

OPERATIONS UPDATE



International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies
Fédération internationale des Sociétés de la Croix-Rouge et du Croissant-Rouge
Federación Internacional de Sociedades de la Cruz Roja y de la Media Luna Roja
الاتحاد الدولي لجمعيات الصليب الأحمر والهلال الأحمر

ALBANIA: FLOODING

22 January, 2003

The Federation's mission is to improve the lives of vulnerable people by mobilizing the power of humanity. It is the world's largest humanitarian organization and its millions of volunteers are active in 178 countries. For more information: www.ifrc.org

Appeal No. 27/02

Launched on 1 October 2002 for 3 months for 20 000 beneficiaries.

Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF) Allocated: None

Beneficiaries: 20,000

Operations Update No. 1; Period covered: 25 /09 to 30/11/ 2002

IN BRIEF

Appeal coverage: 112.3%

Related Appeals: AP01.43/02 and Snowfall operation

Outstanding needs: Due to recent support (as a result of a successful local fundraising campaign), the overall appeal coverage is excellent. Funds were received from various embassies and government agencies in Tirana (USAID, the Canadian Embassy, UNDP, and the Danish Embassy). Support was also received through Red Cross national societies including the Finnish, German, Swedish, Polish, Norwegian, Monaco, and Japanese Red Cross, and the Saudi Arabian and Iranian Red Crescent.

Summary: This Update confirms the Plan of Action presented in the Preliminary Appeal launched on October 1, 2002. The distribution of the first month emergency period is now completed. The disaster relief stock available at the national society warehouse was used for this purpose. Some donors have confirmed their contributions for this appeal, in kind and in cash, and local fundraising efforts were conducted successfully.

Operational Developments

The worst flooding in years has hit the Albanian lowlands following the rains after a week of torrential rain. The Albanian Rc has warned the consequences could be catastrophic for thousand of rural people in one of the Europe's poorest countries. The rains began on 22 September and brought a repeat of the floods which swept much of Central Europe this summer.

Homes, crops and infrastructures have been destroyed, remote communities isolated, water and electricity supplies disrupted. Around 26,000 hectares of arable land are under water and a state of emergency was declared in six prefectures around the country. Neglected river defenses, the reduced capacity of lowland drainage stations and power cuts that shut down pumps exacerbated the problem. Lezha prefecture, 65 kilometres north of Tirana, and Berat, 150 kilometres south of the capital, suffered the greatest damage and Red Cross assessment teams found 3,300 families in serious trouble



there. Among other overwhelmed prefectures were Shkoder to the north, Durres to the northwest, and Fier and Gjirokaster to the south.

Coordination

The first phase of the operation is now over and the subsequent recovery activities covering three months of relief were communicated to the Inter Ministerial Committee with details of proposed activities. The work is also being co-ordinated at the local level through co-operation with local committees at the prefecture level in Lezha, Berat, Durres, Fier and Shkoder. Co-ordination and exchange of information between the Albanian Red Cross and the central and local committees will continue to ensure that no overlapping or duplicative efforts occur with other organisations.

A very fruitful co-operation with USAID’s delegation in Albania enabled the Albanian Red Cross to receive 25,000 USD, which will be used to cover the expenses of the first phase costs of distributing the emergency relief stock, currently being held in the warehouse. There are some soft pledges from the American Red Cross for a quantity of washing powder. The German Red Cross sent 30,000 parcels of daily food rations and 1,650 parcels of 20 kg.

Red Cross and Red Crescent action

The goal of Albanian Red Cross for this operation was to provide immediate relief to some of the most affected families in flooded areas. This was to be achieved through distribution of basic food items and non food-items by Red Cross branches to vulnerable families in the area.

The Albanian Red Cross was involved in providing food assistance for 3 820 identified families. This action is in full compliance with the national society policy for any disaster situation. The national society reacted promptly to the situation, making use of its available stock of disaster.

A managing group was set up at the HQ’s of the Albanian Red Cross as soon as the flooding happened in the country. The main task of this group was to take all necessary measures in order to face the created situation. Immediate action was also the implementation of the relief operation to benefit the 3 820 affected families in five prefectures of the country.

Guidelines on how to operate were drafted and sent out to the branches and sub branches involved in the relief operation. These guidelines took into account the large number of beneficiaries that each branch needed to support and established clear rules that needed to be adhered to in order to most effectively ameliorate their situation. Also included were indications for rations that each family should receive and the complex logistic aspects of the distribution procedure.



The local branches evaluated the human resources available and the other capacities needed. In this framework the secretaries of the five branches have been playing the role of coordinator in their respective branches. In addition to that, the Lezha branch, which was particularly affected, hired an additional coordinator and warehouse manager because of the huge volume of work to be carried out.

