

DREF operation update



International Federation
of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

Timor-Leste: Flooding and landslides

DREF operation n° MD RTP002
GLIDE n° [FL-2007-000107-TMP](#)
Update n° 03
30 April 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.

Period covered by this update:
1 January 2008 - 30 April 2008

Summary:

The sum of CHF 145,212 (USD 125,772 or EUR 89,792) was allocated from the Federation's Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF) on 25 July 2007 to support the national society in delivering assistance to 947 beneficiaries.

In July 2007, Timor-Leste experienced severe downpours leading to flooding and landslides. Overall, 243 families (totalling 947 people comprising 463 men and 484 women) in six districts were badly affected. Through the DREF support, the operation was planned for five months - July through November 2007. However, due to security problems, heavy rains and flooding, insurgency activities and logistical problems such as the purchase of appropriate timber, the operation was extended till March 2008.



CVTL facilitated the rebuilding of secure housing for the community in Suai using local materials.

[<click here to view contact details>](#)
[<click here to view financial report¹>](#)

¹Attached financial report up to 31 March 2008. Financials for April 2008 are currently being processed.

The situation

This operation aligns with the International Federation's Global Agenda Goal 1: Reduced deaths, injuries and impact from disasters. The main challenges have been the short supply of legal timber; security instability and the state of siege for two months; the long wet season; and local community being prohibited from accessing forest resources for construction materials. As such, progress has been slow. On a positive note, however, 76 families have completed and are using their shelters while another 105 shelters are nearly completed.

Overall, Timor-Leste faced many challenges during 2007. About 100,000 internally displaced persons (IDP) have been in the camps for more than a year. The security situation is still unpredictable. The country faced drought from February to March 2007 resulting in food scarcity in many parts. This was followed by a new bout of civil unrest which erupted in the three eastern districts that led to the displacement of about 10,000 people as well as the destruction or burning down of houses and various infrastructures. In the meantime, La Niña brought about heavy rains frequently from December 2007 to date that caused large-scale flooding and landslides in many parts of the country, especially in the Liquica district. Meanwhile, the south-western districts were badly affected by locust infestations.

This DREF bulletin reports on response to the heavy rainfall of July 2007 that resulted in floods and landslides in many parts of the country. The impact was particularly severe in the districts of Suai, Same, Manatutu, Viqueque and Ermera. A total of 243 households were affected with at least one death recorded as well as severe loss of livelihood, shelter and crops such as rice, corn and green crops. In Suai, about 100 deep wells were contaminated by flood water while many houses in Jumalai were destroyed by landslides. Outbreaks of diarrhoea, malaria and dengue were reported in Suai.

Coordination and partnerships

Soon after the disaster, the National Disaster Management Office coordinated the major stakeholders including government departments, UN agencies, international non-governmental organizations, the Timor-Leste national society, Cruz Vermelha de Timor-Leste (CVTL) and the International Federation in relief operations. In Suai, Oxfam with the help of CVTL volunteers cleaned up water wells to ensure safe water. In the meantime, interagency needs assessment teams led by UNOCHA were sent to the affected areas. The government provided initial assistance to the affected families in Manatutu and Suai, distributing food parcels and non-food items while logistical support was provided by the United Nations.

The interagency coordination body discussed immediate and longer term needs based on needs assessment reports. Different agencies agreed to provide immediate relief assistance in different sectors. Shelter, however, was one area that was relatively unattended to, leading to the combined efforts of the CVTL national headquarters and the International Federation to address this gap.

Red Cross and Red Crescent action

Progress towards objectives

Objective:

Support 201 disaster-affected families to rebuild their shelters by the end of November 2007.

Achievements:

The operation followed a community-led sheltering process. The operation team first discussed the sheltering process in town hall meetings in affected areas. The communities agreed that CVTL would provide only core shelter materials and residents themselves would continue to develop these shelters into permanent housing, using local resources.

Identifying suitable construction sites was the priority for relocation of the affected families in two districts. The community recommended some new areas for relocation for which the CVTL and the International Federation worked together with the land and property authorities on issues of land entitlement. Finally, the land and property authorities agreed to provide land titles to the local community in the Suai and Ermera districts. Thus, the land issues were sorted out at the outset of the operation.

