

Operations update



International Federation
of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

Central African Republic: Floods

Emergency appeal n° MDRCF006
GLIDE n° FL-2009-000129-CAF
Operations update n° 1
8 September 2009

Period covered by this Ops Update: 17 July to 17 August, 2009;

Appeal target (current): CHF 805,260 (USD 708,993 or EUR 534,133);

Appeal coverage: 16%; [<click here to go directly to the updated donor response report, or here to link to contact details >](#)

Appeal history:

- This Emergency Appeal was initially launched on a preliminary basis on 6 August 2009 for CHF 805,260 (USD 708,993 or EUR 534,133) for 6 months to assist over 6,000 beneficiaries.
- **Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF):** CHF 35,302 was initially allocated from the Federation's DREF to support the CAR Red Cross national society to respond.



CAR Red Cross volunteers are busy building temporary shelters for the beneficiaries in the site provided by Government Yvette M. Mve/International Federation

Summary: Since 17 July 2009, the Government of the CAR, the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement present in Bangui (CAR Red Cross Society, ICRC and the International Federation), partner national societies (PNS) such as the French Red Cross, local companies, embassies, UN agencies and other NGOs have been making joint efforts to assist flood-affected persons in Bangui by providing financial, material and technical resources to reduce the impact of the floods. The Government has made available three secured sites that are not liable to flooding. The first site is located in the second subdivision of Bangui and can host 110 families; the second is on the premises of the agricultural council and can host at least 300 families; the third is in the 6th subdivision of Bangui, the Kolongo Villa that can host at least 1,200 families.

Various components of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement have started building temporary shelters to host the beneficiaries. Two of the three sites provided by Government have already been prepared, with potable water systems and emergency latrines ready for use. The CAR Red Cross, supported by the Federation, is carrying out advocacy work with a view to meeting the challenges faced by flood-affected people in Bangui, notably for nutrition, education, and development.

Food distribution is ongoing as the World Food Program (WFP) has renewed its partnership with the CAR Red Cross for 2 months (from 8 August to 7 October 2009) to cover the food needs of 7,000 people. Food distributions are made at the headquarters of CAR Red Cross.

The situation

Heavy rains occurred in Bangui in June and July 2009, leading to serious flooding that left over 11,000 people homeless, with serious material damages, including the destruction of household property, school supplies, water and sanitation facilities (especially latrines and water points), farms, hospitals and schools. The 2nd, 4th, 5th and 6th subdivisions of Bangui are the most affected localities, with 65 % of children and several pregnant women and old people who are currently accommodated in schools, churches and other public squares.

In order to respond to this situation, the CAR Government, CAR Red Cross society and the International Federation launched an emergency appeal which has so far stimulated the sympathy and action of several institutions and PNS, notably the French Red Cross that has deployed an emergency team of experts to install a water and latrine system in the first sites provided by Government for the affected populations.

To date, the Ministry of Family, the CBCA Bank, WFP, the French, Japanese and US embassies in Bangui, UNHCR, UNICEF, UNFPA, WHO, the Foberd Company, and MSF Holland have shown their feeling of solidarity by providing food and non-food items, as well as cash support. For example, WFP has so far facilitated 2 distribution sessions, the first of which benefited 9,604 people, while the second, which is ongoing, is targeting only the 1,425 families that are installed in temporary sites. An agreement has been signed between the CAR Red Cross society and WFP for food distribution from 8 August to 7 October 2009, targeting 7,000 flood-affected people relocated in the sites provided by Government.

Despite this commendable international solidarity, much is left to be done, especially as the rains continue to intensify, affecting new people. In fact, as of 23 August 2009, the CAR Red Cross Society had registered 7 newly affected families. Gutter cleaning work and sessions is being considered to sensitize the population in neighborhoods at risk to the respect of hygiene rules and the need to use available garbage disposal bins to prevent the blocking of gutters.

Coordination and partnerships

It has been commonly agreed that CAR Red Cross Society should lead the food and non-food items distribution aspect of the operation, as well as the preparation of the three sites to which the beneficiaries will be relocated, with the support of the competent Government services, notably the city council, civil engineering, the water and electricity company, and the Hygiene service.

The International Federation and CAR Red Cross Society are pursuing advocacy work to stimulate the participation of a greater number of international organizations present in the country, so as to make it possible to tackle all the problems linked with flooding, notably malnutrition, diarrheal diseases, acute respiratory infections, malaria, and the replacement of the school supplies that have been destroyed.

National Society Capacity Building

Since 2007, the International Federation has been supporting the CAR Red Cross in disaster management, especially flood management, thereby contributing to building the capacities of both the National Society and their volunteers. So far, about 90 volunteers have been trained and are at the centre of actions to respond to disasters in Bangui. The know-how acquired over the years have enabled them to update the lists of affected people, ensure food and non-food items distribution, provide psychological support to affected people; sensitize the populations to the need of cleaning gutters, and building semi-temporary shelters. For this particular operation at this stage, CAR Red Cross volunteers have been able to contribute substantially in the installation of the water distribution system and the building of emergency latrines in the sites provided by Government, alongside with the French Red Cross water and sanitation experts. The CAR Red Cross volunteers are well prepared, and this is expected to facilitate the implementation of the remaining activities of this operation.

