

DREF operation n° MDRLS002 31 October 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 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 196,831 was allocated from IFRC's Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF) on the 8th February 2012 to support Lesotho Red Cross Society (LRCS) in delivering immediate assistance to some 800 families (4,000 beneficiaries) for four months. Unearmarked funds to repay DREF are encouraged.

Prolonged periods of drought followed by excessive rains resulted in food insecurity in Lesotho due to significant crop losses during the 2011 cropping season.

After detailed needs assessments in February 2012, DREF resources were prioritised to support the four districts of Mokholong, Kena, Mafeteng and Quthing, which had strong National Society branch structures.



Beneficiaries at a distribution site/LRCS photo

Beneficiary identification, selection and verification were conducted during March and April, and distribution of food rations continued up until the end of June. The operation was initially planned to be implemented over four months; however, a one month extension was requested to complete the relief distributions.

LRCS provided assorted food to 1,063 households (4,000 beneficiaries) in the form of maize meal, pulses, vegetable oil and salt and also continued to train volunteers who had been deployed at the onset of the disaster. The families reached were reportedly able to maintain three meals per day which significantly improved their nutritional status and reduced stress related to search of food. The operation also built the capacity of Lesotho Red Cross to manage similar operations in the future through the valuable lessons learnt in the four districts.

The major donors and partners of DREF include the Red Cross Societies and governments of Australia, Austria, Belgium, Canada, Denmark, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Luxembourg, Monaco, the Netherlands, Norway, Spain, Sweden and the USA as well as DG-ECHO, the UK Department for International Development (DFID), the Medtronic and Z Zurich Foundations and other corporate and private donors. Details of all donors can be found on: http://www.ifrc.org/docs/appeals/Active/MAA00010_2012.pdf

The IFRC, on behalf of the National Society, thanks all for their generous contributions.

[<click here for the final financial report, or here to view contact details>](#)

The situation

During the 2010/11 farming season, Lesotho experienced flooding which led to the damage of crops resulting in food insecurity from significant crop losses. The Disaster Management Authority, United Nations and the Red Cross conducted a rapid assessment in March/April 2011 to determine the extent of flooding and damage.

The Lesotho Vulnerability Assessment Committee (LVAC) assessment was conducted in June 2011 and the report anticipated that 514,000 people would need humanitarian assistance during the 2011/2012 consumption year (July 2011 to June 2012) due to failed crop production prospects. The Lesotho Bureau of Statistics (BOS) also estimated that production of main cereal crops has been reduced by 60 to 80 per cent.

Lesotho Red Cross Society carried out an independent assessment from mid-November to early-December 2011 to ascertain the extent of food insecurity and the performance of the 2011/12 crops. Based on this assessment, the Lesotho Red Cross Society identified nine districts that were the worst affected. These districts were: Quthing, Mphahle'sHoek, Mafeteng, Maseru, Berea, Leribe, Botha Bothe, Mokhotlong, and Thaba-Tseka. The assessment results showed a significant decline in food availability, with more than 50% of the households visited not being able to meet their daily food requirements. Most critical were the People Living with HIV and AIDS (PLWHA), the elderly, OVCs and pregnant and lactating mothers.

However, after further in-depth assessment, it was decided to undertake the intervention in 4 districts only (Mokhotlong, Kena, Mafeteng and Quthing). The capacity and needs assessment which was conducted by LRCS with the assistance of the RDRT revealed that if assistance was to be distributed evenly across the nine districts, it would be spread too thinly with only 2-3 households covered per community. Moreover, LRCS opted to capitalise in the communities where there was an existing capacity of volunteers trained on food distribution and assessments. Other important structures that were considered, included lead farmers and care facilitators who would be in a good position to assist in sustaining livelihood activities implemented during this operation.

CHF 196,831 was allocated from the IFRC's Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF) to support the Lesotho Red Cross Society in delivering immediate assistance to some 800 families (4,000 beneficiaries). The initial target of 800 families was based on the assumption that each family consists of an average of 5 members. However, the actual operation covered 1,063 families though the number of beneficiaries remained at 4000 due to the fact that a number of households had only 1-3 family members.

The operation was initially planned to be implemented over four months, 8 February to 8 June 2012. However, a one month extension was requested till June 30 to ensure complete distribution and also cover for the loss of time due to delays in procurement, testing and analysis of commodities. The operation ended in June 30th after the four districts of Mokhotlong, Kena, Mafeteng and Quthing had been covered and 1,063 families (comprised of 4000 beneficiaries) reached with food assistance. The operation was further extended to include vegetable seeds distribution the three lowland districts of Maseru (Kena), Mafeteng and Quthing.

