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DREF final report

Gabon: Floods

 International Federation
of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

DREF operation n°MDRGA006
GLIDE n° FF-2012-000101-GAB
31 January, 2013

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 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.

Summary: CHF 117,612 was allocated from the IFRC's Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF) on 18 June 2012 to support the national society in delivering assistance to some 1,606 beneficiaries (321 families).

In early June 2012, a violent rainstorm hit Libreville, the capital of the Republic of Gabon, causing floods in the residential areas in more than 12 neighborhoods. The floodwaters caused extensive damage to houses and infrastructure, displacing families and causing injuries and death.

Assessments carried out by Gabonese Red Cross (GRC) volunteers identified 15,569 households (77,845 persons) from four subdivisions in Libreville that had been affected by the floods. Out of these, 321 households (1,606 persons) were considered to be the most vulnerable, since their families had been displaced after their homes were completely or partially destroyed, and their belongings lost.



Gabonese Red Cross volunteers cleaning one of the affected neighborhoods - Photo Geneviève PIAM - RDRT

The DREF operation enabled GRC to assist 302 displaced families with relief items that enhanced their living situation, decreased exposure and vulnerability to diseases, and enabled them to resume some of their normal routines. Each household received a package containing one (1) bucket, one (1) jerry can, three (3) bars of soap/person depending on household size, one (1) kitchen kit, two (2) tarpaulins, two (2) treated mosquito nets, blankets (depending on household size, one (1) blanket per 2 people), mattresses (depending on household size, one (1) mattress per 3 people). Each woman of childbearing age received one (1) hygiene kit consisting of a toothbrush, toilet gloves, toothpaste, bathing soaps and pads (sanitary towels).

Furthermore, GRC reached some 15,000 people living in the areas most affected by floods, with awareness raising activities on health risks related to flooding and their prevention. A total of 661 people from the affected areas were mobilized using the community participatory method and carried out cleaning and sanitation activities, resulting in improved sanitary conditions in the targeted areas. During this exercise, GRC also disinfected around 225 houses and family latrines.

The DREF operation improved the capacity of GRC through provision of useful experience in planning and implementing this flood response operation. As a result, a total of 48 GRC volunteers were trained in relief distribution, risk reduction related to floods, awareness techniques through social mobilization, and hygiene promotion through the Participatory Hygiene and Sanitation Transformation (PHAST) approach.

IFRC deployed a Regional Disaster Response Team (RDRT) member for technical assistance, training of volunteers, setting up the operational structures and assisting in the implementation activities.

These activities, carried out for the benefit of the flood-affected population in Libreville, enhanced the visibility and credibility of GRC vis-à-vis the Government, other humanitarian organizations while enlightening the local population about Red Cross work.

The major donors and partners of DREF include the Australian, American and Belgian governments, the Austrian Red Cross, the Canadian Red Cross and government, Danish Red Cross and government, the European Commission Humanitarian Aid and Civil Protection (ECHO), the Irish and the Italian governments, the Japanese Red Cross Society, the Luxembourg 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.

IFRC, on behalf of the Gabonese Red Cross, would like to extend thanks to all for their generous contributions. Details of all donors can be found on http://www.ifrc.org/docs/appeals/Active/MAA00010_2012.pdf

[<click here for final financial report \(CHF 1,433 returned to DREF\); or here to view contact details>](#)

The situation

The heavy rains that fell in Libreville in Gabon between 4 to 7 June 2012, caused severe flooding in several neighborhoods of the town, leading to extensive damage in more than 12 neighborhoods namely: Sotega, Cocotier, Avea, Boulevard, Akébé frontière, Apostrophe, Belle vue 3, Awendje CES B2, Plein ciel/Odeka, PK 5, Nzeng' Ayong and La Baie des Cochons. People were taken by surprise when awakened by the rapid rising dirty water in their houses, most of which were built on low-lying, shallow or inaccessible marshy areas.

The Gabonese Prime Minister issued a press release on the situation in the Gabonese capital, and the Ministry of Interior, Public Security, Immigration and Decentralization in collaboration with GRC set up a system to register the number of flood-affected people as well as assess the needs and damage.

