

DREF operation update



International Federation
of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

South Africa Civil Unrest

DREF operation n° MDRZA004
Update n° 1
8 November, 2010

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.

CHF 213,905 (USD 185,028 or EUR 146,012) was allocated from the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent's (IFRC's) Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF) to support the South African Red Cross Society (SARCS) to respond to urban violence by strengthening its disaster response capacity to deliver assistance to some 2,500 beneficiaries displaced by threat of violence against foreign nationals. Unearmarked funds to replenish the DREF are encouraged.

Summary: Prior to and throughout the 2010 Soccer World Cup, there were rumours and reports suggesting an increase in civil unrest and urban violence immediately following the end of the World Cup. SARCS and its partners, the IFRC and the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) monitored and conducted assessments of the situation. It was reported then that civil unrest was more suggestive of criminal intent rather than xenophobic causes. The threats of violence in three identified 'hot spots' prompted a migration of some foreigners to their home countries or safe provinces to avert a recurrence of the situation experienced in the 2008 xenophobic attacks. During that period, activity at the border crossing between South Africa and Zimbabwe increased significantly.

Several meetings were convened between the Red Cross partners to discuss and prepare contingency plans to respond to the threat of the violence. With DREF funding and support from its partners, the ICRC in particular, SARCS through its network of volunteers responded by providing blankets and food to the affected communities as well as the restoration of family links. SARCS also collaborated with the Zimbabwe Red Cross Society (ZRCS) in conducting social mobilisation campaigns and the restoration of family links between displaced communities and their families.

The concern over urban violence prompted the South African Government to form an Inter-Ministerial Committee (IMC) specifically to monitor and respond to the threat of violence. The respective provincial governments in the most affected provinces, conducted meetings with various stakeholders including human rights groups, UN agencies, IOM and NGOs to find ways to reduce the tension, coordinate response and prevent civil unrest.

This DREF was used to support SARCS to strengthen its disaster response capacity in First Aid, health education, restoration of family links and anti-discrimination campaigns aimed at sensitising and educating host and migrant communities on the humanitarian consequences of the violence.

To date, 90 staff and volunteers, 30 from each province have been trained as trainers in the three most affected provinces of Western Cape, Limpopo and Gauteng to roll-out the training to reach the target of strengthening the capacity of 100 volunteers and staff per province.

The operation was initially scheduled to be implemented over a period of three months for completion by mid-October 2010. This DREF update seeks a no cost extension of the operation until 31 December 2010. A Final Report will be made available by end of March 2011. The major donors to the DREF were 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

Since the advent of its democratic dispensation in 1994, South Africa has become a primary destination and point of transit for people from across the African continent and beyond. In addition, there is a mix of people who come to South Africa seeking protection, prosperity, or passage, whilst a small but important number of this population are migrants who have been forced to flee their respective countries for various reasons and seek safety in South Africa. These people come from different parts of Africa with the largest numbers originating from Zimbabwe, Somalia, Mozambique as well as the Democratic Republic of Congo; Ethiopia; Angola; Burundi; and Rwanda. The advent of the World Cup in South Africa, the ongoing turmoil in Somalia, the political situation in Zimbabwe and worsening economic or political situation in many African countries has made travel and settling in South Africa more attractive to those seeking economic security and safety.

Various informed sources predicted a likelihood of civil unrest following the end of the World Cup. Isolated cases of harassment, intimidation and threats some resulting in injury have been reported throughout the World Cup period. As predicted, violence towards foreign nationals began immediately after the end of the World Cup on 12 July and was initially confined to the informal settlements of Western Cape Province and later spread to some areas in Gauteng Province. The rumours and reports were self-fulfilling with two deaths reported, as well as the burning and destruction of a small number of shacks (temporary homes in informal settlements). As a result, a number of displaced persons sought safety in safe shelter centres set up by the Western Cape Provincial Government. As of 20 July, the number of persons within these centres had risen to 177. SARCS continues to provide assistance in the form of cooked meals, hygiene kits, blankets as well as the provision of first aid and referrals as required, within the centres.

