DREF operation update

International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

South Africa: Urban Disturbance

DREF operation n° MDRZA002
Update n° 5
15 August 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: 12 – 31 July 2008

Summary: CHF 373,567.19 (USD 355,778.28 or EUR 229,604.91) has been allocated from the International Federation's Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF) to support the South African Red Cross Society in delivering immediate assistance to 30,000 beneficiaries for three months.

South African Red Cross Society volunteers announce the procedures of food distribution to the queues of displaced people at Rand Airport site
Photo: Nooshin Erfani, International Federation

The humanitarian response to the urban disturbance has now moved from an immediate emergency phase to one that aims to address the longer-term needs of the displaced population. National and provincial authorities, after announcing an emergency phase in Gauteng and Western Cape provinces, continue to consult the international community on how to provide relief and some sense of normalcy for the affected population, while a more long-term solution is sought.

The Red Cross Red Crescent Movement components, i.e. the South African Red Cross Society (SARCS), the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) and the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), have been seen as focal points in the planning and provision of emergency relief. The Movement has participated in numerous coordination meetings and forums at local, provincial and national levels with other stakeholders such as United Nations (UN) agencies and non-governmental organisations (NGOs).

The technical and operational support being provided to SARCS by the IFRC, as part of this DREF operation, is planned to continue for two more months, which includes a one-month extension of the operation in order to conclude ongoing activities.

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The situation

The South African Red Cross Society (SARCS) has been actively involved in the provision of relief assistance to the displaced and affected population. So far, the National Society has mobilized hundreds of volunteers and staff, from 35 local branches throughout the country, to provide emergency relief assistance. According to the UN-OCHA Situation Report of 21 July 2008, there are now approximately 12,297 displaced people in 72 sites nationwide.

Gauteng and Western Cape provinces remain the worst affected with the majority of displaced people in need of on-going assistance. In Kwa-Zulu Natal, the number of affected people has decreased to a few hundred, but remains challenging due to the specific context of the relief work. The e-Thekwini municipalities are no longer hosting the displaced, whilst the displaced (most with refugee status) are unwilling to re-integrate. In Durban, this has led to 166 Congolese, mostly refugees or documented asylum seekers, of which 38 woman and 75 children, to seek shelter in Albert Park, where faith-based organizations are providing temporary tents for shelter.

In Gauteng and Western Cape provinces, temporary shelter sites have now been consolidated into fewer locations, chosen by the provincial disaster management teams in close cooperation with municipal authorities. These sites will only function for a maximum of four more weeks, while a long-term solution is developed by the government.

The Department of Home Affairs led the registration process and issuing of temporary identification documents with validity up to November 2008. The development of reintegration strategies is still on-going in the Gauteng and Western Cape provinces, encouraging people to reintegrate back into the communities where it is not possible to return to their home countries. The Department of Home Affairs has stated that the main purpose of the temporary identification cards (ID) cards is to provide access control at the shelters, ensuring the safety and security of its residents. The Department has stated that the ID cards do not cancel or replace any valid documentation an individual may have received prior. It further announced that foreign nationals that possess legal documents such as refugee status permits will not be deported, but at the same time will not be allowed in the shelters without temporary ID cards.

Violence erupted on 16 July in one site in Gauteng (Rifle Range or Glenanda shelter), when a group of refugees held four security guards hostage as they refused to be registered and requested UNHCR to relocate them to a third country. On 17 July 2008, police entered the shelter and fired rubber bullets and stun grenades to resolve the issue. Reportedly six refugees were injured and 10 others arrested.

The SARCS national revised appeal for R7 million (CHF 967,000) has been surpassed with by least R3 million (CHF 415,000) through an outpouring of support from the South African public, companies and members of the international community. In addition, SARCS has received a substantial amount of in-kind donations (food and non-food) donated for use in the urban violence programme.