The community then formed groups of eight to ten people for shelter construction. CVTL recruited a team of three technicians trained in shelter construction to facilitate the operation. The district branches themselves identified volunteers to be involved in this process while the International Federation provided support from the beginning of the operation.

The CVTL and the International Federation encouraged the government to repair river embankments and excavate river beds to change the river course away from the village at the Laclo community in Manatutu. This community was affected by floods last year and was therefore selected for this operation. After the CVTL and the International Federation discussed the issue with the government, the government allocated USD 30,000 (CHF 34,650) for the purpose. After the decision that the reconstruction of shelters in that area was unnecessary, the plan was adjusted for rebuilding 181 shelters in other areas.

Overall, about 40 per cent or 72 shelters have already been completed and are being used by families. The remaining 109 are in the process of completion especially requiring time to collect local resources and apply the finishing touches to their homes. Two main influences on the time taken to do so are the ongoing armed operations in the country, and the occupation of local residents with agricultural activity.

The distribution of shelters is as follows:

Sub-district	District	Number of shelters
Tilomar	Suai	7
Zumalai	Suai	129
Fateburlihu	Same	16
Lawala	Ermera	29

The CVTL and the International Federation provide roofing materials and timber posts while the local residents are responsible for fixing walls using locally available materials. The shelter designs are in line with the local practice, whereby two designs - "two inclined iron roofs" and "a flat iron roof" - are preferred by the community. The local village head and the sub-village heads are actively involved in the shelter construction process.

Constraints or challenges:

The major challenges are:

- **Timber procurement:**

Procurement of legal timber for this operation has been extremely difficult. After weeks of follow-up with the government, the timber supplier obtained government approval for the supply of about 30 cubic meters. CVTL was informed that the government would authorize the rest of the timber after submitting its distribution list in the community. In the meantime, during preparation for delivery, the supplier was harassed by a local gang, leading to the suspension of the supply for some time. Finally, the company supplied the approved 30 cubic meters of timber against a need of 220 cubic meters.

The government issued a public notice making logging in Timor-Leste illegal. As such, obtaining authorization for additional timber has been impossible. The department of forestry advised all concerned to buy timber from other countries. As the price of timber has risen dramatically, none of the companies has been interested in taking orders. Furthermore, getting the necessary documents from the suppliers has been a challenge. Thus, the lack of timber has been the major constraint for the completion of the operation. As a contingency measure,

the International Federation logistics unit in Kuala Lumpur was requested to explore the purchase of legal timber for the operation. Should the provided timber be available from Malaysia or Indonesia, it would have arrived in Timor-Leste by mid-February. Construction would have begun then. With the wet season about to start, timber was a pressing need. Finally, a registered local company agreed to supply the operation with legal timber imported from outside the country. Given the sequence of events, construction of shelters was delayed by almost five months.

One of the lessons learnt from this operation was that for future operations, it would probably be better not to rely on the local market especially for timber in Timor-Leste.

- **Security situation**

Ongoing political and security instability have impacted the operation. Local suppliers do not stock pile construction materials because of the security threats; therefore, it takes at least a month for supplies to arrive in the local market from other countries.

On 11 February 2008, the unsuccessful assassination attempt on the prime minister and president of Timor-Leste resulted in the fatal shooting of the fugitive rebel leader. Following this, the country was in a state of siege for two months. Military operations are currently underway in the western district of Ermera where one of the project sites is located, restricting the movement of people from outside the district.

- **Wet season:**

As a result of La Niña and the change in sea level temperatures, the country faced a long wet season which brought about heavy and frequent rains for the last four months. This adversely affected the delivery of materials and the construction of shelters.

Implementation and coordination:

The country office supported CVTL in the planning, procurement of construction materials, implementation, monitoring and follow-up of the operation. This has provided opportunity for close collaboration between the national society and the International Federation. Support has also been given by the Southeast Asia regional office in Bangkok and the Federation secretariat in Geneva. The national disaster management directorate has also been well aware of this operation.

Contributing to longer-term impact:

As previously mentioned, this operation has contributed to the International Federation's Global Agenda Goal 1: Reduced deaths, injuries and impact from disasters. The International Federation and the CVTL worked jointly with other agencies in identifying the gap in shelter provision. Involvement in this operation has helped raise CVTL's profile, especially with the national disaster management directorate. Hence, both the national society and the International Federation have been consulted as important partners in the preparedness for impending disasters or for emergency response. The timely response to disaster-affected people has contributed to reducing the risk of their potential exposure to the debt trap² in the reconstruction of shelters.

