

DREF operation n° MDRIN008 GLIDE n° EQ-2011-000136-IND 29 May 2012

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.

Summary: CHF 97,137 was allocated from the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies' (IFRC) Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF) on 21 September 2011 to support the National Society in delivering assistance to some 5,000 beneficiaries. This DREF operation received an extension and concluded on 29 February 2011. The Canadian Red Cross and the Canadian government (CIDA) replenished the DREF for this operation.

In response to the earthquake, the Indian Red Cross Society (IRCS) was able to reach 1,000 families with relief supplies, shelter tool kits and water purification units to address their basic needs for a period of two and half months. IRCS trained local volunteers and built their capacity to operate the water treatments units in Chunthang. This relief operation provided a great opportunity to the disaster response team members to demonstrate their skills during an emergency and also to gain more experience of a disaster response operation.



IRCS distributed non-food items to the earthquake affected population in Sikkim. **Photo:** IRCS.

To document the learning from the operation a lessons learnt workshop with the national headquarters, Sikkim state branch staff and volunteers involved in the operation was held in February 2012. A short documentary was prepared for sharing operation achievement and challenges among other volunteers and also for future trainings. Furthermore, this would help IRCS in the long run to analyse the best practises and the gaps to improve Red Cross national disaster response mechanisms.

Despite the damage caused by the earthquake to infrastructure, transportation and communication and the challenges posed by landslides and heavy rains, IRCS was one of the first to reach the affected areas and to provide the affected people with relief supplies, family news service, and shelter kits and purified safe drinking water.

Prior to operation, a close coordination mechanism was maintained with the government authorities and NGO network to avoid duplication and to efficiently use the available resources.

FedEx as the corporate partner provided free services in transporting 1,000 shelter tool kits from IFRC

warehouse in Kuala Lumpur to Gangtok and arranging special facilities for the movement of goods. This partnership has led to time and cost (CHF 30,000) saving for IFRC.

Of the total allocated DREF, CHF 72,338 was spent. The balance of CHF 24,799 has been returned to DREF.

The major donors and partners of DREF include the Australian, the American government, the Austrian Red Cross, the Belgian government, the Canadian Red Cross and government, Danish Red Cross and government, the European Commission Humanitarian Aid and Civil Protection (ECHO), the Irish and Italian governments, the Japanese Red Cross Society, the Luxemburg government, the Monaco Red Cross and government, the Netherlands Red Cross and government, the Norwegian Red Cross and government, the Spanish government, the Swedish Red Cross and government, the United Kingdom department for international Development (DFID), the Medtronic and Z Zurich Foundations and other corporate and private donors.

Replenishment to the DREF specific to this operation was made by the Canadian government (CIDA).

IFRC, on behalf of IRCS, would like to thank all partners for their generous contribution to this DREF. Details of the contributions to the DREF can be found on www.ifrc.org/dref.

[<click here for the DREF budget; and click here for contact details>](#)

The situation

An earthquake with a 6.8 magnitude occurred on 18 September 2011, at 18:11 IST in the border region between India and Nepal, causing widespread damage to the infrastructure in Sikkim. In response to the earthquake, IRCS deployed members of its national disaster response team (NDRT) and national disaster water and sanitation response team (NDWRT), along with one water purification unit and non-food items in coordination with the government's Ministry of Health and Family Welfare. These non-food items and the water purification units were sent to Sikkim by Indian air force planes on 21 September 2011 as part of the immediate response. Relief stocks were mobilized from Bahadurgarh and Guwahati warehouses to Sikkim by road.

Table 1: Details of damage caused by the Sikkim earthquake

| District | Houses damaged (Sikkim) | | | |
|----------|-------------------------|---------------|----------------|--------------|
| | Fully damaged | Severe damage | Partial damage | Minor damage |
| North | 6,000 | - | - | - |
| South | 820 | - | 446 | 1,582 |
| East | 6,000 | - | 9,000 | - |
| West | 1,679 | 5,327 | 8,342 | - |
| Total | 14,499 | 5,327 | 17,788 | 1,582 |

The water purification unit was installed in Chunthang which is served approximately 2,000 people. Despite the bad road conditions, distribution of relief supplies continued in the eastern, western, southern and northern districts. The shelter toolkits pre-positioned at IFRC regional logistics unit warehouse in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, were sent to Sikkim to support reconstruction and repair of damaged houses.