Capacity of the International Federation

At the onset of the disaster, the International Federation's Central Africa Regional Representation deployed its Regional Disaster Management Delegate in Bangui to follow up the situation, assess the needs and organize the first actions, which included the implementation of a DREF operation. By then, food and non-food items were distributed to over 13,500 flood-affected people. All the competent services of the West and Central Africa Zone Office have been mobilized to ensure the success of the operation. A relief/Water and sanitation resource person, who is also a member of the Regional Disaster Response Team, has been deployed in Bangui to assist the National Society in the implementation of the operation. Every effort is being taken to make sure that affected people receive proper assistance with the support of donors.

Red Cross and Red Crescent action

Overview

Eighty-eight CAR Red Cross volunteers have been mobilized for this operation and have been busy preparing the sites to host flood-affected people. So far, the French Red Cross has completed the installation of water and sanitation systems in two of the three sites, with the commendable participation of CAR Red Cross-trained volunteers. The facilities installed include 5 ramps with 6 taps, 10 showers and 20 latrines. The French Red Cross and the International Federation have planned to provide technical briefing on the management of the newly installed water and sanitation systems in order to facilitate the smooth owning of the facilities, firstly by the CAR Red Cross national disaster response team – water and sanitation (NDRT-WATSAN) members, and later on by the beneficiaries themselves.

The International Federation and the French Red Cross intend to pursue hygiene and sanitation promotion activities, as well as the management of excreta and garbage in the days ahead, with the support of Government competent services.

ICRC made available logistics means (trucks and other vehicles) to facilitate the purchase and transportation of food to the temporary sites where affected people are accommodated.

Progress towards objectives

| Relief distributions (food and basic non-food items) | |
|---|--|
| Objective: To distribute non-food items to over 6,000 most vulnerable people in the identified temporary camp sites to cover their initial basic needs. | |
| Expected results | Activities planned |
| The targeted 6,000 flood-affected people have received basic household items that are essential for allowing them to re-establish family life | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop beneficiary targeting strategy and registration system to deliver intended assistance • Distribute relief supplies and control supply movements from point of dispatch to end user. • Procure and distribute non-food items, including mosquito nets, blankets, mats, kitchen sets, and clothes to 1,200 targeted families. • Monitor and evaluate the relief activities and provide reporting on relief distributions. |

Progress: The CAR Red Cross volunteers have updated the lists of vulnerable people, and these have been put at the disposal of the various stakeholders in the field. Details on how the various families are composed will be finalized as soon as the beneficiaries are installed in the official sites.

WFP provided the food items that were distributed to 9,604 beneficiaries on 27 July 2009. Another distribution targeting 6,437 people is planned to take place on 26 August 2009.

A memorandum of understanding (MoU) was signed in early August 2009 between WFP and CAR Red Cross. This MoU stipulates that WFP will make available the food items to be distributed to the beneficiaries, i.e. about 6,437 people, by CAR Red Cross volunteers for two months (from 8 August to 7 October 2009). The food basket will comprise semolina, beans, CSB, cooking oil, sugar, salt and corn.

Reports on food and non-food items distribution have been prepared and submitted to interested partners.

All non-food items made available by the various partners have been put at the disposal of CAR Red Cross, and the latter distributed these items to the 1425 families in temporary sites. The items included mats, blankets, mosquito nets, cooking kits and soap.

The second distribution began on 12 August 2009 at the CAR Red Cross Society headquarters, and lasted for 2 weeks. Some 1,425 heads of families benefited from this distribution (refer to the following table:

| Subdivision | Number households reached | Number of reached | Cereals | Vegetables | CSB | Oil kg | Iodised salt | Sugar |
|-----------------|---------------------------|-------------------|-------------|----------------|--------------|----------------|--------------|--------------|
| 2 nd | 852 | 2,535 | 9,712 | 1,458.8 | 1,214 | 607 | 121.4 | 364.2 |
| 4 th | 68 | 412 | 516 | 77.4 | 64,500 | 32,250 | 6,45 | 19.35 |
| 5 th | 342 | 1,481 | 49.62 | 744,3 | 620.25 | 310.1 | 62,02 | 186,07 |
| 6 th | 223 | 1,009 | 40,18 | 602,7 | 502.25 | 251.125 | 50.22 | 150.67 |
| TOTAL | 1,425 | 6,437 | 19.2 | 2,881,2 | 24.01 | 1,200.5 | 240,1 | 720.3 |

Emergency shelter

Objective: To provide temporary shelter to 6,000 of the affected people in a site (comprising two camps) made available by CAR Government for six months.