The Movement's international components, the IFRC and the ICRC, have continued to provide technical and operational assistance to SARCS, particularly in procurement and logistics, relief distribuitons, donor liaison and management, communications and media liaison and reporting. However, the National Society continues to be the lead agency in this operation.

Coordination and partnerships

In response to the revised national appeal, SARCS has received overwhelming support from the South African public, local companies and organisations, with over R14 million (over 2 million Swiss francs) received so far in donations. The support has ensured continuity in the relief activities and procurement of items. Recent major cash donations include those from Investec,

First National Bank, Independent Newspaper, Development Bank of South Africa, Eskom Development Foundation, Ernst and Young and most recently the French Embassy.

Since the beginning of the Red Cross operation, SARCS has been disseminating reports and information to a wide-range of stakeholders. This transparency has been further reinforced by the holding of a donor meeting on 12 August 2008, at which the national and provincial donors explained of how their donations were utilised.

All three Movement partners (SARCS, the IFRC and the ICRC) have continued to take part in coordination and planning meetings at local, provincial and national levels. SARCS was invited to participate in consultative fora at local, provincial and national levels, given its wide-spread presence throughout the country, its rapid response to the crisis, and its experience in disaster management. While seeking coordination with Government and other actors, SARCS took action immediately and did not wait for coordination mechanisms to start functioning.

Red Cross and Red Crescent action

SARCS continues to play an active role in providing relief to the affected and displaced people throughout the country, and specifically in Gauteng, Western Cape and Kwa-Zulu Natal Provinces. The main services provided are the provision of food parcels and non-food items (such as blankets, hygiene packs, baby kits and basic utensils), as well as first aid, tracing and psycho-social support (in Gauteng and Kwa-Zulu Natal) and provision of cooked meals and similar non-food items and services in Western Cape. In July, SARCS volunteers began to include social work, such as (preventative) peer education and community sensitization, in addition to the support services provided to the people in the shelters, as part of their ongoing community based work.

An overview of the relevant statistics in the three provinces for period May – 31 July 2008 is provided below:

Table 1: Overview of people affected and assistance provided by SARCS in Gauteng Province

GAUTENG	# Sites	# people assisted	Distribution				
			Food parcels	Hygiene kits	Baby kits	Blankets	Maize Meal
May	26	29,084	21,577	15,033	5,609	22,755	339
June	11	8,521	5,040	1,644	2,795	5,729	2,768
July	9	6,544	3,809	1,401	3,060	856	498
	Total	**44,149**	**30,426**	**18,078**	**11,464**	**29,340**	**3,605**

SARCS volunteers have continued to provide cooked meals to the displaced in Western Cape Province. At present they are cooking meals, and providing non-food items to 605 people in eight sites that are specifically allocated to SARCS. In addition, non-food items and other support services such as tracing, first aid and social work have been provided. The number of displaced people has decreased since the last update, mainly due to people slowly re-integrating back into the communities.

Table 2: Overview of people affected and assistance provided in Western Cape Province

WESTERN CAPE	Allocated sites	# people assisted	# cooked meals	Adhoc sites	# people assisted
May	7	3,930	6,680	14	10,561
June	12	1,842	5,777	10	5,024
July	10	1,484	3,495	2	320
	Total	**7,256**	**15,952**		**15,905**

Note: The number of people assisted is an average taken over the whole month,
# of meals is an average of meals provided per day (breakfast/lunch/dinner is counted as one)

In Kwa-Zulu Natal, SARCS, in collaboration with faith-based organizations are providing services and relief items to the affected people at most of the shelters. SARCS has adjusted its distribution method, and is now providing support to the faith based organizations that are housing the displaced, instead of providing direct support.

Table 3: Overview of people affected

KWA-ZULU NATAL	# Sites	# people assisted
May	11	559
June	7	404
July	4	82
	Total	**1,045**

The main challenge remains to be how the displaced people will be successfully re-integrated or possibly repatriated as the people seem unwilling to go back to their former communities.

