

# DREF operation final report



International Federation  
of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

## Bosnia and Herzegovina: Cold wave

DREF operation n° MDRBA002  
GLIDE n° CW-2009-000024-BIH  
22 May 2009

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 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.

**Summary:** CHF 166,370 (USD 144,027 or EUR 110,798) was allocated from the International Federation's Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF) on 23 January 2009 to support the national society in delivering assistance to some 1,000 families.

Extremely low temperatures hit parts of Bosnia and Herzegovina in January 2009, followed by lack of gas supplies worsening the conditions among the most vulnerable people. In responding to the situation the DREF operation was implemented from 23 January 2009 to 22 February 2009. During the operation the National Society distributed food parcels, blankets, wooden briquettes and stoves to 1,000 families. The Red Cross Society of Bosnia and Herzegovina successfully completed the planned activities. People reached were satisfied with the services provided, especially with the quality of goods.



**Photo 1:** Man who received food parcel and blanket in Gacko. **International Federation/ Carl Odegaard**

**The Netherlands Red Cross through its Silent Emergency Fund<sup>1</sup> has contributed 15,000 Euros to the DREF in replenishment of the allocation made for this operation. The major donors to the DREF are the Irish, Italian, Netherlands and Norwegian governments and ECHO. Details of all donors can be found on <http://www.ifrc.org/what/disasters/responding/drs/tools/dref/donors.asp>**

Out of the allocation CHF 45,527 will be reimbursed to the International Federation's DREF since some of the procured goods were less expensive than budgeted.

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## The situation

Extremely low temperatures hit parts of Bosnia and Herzegovina in January 2009, followed by lack of gas supplies worsening the conditions among particularly affected and vulnerable population groups. The number of people severely affected amounted to some 5,200 families or 10,000 people according to

<sup>1</sup> Ninety per cent of the funding for the Silent Emergency Fund is provided by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Netherlands government, and the remaining 10 per cent by the Netherlands Red Cross.

information from Red Cross branches. The lack of natural gas, firewood and alternative fuel for heating were the most serious problems for people in the affected areas.

The most affected regions were the cities of Sarajevo, Zenica, Zvornik and parts of eastern Herzegovina, including Sokolac, Foca and Gacko, where some villages were completely cut off from the rest of the country due to snow drifts. In Gacko and Sokolac the temperature fell to 25 degrees below zero, and in most of the affected areas the authorities proclaimed a state of emergency in order to get the situation under control. The situation after the period of extreme cold was for many compounded by ice storm, leading to high risks of injuries, affecting elderly people in particular, preventing them from leaving their homes regardless of their situation.

In Sokolac, Foca and Zvornik several hundred families were affected by very low temperatures. They were facing severe food shortage and were almost out of firewood. Water in households was frozen making it difficult to prepare food. In the townships of Lucavica and Dobrinje in Sarajevo many were facing similar hardships. Normal water supply was restored after some time, but food shortages continued to cause problems as affected people spent all their money on alternative heating. Also municipal institutions were affected by lack of heating and frozen pipelines.

Owing to the seriousness of the situation authorities requested people to reduce their fuel consumption. The price of electricity in Bosnia and Herzegovina is among the highest in Europe, and as large parts of the population are unemployed and very poor many of the affected people had little or no capacity to cover additional expenses. Consequently many depleted their financial resources. One case of death was reported in Dobo, where a person froze to death because he had no means to acquire heating materials.

Furthermore prices of heaters were very high when the cold wave hit and tripled during the period with low temperatures. According to field information stoves and electric heaters were also sold out, and although new import took place the price level increased dramatically. According to evaluations by international community representatives, a longer-term solution to the situation was unlikely to be found quickly. Although temperatures rose at some locations in February, weather forecasts indicated that temperatures would become extremely low once more, thus stressing the need to instantly respond. Some complaints were raised by people affected claiming that the government did not succeed in meeting their most urgent needs.

## **Coordination and partnerships**

Within the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement the Red Cross Society of Bosnia and Herzegovina cooperated with the International Federation at country as well as regional and zonal level. The International Federation assisted the society in assessing needs, tendering and procuring relief items as well as monitoring and reporting on the operation including surveying people's satisfaction with the services provided.

The National Society furthermore cooperated with the Civil Defense and local and central authorities. The society was involved in all field activities in organizing relief to the affected people. Together with the Civil Defense and the authorities, National Society regional disaster response team (RDRT) members carried out field assessment which was also supported by Federation logistics personnel. Rapid assessments were among others conducted in Sokolac, Lukavica and urban areas of Sarajevo. The members' active participation in assessing the situation, preparing situation reports and disseminating information greatly strengthened the contact and coordination between the National Society and the International Federation as well as with other agencies, including UNHCR and WFP.

Moreover the society actively sought information from other organizations before and during its response to the emergency. Bad weather conditions and subsequent lack of access to some areas somehow limited access to reliable and timely information about the situation.