During the next stage of the operation, Local branches started immediately providing the list of beneficiaries in cooperation with Local Government and the community affected. Once this list of beneficiaries had been provided, on the basis of the number of beneficiaries for each commune, a schedule for delivering respective commodities items from Tirana to the affected branches was prepared. Warehouses were hired to three of the most affected areas of Lezha, Laç (in the same prefecture as Lezha) and Berat. Five trucks and respective drivers were dispatched with these deliveries of commodities from the Tirana warehouse to the branch warehouses. Up to 10 October 2002 all the whole stock needed for 3 820 families were delivered to the 5 branches.

The figures are as follows:

Location	Beneficiary Families
Lezha	2,810 families
Berati	490 families

Fier	120 families
Durres	350 families
Vlore	50 families

The needs assessment mission agreed with PNS was sent to the most affected communes of Balldren, Zejmen & Ura Vajgurore. As was detailed in the Emergency Appeal, these communes were selected based on recognised poor living conditions these communes were known to have prior to the flooding. Of special importance is the fact that all these areas are mainly inhabited by people who have moved to this region during the last ten years from northern part of Albania. The criteria by which beneficiaries were selected can be found in the Emergency Appeal, along with a breakdown of the 3,820 beneficiaries were selected for high priority assistance.

The difficulties in preparing the lists of beneficiaries were solved through insisting that head authorities of the affected communes were involved and gave up to date information. Also through the involvement of the Red Cross sub-branch members council and volunteers, who had knowledge of the local communities.

Other factors that affected the operation have also been largely overcome. The Hygiene Institute paid frequent visits to control the quality and expiry date of the food and every delivery transport truck was provided with a copy of food analyses for the respective items (*the reports made for the distribution operation and daily information have been on our web site (www.kksh.org) updated on daily basis. Photos are available on the web site).*

Relief distribution of food and basic non-food items

Objective 1: Distribute basic food and non-food items to 3,820 vulnerable families in five prefectures during the first month of the emergency.

During this phase the distribution of food items to the Red Cross branches of Lezha, Shkoder, Fier, Berat and Gjirokaster was organised. In accordance with the plan the activities to fulfil this objective were undertaken successfully.

Objective 2: Distribute basic food and non-food supplies to 3,820 families in Lezhe and Berat prefectures during the recovery phase over 3 months.

Beneficiaries for this operation were identified. Initial lists were prepared and then revised in cooperation with local authorities. The procurement of food and non-food items in Albania is under process. The system of data reporting and monitor distribution is already set up.

The relief operation in general is going well with the beneficiaries immediate needs supplied. The emergency appeal is partly supported and is expected to be fully covered.

The Red Cross branches started distributions to the beneficiaries. To do so, they hired trucks locally to transport the commodities to the communes /villages. Loaded trucks were sometimes used as distribution points but most of the time, communal buildings were used. It total, 28 distribution points (at each village involved in this relief operation) and around 64 Red Cross volunteers are involved in this activity.

DISTRIBUTION IN 5 AFFECTED AREAS

<i>Distribution in affected areas</i>		<i>Distributed items</i>							<i>Beneficiaries</i>
<i>Date</i>	<i>Place</i>	<i>Blanket (pcs)</i>	<i>Wheat flour (Kg)</i>	<i>Sugar (Kg)</i>	<i>Oil (Ltr)</i>	<i>Canned meat (pcs)</i>	<i>Detergent (Kg)</i>	<i>Soap (pcs)</i>	<i>Nr. families</i>
23.09.02 till 10-11.02	Lezha Prefecture	5'620	56'200	5'620	5'620	14'050	5'620	22'480	2'810
23.09.02 till 07.09.02	Berat Prefecture	980	9'800	980	980	2'450	980	3'920	490
25.09.02 till 01.10.02	Durres Prefecture	700	7'000	700	700	1'750	700	2'800	350
25.09.02 till 28.09.02	Fier Prefecture	240	2'400	240	240	600	240	960	120

25.09.02 till 02.10.02	Vlora Prefecture	100	1'000	100	100	250	100	400	50
Total		7'640	76'400	7'640	7'640	19'100	7'640	30'560	3'820

Shelter

During this first phase of the operation the Albanian Red Cross was not involved in the housing/shelter of disaster affected persons. The families and persons affected by floods, losing, or not being able to live in their houses, were sheltered in some public buildings given by the local government authorities and to the not damaged neighbour's houses.

Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement -- Principles and Initiatives

The mission of the Red Cross in Albania is in conformity with the Fundamental Principles of the Movement, striving to improve the life and dignity of people in need, by working together to increase humanitarian action. This is in compliance with the mission of the Federation's strategy 2010 with the aim of improving the lives of the vulnerable through the mobilisation of the power of humanity in law.

The two major goals of the Albanian Red Cross are to further develop the Albanian Red Cross Disaster Preparedness programme and to increase the effectiveness of Albanian Red Cross Intervention in local disasters. To fulfil these goals the national society has planned to implement over the next two years a number of projects including proactive responses such as the current response to emergency phase 1. A national strategy has been developed over the past two years and is currently being followed by national and regional branch offices.

National Society Capacity Building

These floods have once again shown that Albania must be prepared to face natural disasters. Through this operation a lot of questions have been thrown up which act as a reminder to the national society of its role in disaster preparedness. This will form the basis of capacity building within the national society. This work continues to be carried out with the support of the annual regional DP programme as well as through the assistance of partners Red Cross societies.

Advocacy/Public Information

There have been very good contact with the media during this period. In TV broadcasting and newspapers the message that the Albanian Red Cross is responding to that situation has been conveyed. The presence of the Albanian Red Cross representatives at the meetings of the authorities and the special committees set up to face the situation, enabled the national society to inform the public about its action and the number of beneficiaries.

Outstanding needs

The first phase covered the basic needs for one month and all items were available at the Albanian Red Cross warehouse as stock of the DPP. This stock was purchased at the end of the last year and these stocks need to be replenished.

The second phase relief operation consists of organising the distribution of packages on a monthly basis to vulnerable families and will be considered as a recovery operation. The affected families have lost their property and personal possessions and the winter lies ahead.

For further details please contact: Penny Elghady, Phone: 41 22 730 4319; Fax: 41 22 733 03 95; email: ekghady@ifrc.org

All International Federation Operations seek to adhere to the Code of Conduct and are committed to the Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Disaster Response (SPHERE Project) in delivering assistance to the most vulnerable. The procurement for this operation was carried out in full compliance and conformity with the Federation's standard for international and local procurement.

For support to or for further information concerning Federation operations in this or other countries, please access the Federation website at <http://www.ifrc.org>.

This operation sought to administer to the immediate requirements of the victims of this disaster. Subsequent operations to promote sustainable development or long-term capacity building will require additional support, and these programmes are outlined on the Federation's website.

John Horekens
Director
External Relations Division

Lynette Lowndes
Head
Europe Department

Albania - Floods						ANNEX 1
APPEAL No. 27/2002		PLEDGES RECEIVED			06.01.2003	
DONOR	CATEGORY	QUANTITY	UNIT	VALUE CHF	DATE	COMMENT
CASH						
REQUESTED IN APPEAL CHF ----->				571'000		TOTAL COVERAGE 112.3%
FINNISH - RC		25'000	EUR	36'700	17.10.2002	
IRANIAN - RC		1'317	USD	1'970	09.10.2002	PROGRAMME MGT & CONTROL
JAPANESE - RC		12'700	USD	19'730	24.10.2002	
MONACO - RC		3'000	EUR	4'404	15.10.2002	
NORWEGIAN - GOVT/RC		539'374	NOK	108'128	25.11.2002	
POLAND - RC		1'000	USD	1'496	18.10.2002	
SAUDI ARABIA - RC		40'401	SAR	17'589	01.11.2002	PROGRAMME MGT & CONTROL
SWEDISH - GOVT		250'000	SEK	39'750	07.10.2002	
SWEDISH - RC		3'500	SEK	557	09.09.2002	PROGRAMME MGT & CONTROL
SUB/TOTAL RECEIVED IN CASH				230'324	CHF	40.3%
KIND AND SERVICES (INCLUDING PERSONNEL)						
DONOR	CATEGORY	QUANTITY	UNIT	VALUE CHF	DATE	COMMENT
IRANIAN - RC		26'343	USD	39'414	09.10.2002	5000 KG RICE, 5000 KG WHEAT FLOUR 3000 L. EDIBLE OIL, 6000 BLANKETS, 10000 CANNED FOOD
SAUDI ARABIAN - RC		808'025	SAR	351'783	01.11.2002	FOOD, TENTS, DATES
SWEDISH - RC		124'760	SEK	19'837	09.09.2002	SECOND HAND CLOTHES
SUB/TOTAL RECEIVED IN KIND/SERVICES				411'034	CHF	72.0%
ADDITIONAL TO APPEAL BUDGET						
DONOR	CATEGORY	QUANTITY	UNIT	VALUE CHF	DATE	COMMENT
SUB/TOTAL RECEIVED				0	CHF	