The situation and needs assessments were carried out by GRC which identified 77,845 people (15,569 families) affected by the floods, of whom 321 families (1,606 persons) were considered the most vulnerable. Their houses had been completely (3 families) or partially (35 families) destroyed, while for others had their houses completely flooded, resulting in the loss of all their possessions (furniture, beddings, kitchen utensils, etc.). Since no resettlement site was allocated to the displaced families until a few days later, host families accommodated some of the families, while a vast majority had to remain in their destroyed houses where they were living in very exposed and precarious conditions.

Assistance to the flood affected families was coordinated by the Ministry of the Interior's civil protection unit.

GRC prepared an action plan based on the needs assessment and provided emergency assistance to the identified most vulnerable households, through provision of NFIs. Furthermore, GRC carried out awareness raising activities on personal hygiene and sanitation to the affected population and mobilized the affected communities in cleaning of their neighbourhoods.

Red Cross and Red Crescent action

As from the early hours of the alert, Gabonese Red Cross volunteers, supported by recently trained members of the National Disaster Response Team (NDRT) were deployed to the affected areas to evacuate the

vulnerable and provide psychosocial support to affected persons. Also, they had to carry out assessments in their respective neighborhoods to identify persons in need and provide emergency relief.

Information provided by GRC volunteers facilitated contact with the authorities and information sharing within the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement.

The IFRC facilitated the launch of an alert for disaster at the Disaster Monitoring Information System (DMIS) and provided technical support in the planning and preparation of the DREF operation Plan of Action.

The DREF support enabled GRC to implement its action plan with the following activities:

1. Distribution of non-food items (blankets, treated mosquito nets, mattresses, soap, buckets, jerry cans, kitchen kits, tarpaulins and hygiene kits (for women of childbearing age).
2. Raising awareness of the population on personal hygiene and sanitation was undertaken.
3. Cleaning of the affected neighborhoods undertaken through social mobilization of community members.
4. Disinfection of family houses and latrines
5. Enhancement of the NS capacity through training of 48 volunteers on distribution, risk reduction and awareness techniques through social mobilization and hygiene promotion (PHAST approach).

IFRC assisted GRC by deploying a RDRT member for technical assistance, training of volunteers, setting up the operational structures and assisting in the implementation of the operation. IFRC also provided guidance with regards to logistics, procurement, distribution and monitoring of activities in the operation.

Achievements against outcomes

GRC implemented all activities planned for this DREF operation. Almost all targeted beneficiaries were reached with regard to distribution of relief items – 302 out of 321 planned families. The whereabouts of 19 families that had moved could not be established for the distribution of their NFI kits; however efforts were made to provide them with information where they could collect their relief packages.

Around 15,000 persons were reached through awareness raising activities on health and other risks related to flooding, and how to reduce these risks using safe water sources and appropriate hygiene practices. A total of 5,914 persons were visited in their homes by the volunteers while the larger audience was reached through mass awareness meetings and information hand outs (leaflets, brochures etc). Originally, GRC had planned for large scale awareness raising campaigns reaching 400,000 people in the town of Libreville; however this was not feasible, as access to certain neighborhoods proved difficult due to the flooding, therefore getting people to attend the mass meetings was more difficult than anticipated. GRC focused on mass meeting sessions and door to door awareness raising as well as providing information leaflets to people in the affected neighborhoods.

A total of 48 GRC volunteers (against the 40 planned) were trained on relief distribution, risk reduction related to floods and awareness techniques, through social mobilization and hygiene promotion through the Participatory Hygiene and Sanitation Transformation (PHAST) approach.

The DREF operation took into consideration the special needs of women in childbearing age with each one among the beneficiaries receiving a hygiene kit.

GRC used the community participatory approach when assessing needs, monitoring the relief distribution and while mobilizing the community for sanitation and hygiene activities. The principle of PHAST methodology that the volunteers were trained in and used for the community cleaning exercises is participatory. GRC also undertook an evaluation on the ground to get the opinion of the beneficiaries with regard to the assistance received during the operation.

Through this DREF operation, including the relief distribution and the awareness and sanitation activities carried out by GRC, the National Society increased its visibility and credibility towards the community and strengthened its auxiliary role to the government of Ghana in disaster response.

Relief distributions (basic non-food items)

Outcome: Immediate non-food item needs of 321 most vulnerable families (1,606 persons) in 4 districts of Libreville are met through the distribution of NFIs.