The IFRC Southern Africa Zone office, through the country representative coordination and a specific operations manager and regionally recruited advisor, continues to support SARCS in close cooperation with ICRC.

Latest developments

At the beginning of August, public authorities announced plans to close temporary settlements on 15 August. A number of actors, including Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF) and the South African Parliament's multi-party task team charge to review the urban violence, have publically expressed their concerns about this decision and consider it premature.

SARCS has developed contingency plans in order to ensure continued assistance for those affected by the urban violence once the settlements have been closed.

As in most emergencies, women and children are some of the most vulnerable living at the temporary shelters around South Africa
Photo: South African Red Cross Society

Progress towards objectives

Relief distributions (food and basic non-food items)

Objective: To distribute food and non-food relief items to a target population of 30,000 people of the most vulnerable in selected IDP temporary relocation centres across the country.

Expected results	Activities planned
Food and non-food items are distributed to 30,000 people amongst selected temporary IDP relocation centres for two months.	• Conducting further assessments to determine the actual numbers and location of beneficiaries, as number fluctuates on daily basis. • Distributing over 80,000 relief items using proper standards and systems. • Designing systems to facilitate smooth distribution to the most vulnerable beneficiaries. • Establishing centres for relief administration by the National Society.

Progress
SARCS is continuously assessing the actual number of displaced per site through the established procedures of data collection and registration. The distributions of relief items, using the ration card system introduced earlier in the operation, are on-going and food parcels have been distributed regularly in Gauteng province, whilst Western Cape has continued to provide cooked meals to the affected people. In Kwa-Zulu Natal, SARCS has adjusted its distribution method, and is now providing support to the faith based organizations that are housing the displaced, instead of providing direct support. Non-food items, such as blankets, hygiene packs, baby kits and basic utensils, have also been distributed where required.

Anti-discrimination campaign

Objective: To improve the spirit of tolerance and co-existence particularly among the host communities in South Africa.

Expected results	Activities planned
Peaceful co-existence between host communities and migrants through advocacy, sensitisation and educative campaign by SARCS.	• Adapting the materials (which include brochures and booklets, TV and radio spots in all official languages) for local contexts. • Supporting IEC subsequent production and distribution via print and electronic mediums. • Conducting community-based sensitization and educational meetings and group discussions.

Progress
The success of SARCS' response to the urban violence has meant it is uniquely placed within the South African context to start new activities that promote tolerance and social unity. Such activities will be based on International Humanitarian Law, and with particular focus on the Movement's Fundamental Principles. The Red Cross thus has the potential to influence attitudes and bring positive change in poor communities, promoting a more long-term solution to the underlying causes of the urban violence.

SARCS is networking throughout the IFRC and with its Movement partners to make use of processes and materials that have already been developed for other successful anti-discrimination action and community sensitization.

Logistics and Warehousing

Objective: To develop logistic procedures, establishing a central warehouse and arranging for appropriate transportation to distribution points.

Expected results	Activities planned
The National Society builds logistics capacity training, and providing delegates to support the logistics function.	• Developing beneficiary targeting strategy and registration system to deliver intended assistance. • Establishing a central warehouse for storage for the relief items • Distributing relief supplies and control supply movements from point of dispatch to end user. • Monitoring and evaluating the relief activities and provide reporting on relief distributions.

Progress
The registration system, using ration cards and beneficiary registers introduced in early June 2008, has been maintained successfully by the SARCS volunteers in charge of registration and distribution.

The warehousing situation of SARCS has been assessed in the three provinces, with the support of ICRC, and recommendations have been made on systems for setting up a warehouse, receiving, storing and despatch of goods, stock taking and disposal of goods. SARCS

warehousing personnel have continued utilizing the recommended systems, and items have been sorted and stored more appropriately. In addition, the in-kind donations received during the operation have been costed in order to get a better idea of total assistance received.

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.

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