Other organizations and agencies providing support to people affected by the low temperatures included UNHCR which distributed heaters in Gorazde, and Caritas which provided food parcels in various other areas.

## **Red Cross and Red Crescent action**

To address the most urgent needs caused by the extreme temperatures, the Red Cross Society of Bosnia and Herzegovina, supported by the International Federation, assisted 1,000 most vulnerable families living in

the affected areas. The core activity during the operation was distribution of locally procured food and non-food items following assessment, selection and tendering processes. Items distributed included food parcels, blankets, briquettes and stoves.

The National Society continuously monitored the operation. A survey was carried out between 31 March and 3 April by the society in cooperation with the International Federation to determine whether the services provided by the Red Cross met the needs of the people reached or not.

During the operation the National Society continued its good working relationship with governmental authorities at central, regional and local level. Furthermore weekly coordination meetings with the International Federation took place demonstrating that coordination and information capacity during emergency response needs to be improved. From an organizational point of view information spreading and sharing was at times hampered by the information capacity of the National Society.

The National Society demonstrated a strong capacity to work with the affected people and to deliver proper services through its highly dedicated volunteers. The number of volunteers involved in the operation was 20.

## Progress towards objectives

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

**Objective: 1,000 most vulnerable families living in the areas affected by low temperatures and lacking heating possibilities are provided with firewood, stoves, blankets and food parcels for a period of one month.**

In targeting 1,000 families the National Society successfully implemented the planned activities and reached its objective, thus alleviating suffering among the people reached. One change in the original plan occurred though because of a shortage of firewood in local markets. The National Society together with the International Federation thus decided to procure wooden briquettes to replace firewood as heating materials. The market price of briquettes allowed the society to procure the planned quantity originally budgeted for, but at a significantly lower price.

Target groups to be reached by the operation were identified according to the pre-determined criteria including elderly and bed-ridden people over 60 living alone; people with disabilities; socially endangered persons with very young children; self-supporting mothers; and returnees, refugees and displaced persons.

Food parcels, blankets, wooden briquettes and stoves were procured and distributed to identified target groups. The items were procured locally following Federation logistics procedures. Before distributing food parcels these were packed according to Federation standards and with both Federation and National Society logos. Table one shows the type and amount of items distributed as well as locations.



**Photo 2:** Offloading of non-relief items in Sokolac collective centre. **Red Cross Society of Bosnia and Herzegovina**

Location	Food parcels*	Stoves	Blankets	Briquettes**
Zvornik	100	5	100	27.50
Sokolac	-	5	-	-
Sokolac (collective centre)	100	5	100	30.00
Fazlagica Kula	60	5	60	17.50
Gacko	90	-	90	10.00
Foca	150	5	150	40.00
Zenica	100	10	100	42.50
Sarajevo (and surrounding areas)	400	15	400	82.50
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,000</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>1,000</b>	<b>250.00</b>

\* Wheat flour 3kg; salt 1 kg; rice 1 kg; powder milk 1 kg; sugar 1 kg; oil 1 litre; pasta 1 kg; beans 2 kg \*\*Tons

**Table 1:** Distributed items during the cold wave operation including locations and amounts.

The distribution of food parcels, stoves, blankets and briquettes was carried out according to the timetable. Each household received a food parcel in one round over one month and fabric packed stoves and blankets packed in plastic bags were distributed according to the schedule. The wooden briquettes were packed in hermetic and waterproof packages each 20 kg and containing 5 briquettes. Every package included a manual with instructions on its use as the briquettes had to be cut in proper pieces not to damage stoves. People reached and interviewed confirmed that the goods received were of good quality and timely distributed.

The distribution was completed as planned and the objective reached, among others ensured by close and continuous monitoring. National headquarters representatives made several visits to monitor the distributions. The regional disaster response team members made spot checks to several distribution points to determine the effectiveness of the distribution.

Press releases and stories about the activities were placed on the International Federation's web site and the survey conducted after the operation contributed to visibility as well.



**Photo: 1:** Procured food parcels with Red Cross emblem. **Red Cross Society of Bosnia and Herzegovina**

## Challenges

Firewood had to be replaced by wooden briquettes as markets were short of firewood. However, the same amount of briquettes was purchased as was planned for firewood. Furthermore the National Society managed to purchase the briquettes at a much lower cost than was budgeted for the firewood meaning that parts of the DREF allocation will be reimbursed. The purchase of additional relief items for stockpiling were considered, but it was not feasible due to the society's limited warehousing capacity.

The National Society experienced some challenges in deciding on the number of distribution points in the local branch in Novi Grad. However, the society managed to solve the matter and complete the distribution as planned and on time. Thus no major change in the distribution plan was needed.

During the distribution of wooden briquettes bad weather conditions, especially in mountainous areas, including snow and ice storms, was a challenge somehow hampering distribution, though not leading to serious delays.

## Conclusion

The National Society carried out a survey from 31 March to 3 April in which the International Federation through the regional representation in Budapest took active part. The main purpose of the survey was to find out whether people reached were satisfied with the services they received and whether they had any recommendations for improving the quality and appropriateness of relief operations in the future.