Red Cross and Red Crescent action

The LRCS worked closely with the Government of Lesotho through the Department of Disaster Management Authority, Ministry Local Government and Chieftainship through the office of the District Administrator as well as UN agencies such as WFP and FAO with each partner having a role. LRCS provided food items in the form of maize meal, pulses, vegetable oil and salt and continued to train the team of volunteers who were deployed at the onset of the disaster. The Society also provided support services which included transport, logistics and communication.

WFP concentrated its efforts on feeding the malnourished under-five children in the district of Mokhotlong only. In Kena and Mafeteng districts, LRCS was the only provider of food commodities. In Quthing district, WFP at a later stage distributed maize meal to bridge the gap in adjacent communities through food for work. The list of beneficiaries was cross checked between LRCS and WFP to avoid double dipping.

The IFRC deployed a RDRT person from Zimbabwe to assist LRCS in carrying out capacity assessment, hence the aforementioned activities. Three districts of Mokhotlong, Leribe and Mafeteng were sampled in the exercise, where different stakeholders were consulted to give views on the food security situation. The Regional Disaster Management Coordinator visited LRCS to provide technical support to the NS.

LRCS provided food items to 1,063 households (4,000 beneficiaries) which included maize meal, pulses, vegetable oil and salt. LRCS through the field officers, divisional officers and volunteers coordinated the

distribution process throughout the DREF operation. This proved to be very effective as coordination became very easy with no recorded duplication of efforts. The actual average number of households was in most cases below the average national household of 5, hence the increase of targeted households to 1,063 from initially planned 800 households.

Achievements against outcomes

Food Security, Nutrition and Livelihoods		
Outcome: Immediate food needs of the 4,000 disaster affected population are met		
Outputs (expected results)	Activities planned:	Progress
Output 1: Appropriate food rations are distributed for three months to vulnerable households.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identification of beneficiaries. • Carry out detailed needs assessment. • Community mobilization and training on community projects and selection process. • Monitor and evaluate the relief activities and provide reporting on relief distributions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Beneficiaries selected, verified and registered for food aid and seed distribution assistance; • Assessment conducted and needs established for the targeted households; • The volunteers were trained on community mobilisation, targeting, selection, registration, distribution and monitoring during and beyond distribution period • A total of one thousand and sixty-three (1,063) families were reached and provided with food commodities. The total number beneficiaries were 4000. • The distribution lists were verified and prepared to meet the distribution criterion. A distribution report was prepared after each distribution.
Output 2: Essential inputs which support the production of food are distributed to vulnerable households.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Procurement of vegetable crops 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Two vegetable crops were procured as part of the livelihoods recovery mechanism • Due to the harsh winter, spinach and mustard seeds were recommended • A total of 666 households were reached
Output 3: Electronic and print media mobilised to sensitize people on LRCS activities during the DREF operation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organise and conduct press conferences; • Attend radio talks; • Invite TV for distribution activities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One press conference and three radio talks were held at head quarters level informing the media on the DREF operation; • The national TV channel covered at least 3 distribution activities • Lesotho News Agency covered two distributions in each district amounting to 8 in total

Impact:

The DREF intervention was crucial and its implementation timely when people were suffering from the impact brought by unfavourable weather conditions. The harsh conditions had resulted in crop failure which led to food shortages in most households, therefore the DREF operation made a significant difference in the lives of vulnerable people in the communities affected. As much as the DREF was a short term relief operation, a significant change amongst the beneficiaries was reflected. The families reached were reportedly maintaining three meals a day which significantly improved their nutritional status and reduced stress related to search of food. Also the beneficiaries' household incomes increased allowing them to buy other basic items such as soap and paraffin. It further reduced the burden on relatives and neighbours resulting from borrowing of food and money and also reduced theft incidences.

The vegetable seeds distributed to 666 households found to be eligible were planted. The lead farmers, conversant with both indigenous and improved farming technologies e.g. keyhole and trench gardening, assisted selected households in appropriate planting methods and technologies. Though the DREF was covering four districts with food distribution, only three districts of Quthing, Kena and Mafeteng were provided with planting seeds. Mokhotlong had very cold weather conditions between zero and -10°C thus inhibiting germination.

The operation also strengthened the relationship between Lesotho Red Cross staff, volunteers from the districts, the District administrators and other relevant civil society organisations as well as the Department for Disaster Management Affairs. The operation built the capacity of Lesotho Red Cross to manage similar operations in the future through the valuable lessons learnt in the four districts. However, during the lessons learnt workshop, some gaps were noted in terms of varying capacities at the district/division branch levels to implement DREF related activities. There is therefore a need to build the capacities of these branches in preparation of future disasters. This also calls for LRCS to devise the means of retaining the already trained volunteers.

Challenges: These included unfavourable weather conditions which delayed the food distribution in some areas leading to the rearrangement of distribution schedules. Inaccessible roads made distribution points unreachable and beneficiaries had to walk for long distances to alternatively further points. Unfortunately, there were no other means of transport to facilitate easier accessibility.