IRCS also runs a unique service known as Family News Service (FNS) which assist in reunifying families and restoring family links (RFL). Two volunteers, who were trained in restoring family links, were deployed in Sikkim to resolve 46 cases of broken family links.

Table 2: Details of RFL cases solved in Sikkim

| Type of RFL services | No. of cases |
|----------------------|--------------|
| "I AM ALIVE message" | 35 |
| Tracing cases | 4 |
| Phone service | 7 |

During the Lachung visits, the team was able to trace the missing family members, who were earlier registered in other parts of Sikkim. Messages received informed family members that they were alive and

well. IRCS volunteers visited Mangan and informed the district commissioner of the FNS service provided in Chunthang. The district commissioner observed that IRCS was the only agency providing such a service and offered support in finding these missing family members in the district. The team distributed two 'I AM ALIVE' messages to each of the concerned families with the help of the local authorities in Mangan district. Furthermore, collaboration with the other private partners (i.e. FedEx) enabled IRCS to reach the affected people with the appropriate assistance in a short span of time.

As time passed, people started salvaging material from their damaged houses, and constructed temporary and permanent houses (shelter). IRCS has provided shelter tool kits to the most vulnerable people to salvage material from their damaged houses and to rebuild their homes. The operation has been implemented very smoothly because of committed Red Cross volunteers and staff under the guidance of senior management.

Coordination and partnerships

At the start of DREF operation, a meeting of humanitarian agencies was conducted at Sphere India office on 19 September 2011 to discuss the challenges faced by organizations in delivering relief aid.

FedEx evolved as a corporate partner for this operation and assisted in transporting shelter tool kits free of charge from Asia Pacific regional logistic unit (RLU) warehouse in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia to Gangtok by arranging special facilities for the movement of goods. The Ministry of Health and Family Welfare which is also a nodal ministry of IRCS facilitated access to the aircraft to transport relief supplies from Delhi to Bagdogra.

During operation, close coordination was maintained with the local government authorities particularly the relief commissioner in Sikkim which facilitated access to the information available with the government bodies as well as their cooperation to implement planned activities. This coordination made available helicopters to transport Red Cross personnel and equipment (i.e. water treatment unit) to the remote areas after the earthquake. Besides this, IFRC maintained coordination with the in-country partner national societies and regularly updated on the unfolding situation and IRCS action.

Red Cross and Red Crescent action

| Relief distributions (food and basic non-food items) |
|---|
| Outcome: The immediate needs of 1,000 earthquake affected families (5,000 beneficiaries) have been met through relief distributions in Sikkim. |
| Outputs and activities planned: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Detailed need assessment by IRCS and mobilisation of national disaster response team (NDRT) and national disaster water and sanitation response team (NDWRT) members and volunteers. • Procurement of non-food item stocks. • Dispatch and transportation by IRCS to the distribution sites. • Distribution of relief items (woollen blankets) by trained IRCS volunteers and staff. • Re-stock relief items distributed. • Regular detailed monitoring and reporting of distributions. |

Achievements:

Based on the needs assessment carried out by the IRCS NDRT/NDWRT members, this relief operation supported the distribution of 1,000 shelter kits, 500 kitchen sets, 2,000 blankets and 500 tarpaulin sheets. The secondary data collected from the local authorities and NGO coordination mechanism established by Sphere India was particularly crucial in executing this operation. This information facilitated in preparing the beneficiaries list for distribution of relief supplies as due to damaged infrastructure it limited the movement of the IRCS teams for data collection in the worst affected areas. All distributed items were based on the needs of the beneficiaries.

