

DREF operation



International Federation
of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

Benin: Fire

**DREF operation n° MDRBJ002
GLIDE n° FRR-2008-000055-BEN
5 May, 2008**

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.

CHF 63,000 (USD 56,350 or EUR 38,181) is requested from the Federation's Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF) to support the national society in delivering immediate assistance to some 1,000 beneficiaries. Un-earmarked funds to repay DREF are encouraged.

Summary: The Red Cross of Benin (RCB) has deployed its team of volunteers in Donatin, a settlement in Cotonou, to provide humanitarian assistance such as first aid to the victims of the fire outbreak. According to the National Society, the outbreak has claimed lives and left many injured and displaced. To alleviate the suffering of the affected people, the national society will be assisting them with some basic relief items and will carry out health and hygiene sensitization activities in the community.

This operation is expected to be implemented over two months, and will therefore be completed by 2 July, 2008. A Final Report will be made available three months after the end of the operation (by 2 September, 2008).

The situation

During the night of 22 to 23 April 2008, a fire broke out in the densely populated fishing village of Donatin within the capitol city of Cotonou. The fire caused extensive material damage and destroyed many houses. The cause of the fire is unknown. According to the Red Cross of Benin, the disaster has claimed five lives, with 32 injured persons (hospitalized), and about 996 people made homeless.

The Ministry of Family Affairs has deployed staff to assess the situation, and the government and authorities of the Cotonou municipality have provided limited food item supplies to affected families. The government has also decided to temporarily relocate the inhabitants of the settlements to a more suitable environment, but community members are reluctant to accept this decision because of their fishing occupation.

According to the Red Cross of Benin officials, NGOs such as IRAD-ONG (Institut de Recherche et Actions pour le Développement), CADEG-ONG (Centre d'Action pour le Développement), Alternatives Citoyennes and an international organization called GORREE-FRANCE have provided assistance to the affected populations.

Seasonal rains have started in Benin, and the situation of those affected by the fire is a source of concern. While some are sheltered by their relatives, the majority of the affected persons are living in temporary shelter made with palm leaves. Their main source of water has been spoiled by the fire, increasing the risk of water borne diseases and epidemics.

Coordination and partnerships

With support from the Federation's West Coast regional office in Lagos, the Red Cross Society of Benin will be working in collaboration with the Ministries of Health and Family Affairs to improve the situation of those affected by the fire.

Red Cross and Red Crescent action

The local branch of the Red Cross immediately mobilized and deployed its volunteers in the affected area to assess the situation and provide first aid, psychological support and counselling to the victims. The Red Cross messages are focussed on the danger of inhaling smoke emanating from the fire, water borne infections and preventive measures to take to avoid eventual epidemics.

The International Federation, through its delegation in Lagos, Nigeria, continues to work closely with the national society by supporting its staff and volunteers in all activities of the Red Cross, ensuring that management as well as operational issues are directed to and implemented according to the principles and core values of the Red Cross Movement.

The needs

Beneficiary selection: The beneficiaries of this operation are the 996 persons made homeless. The community at large and the Red Cross volunteers and staff will indirectly benefit from the operation through health education and training in the prevention of epidemics related to this type of disaster. Red Cross volunteers from two local branches are being selected for the operation because of their knowledge of the culture and traditions of the community people. This will enable them to work effectively within the community during the exercise.

The immediate needs of those affected are basic non-food items such as tarpaulins, blankets, jerry cans, soap, plastic spoons, cups, plates and bowls. The Red Cross volunteers will also carry out psychological counseling and health education in the community. To prevent future occurrences, the national society is planning to carry out sensitization campaign in the affected community.

The proposed operation

Relief distributions (basic non-food items)

Objective: To reduce the vulnerability of the 996 people homeless (200 families affected by the disaster) by providing them with basic relief needs based on the assessment carried out and Federation approved distribution strategy.

Activities planned:

- Purchase and distribute immediate non-food relief items to 200 families at the ratio of one tarpaulin and three blankets per household, one jerry can, one kitchen set and one hygiene pack per household;
- Train and retrain 30 Red Cross volunteers to convey health and good hygiene messages to the affected community;
- Carry out awareness campaign on the risks of diseases associated with the disaster in the affected community;
- Sensitize the community on fire preventive measures;
- Monitor and evaluate the relief activities and provide reporting on relief distributions.

Expected outcomes:

- Affected populations have received necessary immediate non-food and relief items to sustain them during the rainy season;
- The target populations are sensitized on the risks of diseases associated with the disaster, and acquire knowledge on good hygiene practices and preventive measures against these diseases;
- All the necessary support is provided to the government agencies involved in the sensitization of the victims;
- The community is sensitized on the prevention of possible future fires.