The survey showed that the National Society managed to meet the needs of the affected people, thus contributing to maintain the society's credibility as a provider and partner in offering humanitarian assistance. In terms of services the survey shows that goods were of high quality and timely distributed. Most people received items at home and those having to travel and cover transportation costs themselves still managed to get to distribution points and to bring the goods home. The society however has a potential for enhancing the involvement of people reached since participation was somehow limited during the operation. Information about the distribution in terms of time, location and items was considered as sufficient. Visibility was emphasized during the operation, among other with emblems on food parcels, but the National Society

believes it can become even better in future operations. Provision of safety instructions emerged as an important aspect and was emphasized as well with good results.

The National Society managed to handle upcoming challenges which contributed to a successful outcome. No serious delays were thus caused.

Contact and coordination between the National Society and the International Federation as well as with other agencies, including UNHCR and WFP, was greatly strengthened through the active participation of National Society regional disaster response team members in assessing the situation, preparing situation reports and disseminating information.

## 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

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**International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies**

MDRBA002 - Bosnia - Cold Wave

Final Financial Report

Selected Parameters	
Reporting Timeframe	2009/01-2009/04
Budget Timeframe	2009/01-2009/02
Appeal	mdrba002
Budget	APPEAL

All figures are in Swiss Francs (CHF)

**I. Consolidated Response to Appeal**

	Goal 1: Disaster Management	Goal 2: Health and Care	Goal 3: Capacity Building	Goal 4: Principles and Values	Coordination	TOTAL
<b>A. Budget</b>	166,370					166,370
<b>B. Opening Balance</b>	0					0
<b>Income</b>						
<u>Other Income</u>						
<i>Voluntary Income</i>	166,370					166,370
<b>C5. Other Income</b>	166,370					166,370
<b>C. Total Income = SUM(C1..C5)</b>	166,370					166,370
<b>D. Total Funding = B + C</b>	166,370					166,370
<b>Appeal Coverage</b>	100%					100%

**II. Balance of Funds**

	Goal 1: Disaster Management	Goal 2: Health and Care	Goal 3: Capacity Building	Goal 4: Principles and Values	Coordination	TOTAL
<b>B. Opening Balance</b>	0					0
<b>C. Income</b>	166,370					166,370
<b>E. Expenditure</b>	-120,843					-120,843
<b>F. Closing Balance = (B + C + E)</b>	45,527					45,527

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Reporting Timeframe	2009/01-2009/04
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## III. Budget Analysis / Breakdown of Expenditure

Account Groups	Budget	Expenditure					TOTAL	Variance
		Goal 1: Disaster Management	Goal 2: Health and Care	Goal 3: Capacity Building	Goal 4: Principles and Values	Coordination		
A							B	A - B
<b>BUDGET (C)</b>		<b>166,370</b>					<b>166,370</b>	
<b>Supplies</b>								
Clothing & textiles	25,120	16,286					16,286	8,834
Food	25,120	19,514					19,514	5,606
Other Supplies & Services	91,060	51,175					51,175	39,885
<b>Total Supplies</b>	<b>141,300</b>	<b>86,975</b>					<b>86,975</b>	<b>54,325</b>
<b>Transport &amp; Storage</b>								
Storage		2,413					2,413	-2,413
Distribution & Monitoring	9,546	5,518					5,518	4,028
Transport & Vehicle Costs		1,443					1,443	-1,443
<b>Total Transport &amp; Storage</b>	<b>9,546</b>	<b>9,374</b>					<b>9,374</b>	<b>172</b>
<b>Personnel</b>								
International Staff		1,255					1,255	-1,255
National Staff		5,052					5,052	-5,052
National Society Staff		1,234					1,234	-1,234
<b>Total Personnel</b>		<b>7,541</b>					<b>7,541</b>	<b>-7,541</b>
<b>Workshops &amp; Training</b>								
Workshops & Training		470					470	-470
<b>Total Workshops &amp; Training</b>		<b>470</b>					<b>470</b>	<b>-470</b>
<b>General Expenditure</b>								
Travel	4,710	5,245					5,245	-535
Information & Public Relation		193					193	-193
Office Costs		62					62	-62
Communications		322					322	-322
Professional Fees		151					151	-151
Financial Charges		154					154	-154
Other General Expenses		2,500					2,500	-2,500
<b>Total General Expenditure</b>	<b>4,710</b>	<b>8,628</b>					<b>8,628</b>	<b>-3,918</b>
<b>Programme Support</b>								
Program Support	10,814	7,855					7,855	2,959
<b>Total Programme Support</b>	<b>10,814</b>	<b>7,855</b>					<b>7,855</b>	<b>2,959</b>
<b>TOTAL EXPENDITURE (D)</b>	<b>166,370</b>	<b>120,843</b>					<b>120,843</b>	<b>45,527</b>
<b>VARIANCE (C - D)</b>		<b>45,527</b>					<b>45,527</b>	