Table 3: List of relief items procured and distributed

| Relief item | Procured | Distributed |
|-------------------|------------------|------------------|
| Shelter tool kits | 1,000 | 999 |
| Woollen blankets | 2,000 (50% wool) | 2,000 (50% wool) |
| Stoves | 0 | 200 |

| | | |
|--------------|-----|-----|
| Tarpaulins | 800 | 500 |
| Kitchen sets | 500 | 500 |

All the relief supplies were distributed over a period of two and a half month as initial access to these remote affected areas were difficult. This included the time required to mobilize the stocks from the IRCS warehouses in Bahadurgarh and Guwahati as well as from the IFRC RLU warehouse in Kuala Lumpur.

Besides the 1,000 shelter tool kits which had to be imported from the IFRC regional warehouse in Kuala Lumpur, the relief supplies distributed were dispatched from disaster preparedness IRCS stocks pre-positioned at Bahadurgarh warehouse. The distributed items such as kitchen sets, blankets have been replenished and stocked in Bahadurgarh and Kolkata warehouses.

Impact:

The IRCS efforts initiated the restoration of the lives and gave psychological support to the affected families.

Challenges:

At the start of the relief operation transport and communication was badly affected due to the earthquake, landslides and continuous rains. The road linking Siliguri and Gangtok, as well as most of the other main routes were frequently blocked by recurrent landslides and the falling of loose rocks and boulders. Communication links (telephones and any other communication) with many villages in upper north Sikkim were disrupted. This posed a major problem as it prevented smooth and regular communication with some of the worst affected villages.



One of the many beneficiaries who received the shelter tool kits and non-food items by IRCS in Sikkim. **Photo:** IRCS.

Despite these challenges IRCS was one of the first to reach many areas with relief supplies and assistance for those affected, as mentioned by the divisional magistrates, block development officers and additional district collectors in Mangan (north district), Chunthang (north district) and Geyzing (west district).

Emergency health

Outcome: First aid and referral services for the injured and sick people in seventy- hit areas are available.

Outputs and activities planned:

- Procurement of first aid kits.
- Provision of first aid to earthquake affected people in Sikkim.

As the Sikkim government deployed a team of doctors and paramedics to render assistance to the affected People the proposed activity under this objective was not carried out in order to avoid duplication of work. Instead IRCS concentrated its efforts on providing non-food relief supplies, purified safe drinking water and shelter. However, in Mangan, on request of the district administration, the IRCS team members helped in segregating medicines.

Water, sanitation, and hygiene promotion

Outcome: Water and sanitation related diseases are reduced for 1,000 families through access to safe drinking water.

Outputs and activities planned:

- Assess the damage to existing water supply systems and requirement for emergency water supply.
- Selection of most vulnerable people as beneficiaries.
- Deployment of water treatment unit(s).

- Treatment and distribution of safe drinking water for up to 5,000 people (1,000 families).
- Monitoring and evaluation.

Achievements:

After discussions with the relief commissioner in Gangtok a water treatment unit (NOMAD brand) was installed in Chunthang near Gurudwara and provided purified safe drinking water to the affected people who were taking shelter in the relief camps as well as those staying in temporary shelters.

At the start of the operation as Chunthang area was inaccessible by road due to heavy landslides, the IRCS teams lobbied with the local authorities who arranged for an army helicopter to airlift the water treatment unit. On 27 September 2012, the army helicopter airlifted the unit and IRCS disaster response team members from Gangtok to Pegong (ITBP camp helipad). Furthermore, the sub-division magistrate arranged for a vehicle to transport the water treatment unit to Chunthang.

The IRCS team successfully coordinated efforts to assemble the water treatment unit in a timely manner (within four hours) as to provide immediate access for the affected people to start using purified safe drinking water. In addition, the IRCS NDWRT team trained the local community volunteers on the operation of the water treatment unit.



The earthquake affected people benefited from the drinking water distribution point set up by IRCS near Gurudwara at Chunthang. **Photo:** IRCS.