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:

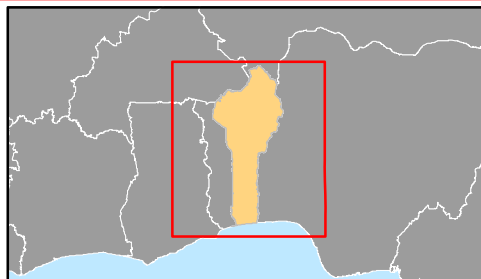
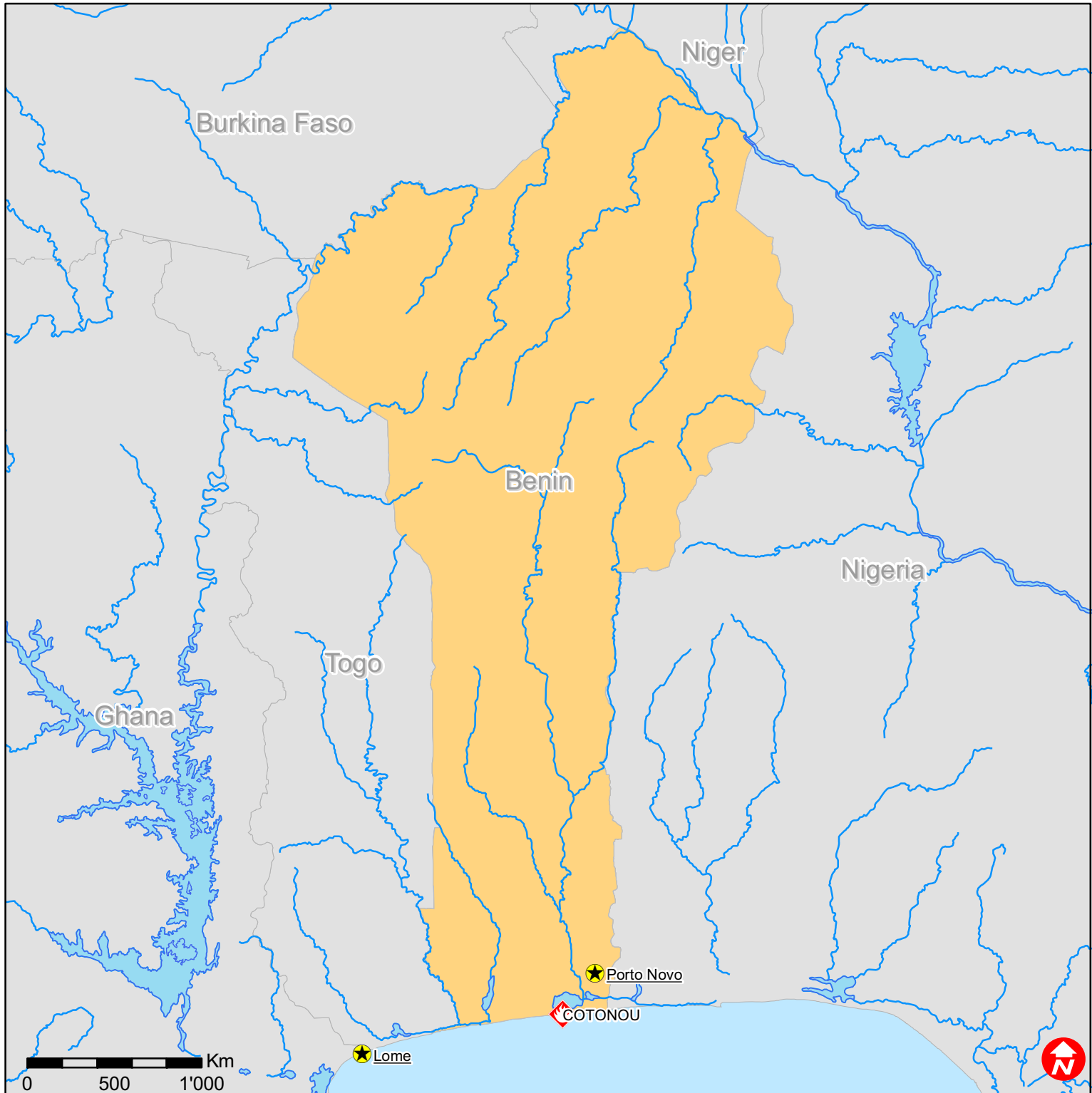
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[<DREF budget \(if available\) and map below; click here to return to the title page>](#)

<i>TYPE</i>	<i>VALUE IN CHF</i>	<i>%</i>
SUPPLIES FOR BENEFICIARIES		
Shelter	28,400	
Water & Sanitation	12,000	
Teaching material	750	
<u>TOTAL BENEFICIARIES NEEDS</u>	41,150	65%
<u>LAND, VEHICLES AND EQUIPMENT</u>		
Distribution and Monitoring	2,000	
Transport & Vehicles	1,000	
<u>PERSONNEL</u>		
Regional Staff	770	
National Society Staff	6,935	
<u>WORKSHOPS AND TRAINING</u>		
Workshop & Training	820	
<u>GENERAL EXPENDITURE</u>		
Travel	1,160	
Office Costs	1,600	
Communications	800	
West Coast Coordination costs	3,000	
<u>PROGRAMME SUPPORT</u>	4,118	
<u>TOTAL OPERATIONAL NEEDS</u>	22,203	35%
TOTAL DREF	63,353	



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Fire in Cotonou

The Red Cross of Benin has deployed its team of volunteers in Donatin, a settlement in Cotonou to give humanitarian assistance such as first aid to the victims of the fire outbreak in the settlement.