Isolated cases of attacks against foreign nationals, some involving injury were reported in the media. Police and army units were deployed to some volatile hot-spots and were actively involved in managing reported cases of disturbances. Sporadic incidences of violence occurred in Gauteng with five people reported injured as of 19 July 2010. A SARCS team from the Soweto Branch conducted an assessment of the situation. A high presence and intervention of police and security teams within the affected areas is reported to have prevented much higher casualties.

In Musina, there were reports of a heavy presence of displaced Zimbabweans at the Beitbridge border post crossing from South Africa into Zimbabwe. There were also reports of increased passage of returning Zimbabweans at Plumtree, which borders Zimbabwe and Botswana. The Zimbabwean Civil Protection Unit was reported to have set up some large tents with provisions for 10,000 blankets, 20 boxes of laundry soap and 1,000 buckets of water for returnees.

Based on this and the experience from the previous 'xenophobic' attacks that occurred in 2008, the SARCS with support from the IFRC and ICRC actively responded to the needs of the affected communities. SARCS are currently continuing with training of volunteers and staff to strengthen their capacity in case of a recurrence of similar or even greater violence to that of 2008.

There were concerns that South Africa would have a repeat of the May 2008 Urban Violence, but in 2010, the Government was better prepared in their response, and acted decisively in dealing with the perpetrators of the violence.

The South African Police Service (SAPS) and the South Africa National Defence Force made their presence felt in affected areas and quickly controlled difficult situations. There were reports of sporadic isolated attacks on foreign nationals i.e. informal shops looted or burnt down and people displaced because their lives were threatened.

During the post-Soccer World Cup threats, some of the foreign nationals did not flee to their countries of origin but to provinces that were perceived to be safer, such as Northern Cape (Kimberley) and Eastern Cape (Port Elizabeth) which reported a huge influx of foreign nationals. The DREF enabled SARCS to procure relief stock and position it in the targeted provinces and to focus more on preparedness by strengthening the capacity of its staff and volunteers to respond.

In early August a SARCS national team which included the programmes manager, RFL coordinator and the communications coordinator) visited Musina to undertake an assessment of the Musina Red Cross office's readiness to respond in light of the influx of Zimbabwean nationals into South Africa. There were reports of many Zimbabwean nationals sleeping on the streets of Musina as all temporal shelters were filled to capacity. UNHCR officials and other humanitarian agencies speculated that this was because most of the Zimbabwean nationals were reluctant to go back to their country fearing possible violence associated with the impending Zimbabwean elections in early 2011.

Coordination and partnerships

Within the Movement, SARCS worked closely with the Partner National Societies (PNS), IFRC and ICRC. The Movement components (SARCS, IFRC and ICRC) are part of the Movement disaster management coordination taskforce. SARCS as a member of the National Disaster Management Centre (NDMC) both at the national and provincial levels is more and more being relied upon by government authorities and other agencies for operational expertise and situational assessment and reports.

Outside the Movement the NS partnered with the UN agencies through the Regional Inter-Agency Coordination Support Office (RIACSO) and the national, provincial and local government authorities of the South African Government. The South African Government has established an IMC (inter-ministerial committee) specifically to respond to the threat of violence against foreign nationals. Recommendations from various organisations and community representatives to address this issue have been made to the IMC. The South African Police Service (SAPS) and South African National Defence Force have already been deployed into volatile areas to prevent and respond to outbreaks of violence. Security structures and systems set up as part of the 2010 World Cup are being maintained and oriented towards responding to the urban violence.