Impact:

The coordinated efforts of the Sikkim government and IRCS was recognised by the local authorities such as sub divisional magistrate/ block development officer and affected communities alike. Many community members from Chunthang also expressed their interest to join the Red Cross as a member or volunteer.

The efforts of IRCS could avail safe drinking water to around 2,000 people, which was a preventive measure taken by government authorities and Red Cross to avoid any spread of diseases. This support was extended for two and half months. The number of people accessing these facilities gradually decreased over time as people migrated from the affected areas and original water supply system was restored.

Challenges:

The installation of the water treatment unit was delayed by three days due to heavy rains and landslides which made it difficult to access Chunthang area by road.

After the installation of the water treatment unit, the helicopter was no longer made available for the team to return to Gangtok to conduct follow-up. The IRCS team had to travel by foot for more than 10 km, including 7 km through an under-construction tunnel, to Naga camp. Meanwhile, the team managed to travel to Mangan with the service of an Indian army truck and later travel to Gangtok with a hired vehicle. This highlights the commitment and dedication of IRCS volunteers who work in difficult situations to reach the most vulnerable people with the required relief assistance.

Emergency shelter

Outcome: 1,000 families have received tools to repair their damaged houses and to salvage material of the damaged houses.

Output and activities planned:

- Identification of beneficiaries.
- Procurement of shelter kits and tarpaulin.
- Distribution of shelter kits along with tarpaulin by trained staff and volunteers.
- Monitoring the use of shelter kits.
- Regular detailed monitoring and reporting of distributions.

Achievements:

A total of 999 shelter tool kits were distributed to the families whose houses were damaged by the earthquake. At the time of distribution of the shelter tool kits, beneficiaries received explanations about the contents and use of shelter tool kit in local language.

FedEx which evolved as a corporate partner for this relief operation transported these 1,000 shelter tool kits free of charge from IFRC warehouse in Kuala Lumpur to Gangtok by arranging special facilities for the movement of goods. This resulted in saving of transportation costs amounting to CHF 30,000 for IFRC.

Impact:

The shelter tool kits helped communities to repair/reconstruct their damaged houses very quickly hence helping them to restore their lives.

Challenges:

The shelter tool kits were not pre-positioned in the IRCS regional warehouse here in India, they were to be imported from the IFRC regional warehouse in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. This caused delay in the distribution of the shelter tool kits to the affected households.

Lessons Learnt Workshop

A lessons learnt workshop was organized on the 7 and 8 February 2012, at IRCS national headquarters in order to capture learning and best practices of the Sikkim earthquake relief operation. The aim of the workshop was to help IRCS to further develop its disaster response mechanism.



The destruction/ damage caused to infrastructure and building structures by earthquake in sikkim. **Photo:** IRCS NDRT member.

SWOT analysis of the earthquake relief operation included:



Strengths

- Deployment of goods, equipment and personnel was very quick.
- There was a good coordination with Government and other agencies.
- Quick and appropriate arrangements by NHQ and IFRC for the transportation of personnel, relief items and equipments.
- Assistance of corporate for transporting shelter tool kits from Kuala Lumpur to Gangtok free of charge.
- Commitment and support of local volunteers.
- Good support from IRCS NHQ, IFRC, State branch, State Govt. administration, Army and local doctors.
- Good coordination between deployed team, state branch and national headquarters.



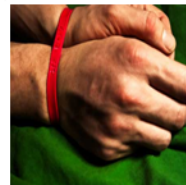
Weakness

- Quality and quantity of relief supplies was not adequate. E.g. The woollen blankets distributed were of 50% wool however looking at the weather conditions it should have been 100% wool blankets.
- Could not deliver first aid service due to lack of first aid kits.
- Lack of communication facilities/equipments with deployed NDRT/NDWRT teams
- Water purification unit was not equipped fully with the necessary accessories.
- Poor State branch capacity.
- Poor road conditions which made travel risky and costly.
- Poor gender balance in NDRT/NDWRT team.
- Limited logistics capacities on ground.
- Working advance given was not enough.
- No trained volunteers at the State to join NDRT/NDWRT members.
- No equipments were made available to NDRT/NDWRT members to facilitate regular reporting from the field.
- Due to lack of communication facilities, it was difficult for the team to communicate their well being and needs from the field.