<p>Output: Appropriate non-food items (relief supplies) are distributed to vulnerable households.</p>	<p>Activities planned:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Purchase and distribution of 642 tarpaulins, 642 mosquito nets, 803 blankets, 803 mattresses, 4,818 bars of soap (200g), 321 buckets, 321 jerry cans, 321 kitchen kits, and 300 hygiene kits. • Training (refresher) of 40 volunteers in Libreville in distribution techniques. • Preparation of equipment and other tools distribution. • Ensure monitoring, evaluation of and reporting on distribution activities.
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Achievements:

Non-food items from IFRC Regional Representation in Yaoundé, acquired with DREF funds (tarpaulins, mosquito nets, blankets, buckets, jerry cans, kitchen sets, chlorine etc.) were transported to Libreville and handed over to the National Society. These items were drawn from the regional stock pre-positioned in Yaoundé, and have been replaced with funds from the DREF of the operation. The other items needed for the operation were purchased locally in Libreville. Regardless, whether locally or regionally purchased, this was done in accordance with the IFRC procurement procedures.

With the support of the RDRT staff deployed by IFRC Central Africa Regional Representation, a training session on relief distribution, awareness raising, hygiene and sanitation (PHAST approach) and flood risk reduction techniques was organized to strengthen the capacity of 48 GRC volunteers.

The 48 trained volunteers were divided into four teams of 10 people, led by one supervisor and one team leader. All these activities implemented with DREF funds were coordinated by the RDRT resource person from the Central Africa Regional Representation of the Federation deployed for this purpose to provide close support to the National Society.

GRC, with technical input from the RDRT, developed a relief distribution plan for the distribution which was actualized in:

1. Preparing the package of required items according to neighborhood and subdivision;
2. Preparing lists (checking and signing);
3. Designing, printing and distributing tokens for the control of queues.

After the official launching of Red Cross assistance activities, in the presence of local administrative and traditional authorities, volunteers distributed non-food items to the flood affected households, according to the vulnerability criteria, family size, and in line with Sphere standards.

Each household received a package containing one (1) bucket, one (1) jerry can, three (3) bars of soap/person depending on household size, one (1) kitchen kit, two (2) tarpaulins, two (2) treated mosquito nets, blankets (depending on household size, one (1) blanket per 2 people), mattresses (depending on household size, one (1) mattress per 3 people). Each woman of childbearing age received one (1) hygiene kit consisting of a toothbrush, toilet gloves, toothpaste, bathing soaps and pads (sanitary towels).

The distribution sessions were witnessed by local authorities of the 12 affected neighborhoods and subdivisions. The neighborhood leaders and sub-divisional mayors provided space for the distributions. No incidents were reported before, during or after the distribution in the four subdivisions, except for a few cases of complaint from some households that were excluded because they did not meet the vulnerability criteria.

Out of the 321 registered households, 302 were provided with the NFIs. The other 19 had either left the town, or were absent. Measures were taken to inform the families where to the relief items could be collected, upon presentation of identification documents and tickets issued by the National Society. If some of the beneficiaries fail to collect the NFI kits, the remaining materials will be used as emergency stock. The logistics department of the National Society performed a discharge for this purpose.

With this assistance from the Federation, 302 most vulnerable households in four subdivisions of Libreville affected by the rains in June were able to improve their living conditions and resume some of their normal routines.

Challenges

Besides the challenge in reaching the 19 missing beneficiary families, the operation also experienced some difficulties relating compliance with the IFRC procurement procedures in Libreville, where it was difficult to find two suppliers for some of the items. Additionally, the costs were higher than anticipated.

The work plan had to be adjusted in relation to the assessment carried out on the ground, including procurement. GRC experienced some challenges when the amount allocated for purchase of some items in Libreville was underestimated. Consequently, the quantities were reduced and ratios revised. This was the case with mattresses; instead of one for two people as originally planned in the DREF (total of 803 mattresses), the market prices required a reduction to 535, at a ratio of one mattress for three people. This adjustment was done through an internal budget revision, under the supervision of the finance and logistics departments of the Regional Representation. It should be noted that a mattress was sold at 14,966 FCFA; about 15,000 FCFA, instead of 8000 FCFA as planned in the approved budget. The cost of living is high in Gabon, and even in Yaoundé, a mattress costs more than 8,000 FCFA, excluding transportation.

