

# DREF operation update



International Federation  
of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

## SERBIA/KOSOVO: FLOODS

DREF operation n° MDRKV002  
GLIDE n° FL-2007-000217-SRB  
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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.

**Period covered by this update:** 28  
November to 12 December, 2007.

**Summary:** CHF 123,597 was allocated from the Federation's Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF) on 28 November, 2007 to support the Red Cross organizations in delivering assistance to some 3,500 beneficiaries, and replenishing exhausted disaster preparedness stocks.

Following the immediate assessment of damage and the needs of affected population by both Red Cross organizations in Kosovo, all relief items were procured locally and distributions started on 1 December 2007. To date, 456 families (approximately 2,230 people) have been supported through this operation, which is expected to be implemented over four months, and completed by 31 March, 2008. In line with the Federation reporting standards, a Final Report (narrative and financial) is due 90 days after the end of the operation (by 30 June, 2008).

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Mirela and her mother receiving relief items upon return to their house, which was flooded on 26 November, 2007.

## The situation

On 26 November 2007, heavy rains and snow caused floods in many villages and cities throughout Kosovo. Increased water levels in the rivers Terstena, Drini I Bardhe, Sitnica and Klina have broken the banks and have flooded the surrounding areas. The municipalities mostly affected by floods were: Pristina/Prishtina, Pec/Peja, Podujevo/Podujeve, Kosovo Polje/Fushe Kosove, Vucitrn/Vushtrri, Srbica/Skenderaj, Lipljan/Lipjan, Kamenica/Kamenice, Obilic/ Obiliq.

Even though the high water levels only lasted for a few days, it has been impossible for many of the evacuated people to return to their homes after the water had receded due to sub-zero temperatures which made it impossible for them to live in their flood-affected houses. Therefore, many of the evacuated families still remain with their host families (usually relatives, friends or neighbours) until the conditions within their houses have improved further, and their wet furniture and firewood for heating has dried out sufficiently. A number of beneficiaries requested the assistance to be delivered upon their return to their homes in order to help them during this difficult time.

The affected communities expressed their gratitude to the Red Cross for the provision of some basic relief items. It is unfortunate that most of the affected population already belonged to the poorest within Kosovo, who were already on the beneficiary lists of the local Red Cross organizations as the most vulnerable. Thus, combined with the recent increase in costs for basic living commodities such as bread and cereals, cooking oil and vegetable, the flooding has further increased the vulnerability of the poorest population in Kosovo.

The overall time frame of this operation has been fully in line with the planned activities. The only external factors that could delay the timely implementation would be more heavy rains and snow. As the Red Cross organizations were the only ones to respond to the flooding, it can be said that the fast provision of relief items to the affected population also had a very positive impact on the image of the Red Cross organizations in Kosovo proving once again that they care for the most vulnerable and provide them effective support.

## Coordination and partnerships

The Federation, the two Red Cross organizations and the Kosovo Emergency Department are in regular contact with each other, which enables them to discuss the role and responsibilities of the different actors in emergencies. Consequently there has been a good coordination of the activities with the local authorities and the Emergency Department during the course of this operation. At local level, the Red Cross branches are also coordinating their activities with the social welfare authorities.

# Red Cross and Red Crescent action

## Progress towards objectives

### Relief distributions (food and basic non-food items)

**Objective: Distributing basic food and non-food items to 714 families (approximately 3,500 persons) during a four-month period**

#### Activities planned to reach this objective:

- Preparation of beneficiaries lists;
- Procurement of emergency items in Kosovo;
- Distribution of emergency items by the Red Cross branches and their volunteers according to the prepared beneficiary lists;
- Coordination with local emergency departments and social welfare authorities;
- Monitoring and reporting.

#### Progress and impact:

The Red Cross organizations in Kosovo have been the only humanitarian organizations to respond to the flooding. Not only were they immediately present within the affected areas assessing the needs of the affected population and the damage caused by the floods, but they also provided immediate support from their own limited stock of emergency relief buffer stocks. The distributed materials included blankets, mattresses, rubber boots, drinking water, food and hygiene parcels. The materials purchased as part of this operation will also be used to replenish the buffer stocks for what was distributed immediately by the Red Cross organizations. During the damage and needs assessment and the drawing up of the beneficiary lists, the Red Cross organizations also provided psychological support to the victims through their volunteers.

Immediately upon approval of the funds from DREF, the Federation Office in Kosovo initiated the local procurement process for the required relief items. Due to an established network of suppliers, the Federation Office was able to purchase the goods and supply the local Red Cross organizations within a very short

time. The following items were procured: hygiene parcels, food parcels, blankets, mattresses and drinking water.

While the local Red Cross organizations had already distributed some relief items to a limited number of the most vulnerable beneficiaries from their own buffer stocks, the distribution of the DREF funded relief items by the local Red Cross organizations commenced on 1 December 2007 – only two days after the approval of the DREF funds. To date, **456 families with approximately 2,230 members have received emergency assistance** as part of this operation. The distributions, which are still ongoing, are carried out by the volunteers of the local Red Cross organizations on municipal level, under the supervision of the local branch secretaries. The Red Cross organizations are using their own transport capacity for the operation.

Regular monitoring of the activities is done both by the headquarters' disaster management coordinators and the Federation Office in Kosovo.

## How we work

All International Federation 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 is committed to the [Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Disaster Response](#) (Sphere) in delivering assistance to the most vulnerable.

The International Federation's activities are aligned with its Global Agenda, which sets out four broad goals to meet the Federation's mission to "improve the lives of vulnerable people by mobilizing the power of humanity".

### Global Agenda Goals:

- Reduce the numbers of deaths, injuries and impact from disasters.
- Reduce the number of deaths, illnesses and impact from diseases and public health emergencies.
- Increase local community, civil society and Red Cross Red Crescent capacity to address the most urgent situations of vulnerability.
- Reduce intolerance, discrimination and social exclusion and promote respect for diversity and human dignity.

## Contact information

### For further information specifically related to this operation please contact:

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