Opportunities

- It was an opportunity to strengthen the state & district branches on assessment, distribution and watsan.
- Further strengthen disaster response mechanism.
- It was an opportunity to disseminate IRCS principles and values.
- To get engaged with government (with auxiliary status).
- To tap funds and equipments support from various donors.
- To work with the communities.
- It was an opportunity to enrol volunteers.
- It was an opportunity for the NDRT/NDWRT members to prove themselves physically and mentally.



Constraints

- Bad weather conditions which hampered movement of NDRT/NDWRT.
- Due to land slides, accessibility to affected areas was a challenge.
- People were moving out of the affected area. Due to this population movement, it was difficult to identify the real affected people for the service delivery.

Key recommendations:

- Basic support equipments should be provided to the deployed teams in times of disaster response.
- Reserve fund may be maintained at the national headquarters for emergency response.
- 24/7 emergency control room should be made operational during emergency response operations in order to extend required support to the deployed teams in the disaster affected areas.
- Standard operating procedures, terms of reference (ToRs) may be reviewed.
- Warehousing facilities may be provided at disaster prone states and districts.
- Regular maintenance of the water purification units should be done at warehouses.
- Guidelines stating responsibilities of the state branch with regard to operation and maintenance of water purification unit and role of NDRT/NDWRT team members should be sent to the state branches.
- More state branches should be encouraged to nominate volunteers/staff for NDRT/NDWRT trainings so that in all states trained human resource is available for deployment during times of disasters.
- SDRT and DDRT trainings should be conducted in Sikkim.
- Mechanism may be devised to help warehouses to get finance and human resources required for the quick dispatch of relief items.
- The Shelter tool kits distributed in Sikkim were appreciated by the beneficiaries and local authorities due to its usefulness. These kits may be contextualized and pre-positioned in the warehouses as disaster preparedness stocks in order to avoid cost of transportation and time required to import it from IFRC Kuala Lumpur RLU warehouse in future

Contact information

For further information specifically related to this operation please contact:

Indian Red Cross Society:

- Dr. SP Agarwal, Secretary General; phone: +91 11 2371 6441; email: spagarwalsg@indianredcross.org

IFRC India country office:

- John Roche, Head of office; phone: +91 11 2332 4203; email: john.roche@ifrc.org

IFRC South Asia regional office, in India:

- Azmat Ulla, Head of regional office; phone: +91 11 2411 1122; fax: +91 11 2411 1128; email: azmat.ulla@ifrc.org
- Maija-Liisa Fors, Regional programme coordinator; phone: +91.11.2411.1125; fax: +91.11.2411.1128; email: majjaliisa.fors@ifrc.org

IFRC Asia Pacific Zone office, in Malaysia:

- Mathew Schraeder, Operations coordinator; phone: +603 9207 5798; mobile: +6012 305 8332; email: mathew.schraeder@ifrc.org
- Al Panico, Head of operations; phone: + 603 9207 5700; email: al.panico@ifrc.org
- Alan Bradbury, Head of resource mobilization and planning, monitoring, evaluation and reporting (PMER); phone: +603 9207 5775; email: alan.bradbury@ifrc.org
- Jeremy Francis, Regional logistics coordinator; mobile: +6012 298 9752; email: jeremy.francis@ifrc.org

Click [here](#) to return to the title page

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.

www.ifrc.org
Saving lives, changing minds.