Looking ahead:

The above constraints and challenges led to the delay of the operation; however, most of the shelters are nearly completed. With CVTL providing only roofing materials and timber posts, local beneficiaries were responsible for the actual construction of shelters. As their access to forest resources is limited due to military operations in the forests, it has been difficult to collect these materials. As such, the CVTL together with the International Federation will continue to follow up with the local community in the completion of the remaining shelters.

² With the loss of homes and livelihoods in the wake of disaster, there is a practice to address these problems by borrowing money from local money lenders at high interest rates. This exposes those affected to being trapped in debt. This operation provided those affected with materials, tools and skills to rebuild their homes without the need to borrow money.

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 \(NGOs\) 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:

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- Federation Southeast Asia regional office in Thailand: Alan Bradbury (acting head of regional delegation); email: alan.bradbury@ifrc.org; phone: +66.2.661.8201; fax: +66.2.661.9322
- Asia Pacific zone office in Kuala Lumpur: Amy Gaver (disaster management delegate), email: amy.gaver@ifrc.org, phone: + 60 3 9207 5724, fax: +60 3 2161 0670, mobile +60 12 220 1174.

[<financial report attached; click here to return to the title page>](#)

International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

MDRTP002 - East Timor - Floods & Landslides

Interim Financial Report

Selected Parameters	
Reporting Timeframe	2007/7-2008/3
Budget Timeframe	2007/7-2008/3
Appeal	MDRTP002
Budget	APPEAL

All figures are in Swiss Francs (CHF)

I. Consolidated Response to Appeal

	Health & Care	Disaster Management	Humanitarian Values	Organisational Development	Coordination & Implementation	TOTAL
A. Budget		145,212				145,212
B. Opening Balance		0				0
Income						
<u>Other Income</u>						
<i>DREF Allocations</i>		145,212				145,212
<i>C5. Other Income</i>		145,212				145,212
C. Total Income = SUM(C1..C5)		145,212				145,212
D. Total Funding = B + C		145,212				145,212
Appeal Coverage		100%				100%

II. Balance of Funds

	Health & Care	Disaster Management	Humanitarian Values	Organisational Development	Coordination & Implementation	TOTAL
B. Opening Balance		0				0
C. Income		145,212				145,212
E. Expenditure		-129,717				-129,717
F. Closing Balance = (B + C + E)		15,495				15,495

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III. Budget Analysis / Breakdown of Expenditure

Account Groups	Budget	Expenditure					TOTAL	Variance
		Health & Care	Disaster Management	Humanitarian Values	Organisational Development	Coordination & Implementation		
A							B	A - B
BUDGET (C)		145,212					145,212	
Supplies								
Shelter - Relief			36,617				36,617	-36,617
Construction Materials	107,691		58,350				58,350	49,341
Total Supplies	107,691		94,967				94,967	12,724
Transport & Storage								
Transport & Vehicle Costs	5,516		5,963				5,963	-446
Total Transport & Storage	5,516		5,963				5,963	-446
Personnel								
International Staff Payroll Benefits			32				32	-32
Regionally Deployed Staff			23				23	-23
National Society Staff	11,839		9,548				9,548	2,290
Total Personnel	11,839		9,604				9,604	2,235
Workshops & Training								
Workshops & Training			159				159	-159
Total Workshops & Training			159				159	-159
General Expenditure								
Travel			123				123	-123
Information & Public Relation			104				104	-104
Office Costs	10,727		624				624	10,103
Communications			646				646	-646
Financial Charges			11				11	-11
Other General Expenses			7,699				7,699	-7,699
Total General Expenditure	10,727		9,207				9,207	1,520
Programme Support								
Program Support	9,439		8,432				8,432	1,007
Total Programme Support	9,439		8,432				8,432	1,007
Operational Provisions								
Operational Provisions			1,386				1,386	-1,386
Total Operational Provisions			1,386				1,386	-1,386
TOTAL EXPENDITURE (D)	145,212		129,717				129,717	15,495
VARIANCE (C - D)			15,495				15,495	