Red Cross and Red Crescent action

A planning meeting to discuss strategies to address the urban violence, xenophobia and population movement was held in Zimbabwe from 3 to 5 March, 2010 as a preparedness action. The meeting brought together Secretaries General and disaster management technical staff from Zimbabwe and South Africa Red Cross Societies, IFRC Africa Zone head of operations, IFRC regional disaster management coordinator, representatives from the Danish and the Finnish Red Cross. This meeting resulted in the establishment of the Ubuntu (Humanity) Initiative, a project aimed at promoting social integration and reducing violence in line with the new Federation policy on migration

On 12 July, the SARCS secretary general sent a message to all the SARCS Regional Offices to put on high alert in preparation for any outbreak of violence. Reports of violence especially in Wellington and Paarl (Mbekweni Township) in the Western Cape Province affected a total of 177 people who were forced by to abandon their homes or shops. Since 14 July, SARCS has distributed 177 blankets to the affected people and has been providing them with food in the form of two meals per day. Hygiene education commenced on 19 July 2010 targeting displaced foreigners based at Franchhoek and Antoniesvlei camps.

In Gauteng Province, civil unrest was reported on 19 July in Kya Sands in Kagiso in Johannesburg. Assessments were also been carried out by SARCS field teams in Ryger Park, Gauteng, which is one of the hot spots of the 2008 of urban violence. Police and army units were deployed to the area.

The SARCS disaster management coordinator and tracing officer visited the Musina/Beitbridge border areas from 5 to 9 July. Observations from this visit revealed the relative readiness of municipalities in the area to respond to the situation. Officials from SARCS and ZRCS met in Musina to discuss key areas of cooperation and support as well as updating each other on the situation regarding movement of foreign nationals from South Africa into Zimbabwe. The meeting also revealed an urgent need to revive and strengthen the SARCS presence (office, staffing, volunteer training and visibility) in the Musina area, especially in the light of the critical stakeholder relationships, where organizations like the UN, MSF, IOM etc, are represented at relatively high levels.

SARCS volunteers conducted a social mobilisation campaign carried anti-discrimination messages. The campaign was initiated by the SAPS with the objective of promoting respect for diversity and human dignity, and reduces intolerance, discrimination and social exclusion between host and migrant communities

The proposed operation

This operation is mainly focusing on strengthening the capacity of SARCS to be able to respond to the current and potential violence against foreign nationals living in South Africa. The SARCS will also carry out anti-discrimination campaigns targeting host communities. The campaigns will use existing and new materials developed by IFRC and SARCS to promote respect for diversity and human dignity, and reduce intolerance, discrimination and social exclusion.

Disaster Preparedness and Response

Objective: SARCS has effective disaster preparedness and response mechanism for efficient delivery of emergency response and recovery assistance.

Activities planned:

- Training 100 volunteers on integrated disaster management training in Gauteng, Western Cape and Limpopo Provinces.
- Developing a national and three provincial contingency plans for Gauteng, Western Cape and Limpopo Provinces.
- Conducting three training sessions on Safer Access in Gauteng, Western Cape and Limpopo Provinces.
- Pre-positioning 100 volunteer kits in prone provinces.
- Pre-positioning relief stocks for 2,500 families in Gauteng, Western Cape and Limpopo Provinces.
- Procurement and pre-positioning of 45 tracing kits in nine regional offices.
- Developing and disseminating tracing guidelines to nine regional offices.

Progress

A week long training of trainers (ToT) session in basic disaster management targeting SARCS staff and volunteers was conducted in Limpopo, Gauteng and Western Cape Provinces. The training covered such topics as community-based First Aid, basic disaster management, restoration of family links and dissemination .A total 47 staff and volunteers were trained who will now cascade the training to 100 volunteers and staff members in each of the three provinces of Gauteng, Western Cape and Limpopo. SARCS volunteers comprised of both foreign and South African nationals. A breakdown of the participants is shown is as follows Limpopo 16, Gauteng 16 and Western Cape 15. The inclusion of foreign nationals in the training contributed in building bridges towards tolerance, social inclusion, mutual respect and learning from one another.

In cooperation with the ICRC, SARCS also conducted training in First Aid and Safer Access for 263 volunteers and staff countrywide. With guidance from the DM Coordinator and collaboration with local partners, SARCS produced contingency plans for the three provinces of Gauteng, Western Cape and Limpopo.

