance to some 1,500 beneficiaries¹ and to replenish disaster preparedness stocks in sight of future heavy rains.

Thanks to the activities included in the DREF allocation, Palestine Red Crescent Society (Palestine RC) was better prepared to face the new heavy rains that hit Gaza during the last days of February. Both the training of new volunteers and the production of information materials have proven to be useful. Volunteers were in the areas of risk before the beginning of the



In February, Palestine Red Crescent Society volunteers visited families at the onset of the heavy rains. **Palestine Red Crescent Society.**

announced heavy rains and informed the population on measures to be taken. They were able to rescue people from the 46 houses that were partially flooded, as well as to distribute non-food aid to the affected families. The impact of these rains was fortunately less disastrous than the previous ones.

This operation is expected to be implemented in three months, and completed by 30 April 2010. In line with Federation reporting standards, the Final Report (narrative and financial) is due 90 days after the end of the operation (by 31 July 2010).

European Commission Humanitarian Aid Office (ECHO) and Canadian Red Cross contributed Euro 32,900 (approximately CHF 47,105) and CAD 20,000 (approximately CHF 20,945) respectively to the DREF in replenishment of the allocation made for this operation. 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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¹ Although the initial number of beneficiaries was 2,500, it is currently lower than planned. This is due to the final results of the assessments throughout the implementation, as well as the impact of the rains being lower than expected.

The situation

From the late night of 18 January and the following 24 hours, torrential rains hit the Gaza Strip and Almughraqa, causing heavy floods in parts of this densely populated and poor area. The situation has been worsened by the flooding of water from the green line area which borders the Gaza Valley.

As a result, the Wadi Gaza, a low lying farming area situated to the south of Gaza City and mostly inhabited by Bedouins, was severely affected. 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 houses, making life more difficult for the Gazans who are still unable to rebuild their lives after last year's Israeli war on the Gaza Strip. Some 217 families had their houses either severely or partially flooded as a result of the torrential rains and the influx of water from the green area.

As expected, new heavy rains hit Gaza again in the end of February. As a result, some areas like Aburasha pool in the Jabaha camp, Saftawi, Toubba, Sahwa, Al-Halamee and Tal Al-Zatar saw a sudden rise of water that blocked transportation and flooded several households. In the following days, the rains were more intermittent but still very heavy, affecting the movement of people and commercial activity (e.g. in markets). New households, especially poor structures built with plastic sheeting, corrugated roof and asbestos corrugated roofing blocks were flooded, and two were completely destroyed by fires originated by electricity short circuits.

Despite the large quantity of rain, the level of destruction and of impact on the families was less severe than that of January. Both the awareness of the families in the risk areas and the preparedness of the volunteers of the Palestine RC had increased based on the experience of the previous month.

It is important to recall the special situation of the Gaza Strip, which is a flat landscape approximately 45 km long and between five to 10 km wide, of which an important area all along the border to Israel is inaccessible for the Palestinian people. Of its 1,5 million Palestinians inhabitants, more than one million are registered as refugees mostly living in camps. More than 80% of the Gaza population lives below the poverty line. Access to and from the Gaza Strip has been for the last years restricted by the tight closure imposed by the Israeli authorities, resulting in accrued vulnerability of the vast majority of the population. After the 2008/2009 war conducted by the Israeli forces and the severe and widespread destruction of infrastructure and households, the conditions of the local populations were, if possible, much worsened and the pre-existing tight closure already imposed on the Gaza Strip has been further tightened. With the Gaza Strip being under closure for years, the economy is close to complete collapse.

Coordination and partnerships

While maintaining its operational autonomy, the Palestine RC has since the onset of the flooding in January been coordinating its activities with the Civil Defence. The National Society has continued to rescue and evacuate the injured persons, and deploy ambulances as well as its disaster management units and volunteers. In addition, Palestine RC has coordinated the evacuation of the families from the households to the temporary shelters (schools) with United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA). Palestine RC provided first support and assistance to all the families, and handed over the responsibility to UNRWA once in the temporary shelters. The National Society also maintained the clusters informed of its activities; in the future, active participation to the shelter cluster will provide additional improvements to the overall inter-agency coordination. The Palestine RC presence in the ground and its experience in humanitarian operations, along with its operational capacity, positions it as a key actor in case of sudden emergencies and disasters.

Red Cross and Red Crescent action

Progress towards outcomes

Relief distributions (food and basic non-food items)

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

Outputs and activities planned:

- Conduct rapid emergency needs and capacity assessments.
- Develop beneficiary targeting and registration system to deliver intended assistance.
- Distribute relief supplies and control supply movements from point of dispatch to end user.
- Replenish stocks used in the first hours of the relief operation (blankets, mattresses and hygiene kits).
- Preposition relief supplies.
- Mobilize and equip volunteers.
- Monitor and evaluate the relief activities and provide reporting on relief distributions (including beneficiary satisfaction surveys and lessons learned for volunteers and National Society staff).

Progress: At the onset of the rains, the Palestine RC activated the operations room, mobilized more than 50 of its volunteers and staff and started early warning activities addressing the main exposed communities. As soon as the situation worsened, the operations room centralized communications and appeals from the affected areas and coordinated the evacuation of casualties with the emergency ambulance service.

Immediately after the floods, the Palestine RC provided search and rescue activities and based on its needs assessment in the field, delivered humanitarian assistance to those in need. The table below indicates the distributed relief items and the respective quantities.

