

DREF operation update



International Federation
of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

Uzbekistan: Explosions

DREF operation n°MDRUZ001
Update n° 01
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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 July to 31 August 2008.

Summary: CHF 58,770 (USD 57,618 or EUR 36,503) was allocated from the International Federation's Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF) on 28 July, 2008 to support the Uzbekistan Red Crescent Society in delivering assistance to 500 families affected by explosions at a military arms depot and residing in temporary shelters. The Netherlands Red Cross has contributed through its Silent Emergency Fund CHF 32,700 towards the replenishment of the DREF allocation for this operation.



The affected families start reconstructing their homes.
Photo: Valentina Sosnovaya/International Federation

According to the latest information from the government and the National Society 689 families lost their homes as a result of the accident. The authorities pledged to compensate for the loss of home to these families by providing apartments in blocks or plots of land for new houses and financial compensation to cover construction materials. The initial arrangements by the government to accommodate the families that had lost their houses in summer camps did not find support among the affected population. Consequently, a tent camp for 40 tents from the Red Crescent stock has been set up at the outskirts of the town of Kagan near the place where land plots are being allocated and 30 families are currently residing in the camp. Other people left homeless are staying in self-made temporary shelters erected in the yards of their houses or with neighbours.

Following the allocation from DREF the Uzbekistan Red Crescent Society has procured the relief items – food parcels, hygiene items, bed linen, mattresses, kitchen sets, jerry cans and candles – and the distributions will start next week. All relief items have been procured locally and in accordance with the International Federation's standard tendering procedures.

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The situation

A series of explosions at the arms depot in the town of Kagan in southern Uzbekistan on 10 July, 2008 killed 6 people, wounded 30 people and caused damage to housing and property. The area around the depot was cordoned off, and in the first days 68,000 people from the town of Kagan and Kagan region were evacuated to the neighbouring districts of Bukhara and Navoi regions. Two weeks after the accident the evacuated people could return to their places of residence. However, as a result of the accident 28 houses have been destroyed by fire and 351 houses damaged by the blast became unsafe for living. Besides, the houses of 310 families located within the three-kilometre right-of-way around the depot have been also demolished.

According to the information provided by the government and the National Society 689 families or 2,760 people lost their homes; among them almost 380 families lost part or all of their property. The initial arrangements by the government to accommodate the families that had lost their houses in summer camps did not find support among the affected population. The authorities pledged to compensate for the loss of home to these families by providing apartments in two apartment blocks or plots of land and financial compensation to cover construction materials at the amount of around 25,000 Swiss francs (through construction companies). By now 60 affected families have moved to new apartments and 36 families received plots of land and started receiving construction materials. It is estimated that the allocated funds will not be enough and that all indoor works will have to be covered by house owners.

Coordination and partnerships

The Uzbekistan Red Crescent Society is closely coordinating its response actions with the government at national and local levels and is represented in the emergency commission. The local authorities expressed their full support of the National Society activities. The regional Bukhara Red Crescent branch is in close contact with the local authorities of Kagan town and Bukhara city and the regional coordinator for emergency situations. The Uzbekistan Red Crescent headquarters and the affected branch are key implementers of the operation. The International Federation's regional representation in Almaty has been providing general supervision and coordination. Between 10 and 16 August the regional disaster management officer visited the National Society headquarters and the branch to monitor the situation and assist with technical and logistical arrangements.

Red Cross and Red Crescent action

In the first days following the evacuation of people from the disaster area representatives of the Bukhara, Navoi and Samarkand Red Crescent branches and volunteers were mobilized immediately to work with the organized central staff and in 14 evacuation points. The Red Crescent points at the central evacuation point in Bukhara city and at the headquarters of the Emergency Ministry in Kagan town have been providing first aid and distributing relief items and medical supplies from the regional disaster stocks to the affected population as an immediate response. Between 10 and 23 of July, the period of temporary evacuation, the Red Crescent staff and volunteers provided 428 families or 2,142 people with food (bread and fruits), bottled water, hygiene items – toilet and washing soap, detergent, tooth brushes and towels – second hand clothes and shoes. The point in Kagan town has been further disseminating information and assisting with applications for government compensations.

After 21 July, when the evacuated population returned home the Bukhara Red Crescent branch carried out a situation assessment to identify the impact of the explosion and the needs of affected people. They visited all families, whose houses had been destroyed in Kagan city and Kagan region in order to confirm the list of beneficiaries for relief distributions. This assessment showed that 693 families were directly affected by explosions, including 28 families whose houses had been destroyed by fire, 4 families whose members had been killed, 351 families whose property had been destroyed or damaged and 310 families whose houses had been demolished. Among them 319 families have been identified as the most vulnerable, they are 150 families with older people, 30 families that have people with disabilities, 44 families with many children and 95 low-income families. The affected people needed additional food packages, hygiene kits and other relief items such as blankets, bed linen, mattresses and kitchenware.

Also some people required temporary shelters for the period of construction of their new houses or major repair works. In an effort to meet the needs the National Society dispatched from the central and regional disaster stocks 64 tents and 15 plastic sheets, 225 mattresses, 217 blankets, 160 bed linen sets, 40 kitchen sets, 40 jerry cans, 450 candles and 223 packets of chlorine tablets.

A tent camp for 40 tents of the Red Crescent Society has been set up at the outskirts of the Kagan town near the place where land plots are being allocated to the families whose houses had been demolished after the

accident. The camp is managed by the authorities. At present, 30 families or 190 people are residing in the tent camp near their new plots of land. Other people left homeless as a result of the explosions are staying in self-made temporary shelters erected in the yards of their damaged houses or with neighbours.

Progress towards objectives

Relief distributions (food and basic non-food items)

Objective: To provide food and non-food relief items to 500 vulnerable affected families residing in temporary shelters.

The 500 families targeted include the 319 families who have been identified as the most vulnerable, and another 181 families selected depending on the scale of the damage.

Progress and impact:

The Red Crescent Society has procured the following relief items: food parcels (500 units), hygiene items (500 family parcels), bed linen (500 sets), mattresses (450 pieces), kitchen sets (100 units), jerry cans (200 pieces) and candles (3,000 pieces). The National Society slightly revised the composition and quantity of items to be procured, namely pillows have been replaced by blankets, the quantity of bed linen sets and mattresses decreased.

All relief items have been procured locally in the capital of Tashkent following the International Federation's standard tendering procedures. The National Society has agreed on free delivery of all procured goods to Bukhara region by railroad and on free storage in a warehouse provided by the government until the distributions finish. The distributions will start between 10-13 September and are expected to be completed by 24 September.

The speedy efforts of the local branches to assess the damage and identify the needs of the affected households demonstrated their capacities to handle emergency situations. This is the result of training during workshops provided to the staff in the past years.

The actions carried out by the Uzbekistan Red Crescent Society across the affected region involved approximately 40 volunteers who were assisted by 2 members from the headquarters.

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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