The distributions also coincided with the general elections characterised by widespread campaigns and rallies in most areas. This situation hampered the distribution schedule and the set dates had to be reorganised.



Snow in Mokhotlong during distributions/LRCS photo

Due to the severity of the food insecurity, people who had not been registered for distribution also came to ask for assistance. Other challenging factors included false information provided by beneficiaries about their household sizes, while others registered in more than one village. In the upcoming appeal, the assessment methodology will be improved to mitigate this challenge.

Recommendations: LRCS concentrated on the 4 districts and areas where capacity already existed including food distribution and community based disaster preparedness trained volunteers. The other 5 were covered by WFP and Caritas Lesotho. Impact would have been limited significantly if the operation had covered all 9 districts which points to the need for a more thorough assessment in future appeals. However, there are still a big number of people who were not covered in the four districts and should therefore be considered in the next appeal.

While the DREF operation provided relief to some of the most vulnerable households, it is clear that much more support will be needed to overcome two consecutive seasons of failed harvests. It was also apparent during the distributions that there were many equally vulnerable people/households left out. It is therefore recommended that an emergency appeal should be launched and the number of beneficiaries increased significantly in the new intervention.

The Government of Lesotho is on the verge of launching a nation-wide appeal for food, livestock and infrastructure oriented interventions to cover ten districts. All actors will therefore be asked to share their plans of action in the different districts and areas. The targeted beneficiaries will be verified to avoid duplicating efforts.

Appropriate interventions will include crop and livestock stock diversification. In crop selection and diversification, drought-tolerant and improved-seeds that are resistant to pests and diseases will be prioritized. It is also important to consider a variety of agricultural interventions, as diversity will help spread the risk of the overall livelihoods project components failing.

Contact information

For further information specifically related to this operation please contact:

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DREF history:

- This DREF was initially allocated on 8th February 2012 for CHF 196,831 4 months to assist 4,000 beneficiaries.
- 1 DREF operation update was issued on the 21st of May 2012.
<http://www.ifrc.org/docs/Appeals/12/MDRLS00201.pdf>
- The timeframe of the DREF was extended with one month up to 8 July 2012.

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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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.
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Selected Parameters	
Reporting Timeframe	2012/2-2012/10
Budget Timeframe	2012/2-2012/6
Appeal	MDRLS002
Budget	APPROVED

All figures are in Swiss Francs (CHF)

I. Funding

	Disaster Management	Health and Social Services	National Society Development	Principles and Values	Coordination	TOTAL	Deferred Income
A. Budget	196,831					196,831	
B. Opening Balance	0					0	
Income							
<u>Other Income</u>							
<i>DREF Allocations</i>	194,571					194,571	
C4. Other Income	194,571					194,571	
C. Total Income = SUM(C1..C4)	194,571					194,571	
D. Total Funding = B +C	194,571					194,571	
Coverage = D/A	99%					99%	

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	194,571					194,571	
E. Expenditure	-194,571					-194,571	
F. Closing Balance = (B + C + E)	0					0	

MDRLS002 - Lesotho - Food Insecurity

Appeal Launch Date: 08 feb 12

Appeal Timeframe: 08 feb 12 to 08 jun 12

Final Report

Selected Parameters	
Reporting Timeframe	2012/2-2012/10
Budget Timeframe	2012/2-2012/6
Appeal	MDRLS002
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)		196,831					196,831	
Relief items, Construction, Supplies								
Food	116,850	124,383				124,383	-7,533	
Seeds & Plants	5,000	4,704				4,704	296	
Total Relief items, Construction, Supplies	121,850	129,087				129,087	-7,237	
Logistics, Transport & Storage								
Storage	7,250						7,250	
Transport & Vehicles Costs	15,500	17,191				17,191	-1,691	
Total Logistics, Transport & Storage	22,750	17,191				17,191	5,559	
Personnel								
International Staff	6,750						6,750	
National Society Staff	17,048	1,900				1,900	15,148	
Volunteers	8,770	13,777				13,777	-5,007	
Total Personnel	32,568	15,677				15,677	16,891	
Workshops & Training								
Workshops & Training		9,214				9,214	-9,214	
Total Workshops & Training		9,214				9,214	-9,214	
General Expenditure								
Travel	700	1,574				1,574	-874	
Information & Public Relations	500						500	
Office Costs	4,650	3,270				3,270	1,380	
Communications	1,575	2,011				2,011	-436	
Financial Charges	225	719				719	-494	
Shared Office and Services Costs		3,953				3,953	-3,953	
Total General Expenditure	7,650	11,527				11,527	-3,877	
Indirect Costs								
Programme & Services Support Recov	12,013	11,875				11,875	138	
Total Indirect Costs	12,013	11,875				11,875	138	
TOTAL EXPENDITURE (D)	196,831	194,571				194,571	2,260	
VARIANCE (C - D)		2,260				2,260		