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.
-

MDRIN008 - India - Sikkim Earthquake

Appeal Launch Date: 22 sep 11

Appeal Timeframe: 22 sep 11 to 29 feb 12

Final Report
I. Funding

| Selected Parameters | |
|---------------------|---------------|
| Reporting Timeframe | 2011/9-2012/4 |
| Budget Timeframe | 2011/9-2012/2 |
| Appeal | MDRIN008 |
| Budget | APPROVED |

All figures are in Swiss Francs (CHF)

| | Disaster Management | Health and Social Services | National Society Development | Principles and Values | Coordination | TOTAL | Deferred Income |
|--------------------------------------|---------------------|----------------------------|------------------------------|-----------------------|--------------|--------|-----------------|
| A. Budget | 97,137 | | | | | 97,137 | |
| B. Opening Balance | 0 | | | | | 0 | |
| Income | | | | | | | |
| <u>Other Income</u> | | | | | | | |
| <i>DREF Allocations</i> | 97,137 | | | | | 97,137 | |
| C4. Other Income | 97,137 | | | | | 97,137 | |
| C. Total Income = SUM(C1..C4) | 97,137 | | | | | 97,137 | |
| D. Total Funding = B +C | 97,137 | | | | | 97,137 | |
| Coverage = D/A | 100% | | | | | 100% | |

II. Movement of Funds

| | Disaster Management | Health and Social Services | National Society Development | Principles and Values | Coordination | TOTAL | Deferred Income |
|---|---------------------|----------------------------|------------------------------|-----------------------|--------------|---------|-----------------|
| B. Opening Balance | 0 | | | | | 0 | |
| C. Income | 97,137 | | | | | 97,137 | |
| E. Expenditure | -72,338 | | | | | -72,338 | |
| F. Closing Balance = (B + C + E) | 24,799 | | | | | 24,799 | |

| Selected Parameters | |
|---------------------|---------------|
| Reporting Timeframe | 2011/9-2012/4 |
| Budget Timeframe | 2011/9-2012/2 |
| Appeal | MDRIN008 |
| Budget | APPROVED |

All figures are in Swiss Francs (CHF)

III. 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) | | 97,137 | | | | | 97,137 | |
| Relief items, Construction, Supplies | | | | | | | | |
| Shelter - Relief | 51,179 | 28,326 | | | | 28,326 | 22,853 | |
| Clothing & Textiles | 10,784 | 11,429 | | | | 11,429 | -644 | |
| Medical & First Aid | 914 | | | | | | 914 | |
| Utensils & Tools | | 10,896 | | | | 10,896 | -10,896 | |
| Total Relief items, Construction, Supplies | 62,877 | 50,650 | | | | 50,650 | 12,226 | |
| Logistics, Transport & Storage | | | | | | | | |
| Storage | | 347 | | | | 347 | -347 | |
| Distribution & Monitoring | 9,139 | 489 | | | | 489 | 8,650 | |
| Transport & Vehicles Costs | | 1,573 | | | | 1,573 | -1,573 | |
| Logistics Services | | 2,281 | | | | 2,281 | -2,281 | |
| Total Logistics, Transport & Storage | 9,139 | 4,690 | | | | 4,690 | 4,449 | |
| Workshops & Training | | | | | | | | |
| Workshops & Training | | 6,012 | | | | 6,012 | -6,012 | |
| Total Workshops & Training | | 6,012 | | | | 6,012 | -6,012 | |
| General Expenditure | | | | | | | | |
| Travel | 14,623 | 10,826 | | | | 10,826 | 3,796 | |
| Office Costs | | 62 | | | | 62 | -62 | |
| Communications | 914 | 13 | | | | 13 | 900 | |
| Financial Charges | | -4,331 | | | | -4,331 | 4,331 | |
| Other General Expenses | 3,656 | | | | | | 3,656 | |
| Total General Expenditure | 19,192 | 6,570 | | | | 6,570 | 12,622 | |
| Indirect Costs | | | | | | | | |
| Programme & Services Support Recov | 5,929 | 4,415 | | | | 4,415 | 1,514 | |
| Total Indirect Costs | 5,929 | 4,415 | | | | 4,415 | 1,514 | |
| TOTAL EXPENDITURE (D) | 97,137 | 72,338 | | | | 72,338 | 24,799 | |
| VARIANCE (C - D) | | 24,799 | | | | 24,799 | | |