SARCS also prepositioned food parcels, hygiene packs, blankets, jerry cans and mattresses in the three provinces. Additional jerry cans were dispatched to Kwa-Zulu Natal, Eastern Cape and Northern Cape provinces due to the influx of foreign nationals fleeing from the most volatile provinces. The breakdown of the pre-positioned relief items is shown in Table 2 below.

Province	Food Parcels	Blankets	Hygiene Packs	Jerry Cans	Mattresses
Gauteng	200	3,500	300	900	200
Limpopo	150	1,500	200	600	100
Western Cape	150	1,500	150	800	100
Northern Cape	-	-	-	600	-
Free State	-	-	-	600	-
Kwa-Zulu Natal	-	-	-	800	-
Eastern Cape	-	-	-	700	-
Total	500	6,500	650	5,000	400

With the support of the ICRC, SARCS also distributed 654 Red Cross vests and 195 First Aid kits were to the targeted provinces.

Challenges

The DREF objectives need to be realigned to the capacity building needs with reference to mass population movement challenges in vulnerable communities, to ensure effective preparedness and readiness to respond to disasters. There was also a challenge in getting the required number of foreign nationals in the volunteer teams across the country.

There were logistical challenges caused by different systems at SARCS and IFRC. This led to communication break down and the making of decisions that were not appropriate for SARCS such as the payment for storage whilst SARCS would have used own premises or supplier warehouse facilities.

Principle and Values

Objective: Promote respect for diversity and human dignity, and reduce intolerance, discrimination and social exclusion.

Activities planned:

- Conducting ten training sessions on Red Cross Principles, Humanitarian Values and International Humanitarian Law (IHL) for 100 SARCS staff and volunteers.
- Dissemination of Red Cross Principles, Humanitarian Values and IHL to eight provinces targeting local administration and leaders.
- Printing and distribution of 10,000 pamphlets on anti-discrimination.

Progress

A total of 90 staff and volunteers were trained on dissemination which covered the following topics, key messages of the National Society in context of the urban violence, principles of: humanity, voluntary service, neutrality and impartiality. Training on dissemination of Red Cross Principles and Humanitarian Values was also conducted in the affected provinces targeting local administration leaders in Western Cape, Gauteng and Limpopo Provinces.

Emergency Health

Objective: The Capacity of SARCS volunteers, staff and community members is increased, in order to provide community-based First Aid (CBHFA) services.

Activities planned:

- Training of 300 volunteers on CBHFA in Gauteng, Western Cape and Limpopo Provinces. Procurement and pre-positioning of 100 hundred First Aid kits in Gauteng, Western Cape and Limpopo Provinces.
- One training in each province to sensitise volunteers on psychosocial programming (PSP) interventions and referral systems.

Progress

A training of trainers (ToT) session on CBHFA targeting SARCS staff and volunteers was conducted in Limpopo, Gauteng and Western Cape. A total of 43 staff and volunteers were trained who will now cascade the training to 100 volunteers and staff members in each of the three provinces of Gauteng, Western Cape and Limpopo. A breakdown of the participants is as follows Limpopo 16, Gauteng 17 and Western Cape 10. This was the first time that SARCS introduced CBHFA as a key training component of an emergency response and it was very successful. CBHFA can be used to gain entry into a community as well as access to foreign nationals to assist them to be first responders in 'hot spot' areas

Communication

Objective: SARCS develop a comprehensive communication strategy.

Activities planned:

- Developing a national communication strategy.
- Developing and publication of an anti-discrimination campaign DVD.

Progress

SARCS printed and distributed 1,500 people and 10,000 pamphlets communicating anti-discrimination messages.

Proposed Way-forward

In order to ensure the realization of objectives as set out in the DREF operation, a no cost extension of the DREF for an additional two months up to 31 December to complete the following outstanding tasks:

- Roll-out of training to the targeted provinces;
- 3 training sessions for foreign nationals;
- Expand the DREF activities to provinces where foreign nationals fled to when their lives were threatened which include Northern Cape (Kimberley), North West (Mafikeng) and Mpumalanga (Mbombela) Provinces;

Implementation of these activities was delayed by the service delivery strikes experienced in South Africa in the second quarter of 2010/

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

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