Water, sanitation, and hygiene promotion

Outcome: Contribute to the improvement of living conditions of the 400,000 most vulnerable families in 4 districts of Libreville affected by floods through sanitation and hygiene promotion activities for 3 months.	
Output: Immediate reduction in risk of waterborne and water related diseases in targeted communities.	Activities planned: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Refresher training of 40 volunteers in Libreville on reducing the risk of flooding. • Produce flipcharts, leaflets and posters on how to reduce flooding risks and epidemics and other diseases related to dirty water and poor hygienic conditions. • Community sensitization in the 4 subdivisions on the risks of flooding and epidemics and other diseases related to dirty water and poor hygienic conditions. • Purchase of 4 megaphones and handing over to the National Society. • Purchase of 12 sanitation kits and handing over to the National Society. • Implementation of hygiene and sanitation promotion activities. • Complete disinfection of latrines and houses. • Ensure monitoring, evaluation of and reporting on activities related to water, sanitation and hygiene promotion.

Achievements:

A total of 48 volunteers were trained on how to reduce risks related to flooding, including improved hygiene practices, prevention of water borne and water related diseases and other risks. Training was undertaken with support from the RDRT resource person from the IFRC Central Africa Regional Representation.

GRC volunteers used leaflets, posters, flipcharts and megaphones bearing key messages in awareness raising activities targeting the populations of neighborhoods in the four flood-affected subdivisions of Libreville in particular, and those of the entire city on the risks and consequences of floods. The messages included health messages and how to improve hygiene practices, prevent diseases, and other risk related with floods.

Women and youths (1,164 women and 812 youths) were highly involved in door-to-door awareness activities. A total of 5,914 people were reached with these activities, through the efforts of the trained volunteers. Through mass awareness raising meetings and hand out of leaflets, brochures etc, and some 15,000 persons were reached. GRC volunteers' sensitized disaster affected families as well as other inhabitants of the capital city; however the set target of 400,000 persons was not reached due to inaccessibility to people in some of the flooded areas.

Evidently, it was observed that people have been increasingly adhering to improved hygiene routines in the 12 neighborhoods in the four subdivisions, as well as other neighborhoods reached by the campaigns, following the messages disseminated by the GRC volunteers during the awareness sessions.

Regarding the sanitation component, sanitation kits consisting of pickaxes, hoes, 4 teeth diggers, garden rakes, yard brooms, cargo wheelbarrows, gloves (reinforced PVC, 40cm and 27cm long), PVC boots, machetes, masks (type 1 and 2), safety goggles and protective clothing were purchased and handed over to GRC for community hygiene and sanitation campaigns.

In most areas, rainwater and sewage channels that hitherto caused floods, due to the illegal occupation of land, were cleaned by GRC volunteers and mobilized community members.

A total of 661 people from the affected areas were mobilized for the cleanup activities. Many youths were among the community members volunteering to participate in sanitation activities aimed at the improvement of sanitary conditions in their immediate environment. Although the youth demonstrated readiness to perform community cleaning, GRC in general experienced some difficulties in mobilizing more people from the communities.

With the help of community leaders and several local associations (women, youth, religious leaders), the GRC managed to involve the affected families and community members of the targeted neighborhoods in the sanitation activities and hygiene promotion campaigns.

GRC disinfected 225 houses and family latrines, focusing on those that had been completely flooded. This decreased the risks of diseases for the families that prepared to move back to their homes.

Challenges :

GRC faced some challenges in mobilizing the community members for sanitary activities in their own neighborhoods. This was partly overcome by the support of community leaders and local associations.

GRC did not reach as many beneficiaries as originally planned in the plan of action (400,000 people) due to accessibility of some flooded neighborhoods and it was more difficult to get people to attend mass awareness meetings as anticipated.

Lessons learned:

GRC believes that future procurement in Libreville should be avoided, given the high cost and also the scarcity of some items in the local markets.

The difficulties to mobilize community members for improving their own environment demonstrates the relevance of the activities aimed at changing mentalities (sensitization, etc), and the validity of GRC youth antenna projects aimed at encouraging the full participation of youths in the development of their immediate surroundings. Thus, at National Society level, strategies are being put in place to overcome the difficulties encountered in mobilizing people to carry out sanitation activities during this operation. For example, there are plans to build upon and encourage the involvement of youths in community environmental sanitation projects. The projects aim at stimulating the interest of youths in the neighborhoods in environmental hygiene and sanitation activities, developing a spirit of solidarity and social responsibility, and the adoption of healthy habits and related skills, as propounded in the PHAST approach.