Relief Items	Amount
Tents	56
Sleeping bags	679
Blankets	1,200
Hygiene kits	440
Candles (pack)	440
Heaters	350
Kitchen kits	278
Tarpaulins	260
Wheel chairs	3
Mattresses	250
Oil lamps	100

In order to better prepare for the remaining part of the rainy season, Palestine RC organised five meetings and two training sessions for the new volunteers on early warning and needs assessment. The meetings aimed at sharing the best practices in disaster response for floods.

During the new wave of heavy rains at the end of February, the National Society undertook a series of activities such as early warning, needs assessment, first aid, provision of emergency medical support, and distribution of non-food items. On the basis of weather forecasts, since the morning of 25 February, Palestine RC activated its operations room, contacted the Civil Defense, pre-alerted both the National Society's emergency units and its hospitals, and mobilized its disaster management units. Since early morning of 26 February, Palestine RC teams were in the field evaluating the impact of these first showers. Their findings indicated that the Aburasha pool in Jabaha camp was flooded, and the water had entered some houses. In the Saftawi area, where the level of water reached almost two meters, 15 houses were partially flooded. In the Touba area, where the level of water reached 1,3 meters, 20 houses were severely flooded. In Sahwa, the water reached 1,8 meters severely flooding 10 houses. In the Al-Halamee area, the water caused the closure of the main roads as well as many problems in transportation. In Tal Al-Zatar, one house was partially flooded.

Throughout the day, Palestine RC teams provided first aid to persons that needed assistance. In the morning of the 27 February, a Palestine RC needs assessment team was dispatched to Joreh Saftawi. They found and reported that 15 households were very severely damaged by the flooding (these households are made of asbestos and plastic sheeting). They then moved again to Sahwa and Touba where 13 houses, in addition to those of the previous days, were severely flooded. Once the team reached Bethanoon and Jabalhia, they found two houses completely destroyed by fires occasioned by electricity short circuits.

On 28 February, Palestine RC volunteers extended their early warning to the neighborhoods surrounding these areas. The National Society pre-alerted its teams to be ready to evacuate at-risk families if needed.

During the same day, Palestine RC completed the distribution of non-food aid to the families affected by the rains of the previous days.

The table below indicates the distributed relief items and the respective quantities throughout the second wave of heavy rains.

Relief Items	Amount
Sleeping bags	60
Blankets	237
Hygiene kits	30
Heaters	30
Kitchen kits	30
Tarpaulins	60
Mattresses	60
Oil lamps	60

The weather forecasts indicate that the rains in February could be the last heavy ones of the season, but the pattern of rains and temperatures have been altered quite significantly in recent years due to climate change. The Palestine RC Gaza branch will monitor the events in the following weeks and continue training its volunteers in early warning and needs assessment.

The Palestine RC has been verifying the availability of the non-food items to replenish its stocks in the local market in Gaza. All items are available through local firms, and although the cost is slightly above the cost for similar items in the West Bank, both the costs of transportation and the delays due to the delivery of all clearances to move them into Gaza suggested that the local purchase is the best option.

Palestine RC has issued two tenders for the three main items - one for blankets and mattresses, and one for hygiene kits. On the basis of the offers, the National Society has proceeded to call the internal purchasing committee that selected the best offer on the basis of the criteria of quality and price. Accordingly, they have purchased 1,301 blankets, 446 mattresses and 213 hygiene kits. Most of the goods have been delivered to the Palestine RC warehouse in Gaza, and the remaining part will be delivered in the following days.

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.

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

MDRPS004 - Palestine - Floods

Interim Financial Report

Selected Parameters	
Reporting Timeframe	2010/01-2010/02
Budget Timeframe	2010/01-2010/04
Appeal	MDRPS004
Budget	APPEAL

All figures are in Swiss Francs (CHF)

I. Consolidated Response to Appeal

	Disaster Management	Health and Social Services	National Society Development	Principles and Values	Coordination	TOTAL
A. Budget	68,271					68,271
B. Opening Balance	0					0
Income						
<u>Other Income</u>						
Voluntary Income	68,271					68,271
C6. Other Income	68,271					68,271
C. Total Income = SUM(C1..C6)	68,271					68,271
D. Total Funding = B + C	68,271					68,271
Appeal Coverage	100%					100%

II. Balance of Funds

	Disaster Management	Health and Social Services	National Society Development	Principles and Values	Coordination	TOTAL
B. Opening Balance	0					0
C. Income	68,271					68,271
E. Expenditure	-48,590					-48,590
F. Closing Balance = (B + C + E)	19,681					19,681

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III. Budget Analysis / Breakdown of Expenditure

Account Groups	Budget	Expenditure					TOTAL	Variance
		Disaster Management	Health and Social Services	National Society Development	Principles and Values	Coordination		
A							B	A - B
BUDGET (C)		68,271					68,271	
Supplies								
Clothing & textiles	38,373						38,373	
Other Supplies & Services	18,692						18,692	
Total Supplies	57,065						57,065	
Transport & Storage								
Storage	1,041						1,041	
Distribution & Monitoring	521						521	
Transport & Vehicle Costs	1,041						1,041	
Total Transport & Storage	2,603						2,603	
Personnel								
National Society Staff	3,124						3,124	
Total Personnel	3,124						3,124	
General Expenditure								
Communications	1,041						1,041	
Total General Expenditure	1,041						1,041	
Programme Support								
Program Support	4,438	2,966				2,966	1,472	
Total Programme Support	4,438	2,966				2,966	1,472	
Operational Provisions								
Operational Provisions		45,625				45,625	-45,625	
Total Operational Provisions		45,625				45,625	-45,625	
TOTAL EXPENDITURE (D)	68,271	48,590				48,590	19,680	
VARIANCE (C - D)		19,680				19,680		