With the help of community leaders and several local associations (women, youth, religious leaders), GRC managed to involve affected families and community members of the targeted neighborhoods in the sanitation activities and hygiene promotion campaigns. With the involvement of conscious local authorities, GRC believes that there is a good chance of transforming the sanitation activities into sustainable community action. For this to be realized, an appeal should be launched to the government for joint action in the promotion of sanitation activities in these neighborhoods in need of major infrastructure rehabilitation.

Through this DREF operation, including the relief distribution and the awareness and sanitation activities carried out by GRC, the National Society increased its visibility, credibility and its auxiliary role among administrative and traditional authorities in the flood-affected subdivisions in Libreville. It is now imperative to strengthen the operational capacity (mobilizing/training and equipping volunteers) of local Red Cross committees in high risk areas.

The local committees of GRC should be strengthened in order to ensure effective, timely and efficient responses during emergencies. This is also important due to the restructuring of the organization currently taking place.

Contact information

For further information specifically related to this operation please contact:

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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 (NGOs) 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.

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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.

Selected Parameters	
Reporting Timeframe	2012/1-2012/12
Budget Timeframe	2012/1-2012/12
Appeal	MDRGA006
Budget	APPROVED

All figures are in Swiss Francs (CHF)

I. Funding

	Pledge	Disaster Management	Health and Social Services	National Society Development	Principles and Values	Coordination	TOTAL
A. Budget		117,613					117,613
B. Opening Balance		0					0
Income							
Other Income							
<i>DREF Allocations</i>		117,612					117,612
C4. Other Income		117,612					117,612
C. Total Income = SUM(C1..C4)		117,612					117,612
D. Total Funding = B + C		117,612					117,612
Coverage = D/A		100%					100%

II. Movement of Funds

	Disaster Management	Health and Social Services	National Society Development	Principles and Values	Coordination	TOTAL
B. Opening Balance	0					0
C. Income	117,612					117,612
E. Expenditure	-116,179					-116,179
F. Closing Balance = (B + C + E)	1,433					1,433

International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies
MDRGA006 - Gabon - Floods in Libreville

Appeal Launch Date: 18 jun 12

Appeal Timeframe: 18 jun 12 to 18 oct 12

FINAL Report

Selected Parameters	
Reporting Timeframe	2012/1-2012/12
Budget Timeframe	2012/1-2012/12
Appeal	MDRGA006
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)		117,613					117,613	
Relief items, Construction, Supplies								
Shelter - Relief	8,223	7,988				7,988	235	
Clothing & Textiles	19,918	20,073				20,073	-155	
Water, Sanitation & Hygiene	8,202	7,838				7,838	364	
Medical & First Aid	962	911				911	51	
Utensils & Tools	13,272	12,931				12,931	341	
Other Supplies & Services	9,021	8,422				8,422	599	
Total Relief items, Construction, Supplies	59,598	58,163				58,163	1,435	
Land, vehicles & equipment								
Computers & Telecom		28				28	-28	
Total Land, vehicles & equipment		28				28	-28	
Logistics, Transport & Storage								
Storage	346	1,196				1,196	-850	
Distribution & Monitoring	11,112	8,973				8,973	2,139	
Transport & Vehicles Costs	1,624	2,566				2,566	-942	
Logistics Services		994				994	-994	
Total Logistics, Transport & Storage	13,082	13,729				13,729	-647	
Personnel								
International Staff	5,808	5,544				5,544	264	
National Society Staff	1,923	1,918				1,918	5	
Volunteers	9,146	9,599				9,599	-453	
Total Personnel	16,877	17,061				17,061	-184	
Workshops & Training								
Workshops & Training	5,365	5,356				5,356	9	
Total Workshops & Training	5,365	5,356				5,356	9	
General Expenditure								
Travel	4,936	4,521				4,521	415	
Information & Public Relations	8,538	8,860				8,860	-322	
Office Costs	500	256				256	244	
Communications	1,058	683				683	375	
Financial Charges	481	431				431	50	
Total General Expenditure	15,513	14,751				14,751	762	
Indirect Costs								
Programme & Services Support Recov	7,178	7,091				7,091	88	
Total Indirect Costs	7,178	7,091				7,091	88	
TOTAL EXPENDITURE (D)	117,613	116,179				116,179	1,435	
VARIANCE (C - D)		1,435				1,435		