| Expected results | Activities planned |
|---|---|
| Appropriate sites are identified and developed with temporary shelters built to accommodate the 6,000 affected people (1,200 families) with dignity in collaboration with Government, local authorities and the beneficiaries | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assess the extent of the shelter needs and ideal shelter solutions. The site identified is protected from the risks of flooding through embankment work and appropriate canalization to ensure automatic evacuation of rain and used waters. Ensure shelter and settlement programming i.e. access to required water and sanitation services and communal facilities, including health services. Construction of 1,200 appropriate temporary shelters with local materials. Promote increased awareness and understanding of safe and adequate response with the National Society and affected communities. |

Progress: The Government has made available three secured sites that are not liable to flooding for the operation. The first site is in the second subdivision of Bangui and can host 110 families, the second is in the premises of the agricultural council and can host at least 300 families, and the third is in the 6th subdivision of Bangui, the Kolongo Villa that can host at least 1,200 families. However, Government is yet to validate the allocation of this last site.

Site preparation work is ongoing, and it is expected that the first 2 sites will be ready shortly to welcome the beneficiaries. 88 CAR Red Cross volunteers have been mobilized to that effect, and have been very active in the construction of wooden temporary shelters to be covered with plastic sheeting for accommodating the beneficiaries. So far, the volunteers are about to complete the construction of 120 shelters that will accommodate the first extremely vulnerable 329 families of affected people, i.e. 2,632 people within 5 days, by the end of this week.

Challenges: The site preparation work is regularly disturbed by frequent rains, which are likely to delay the readiness of the three sites as initially planned.

Acquiring a single site that can accommodate all of the beneficiaries is a considerable challenge, including actually relocating them in sites that are not liable to flooding.

Emergency health and care

Objective: The health risks of the emergency on the affected population is reduced through the provision of preventive, community-level and curative services to 1,200 families (6,000 beneficiaries) in the two camps and 4 subdivisions of Bangui, for six months.

| Expected results | Activities planned |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The risks of communicable diseases and epidemics outbreak are reduced within the identified site for the vulnerable populations and in its surrounding localities. Manage itinerant patients and | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assess the basic mortality and morbidity in the population during emergency. Assess the health risks of the affected population in terms of health services, prevention, health needs and risk of communicable diseases. Manage a first-aid post installed at the camp sites by the CARRCS. Advocate for the supply of essential drugs in two targeted health |

| | |
|--|--|
| provide referral services to the serious cases | centres for the treatment of the patients from the site identified for the purpose of the operation. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sensitize affected people to the measures to be taken in order to avoid the spread of communicable diseases and epidemics. • Provide first aid and referral services for affected communities through 60 volunteers in the coming three months. • Train 60 volunteers on communicable disease surveillance in coordination with the Ministry of Health and district health offices. |
|--|--|

Progress: So far, the MSH Holland mobile medical van has been providing health care services twice per week in all the temporary sites. The recurrent diseases registered include malaria, acute respiratory infections, and acute diarrhoea. Red Cross volunteers are about to complete the construction of two relief posts, one in each of the first sites made available by Government. It will be the responsibility of these posts to provide first aid services in the sites by the end of this week. The posts will be jointly managed by the Ministry of Health, Red Cross volunteers, and all other health actors who express the wish to do so, all under the coordination of the International Federation.

Water, sanitation, and hygiene promotion

| Objective: To reduce the risk of waterborne and water-related diseases through the provision of safe water, adequate sanitation and hygiene promotion to 1,200 families at the displaced camps and to the neighbouring populations for six months. | |
|---|---|
| Expected results | Activities planned |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safe and adequate water supply has been provided to the flood victims. • Reduced risk of further contamination of water and no more clogging of water ways in the affected areas and surroundings; and improved hygiene promotion. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assess the basic water, sanitation and hygiene promotion and likelihood of water and sanitation related diseases in the affected population. • Disinfect and rehabilitate polluted water wells in the flooded areas. • Train beneficiaries on environmental and personal hygiene and the use of the provided sanitation materials. • Sensitize communities on waste management, drainage management and sanitation. • Conduct mass hygiene and clean-up campaigns to sensitize the populations of affected neighbourhoods on the use of public dustbins and avoid throwing garbage in gutters and streams. • Work in close collaboration with the city council of Bangui, Government authorities and other partners to ensure the disposal of collected garbage in an appropriate rubbish dump on a regular basis. |

Progress: Working under the supervision of French Red Cross water and sanitation experts, CAR Red Cross volunteers installed 20 latrines, 10 showers, 2 water distribution ramps of 6 taps each, and a 10 m³ bladder at the site of the second subdivision of Bangui. In the second site, i.e. in the premises of the agricultural council, the volunteers installed 20 latrines, 10 showers, 3 water distribution ramps of 6 taps each, and a 10 m³ bladder.

Dialogue with SODECA (the water distribution company) is ongoing to make sure that the sites provided for the operation are connected to the Bangui urban water distribution network free of charge.

The French Red Cross and the International Federation have planned to provide technical briefing on the management of the newly installed water and sanitation systems in order to facilitate the smooth owning of the facilities, firstly by CAR Red Cross national disaster response team – water and sanitation (NDRT-WATSAN) members, and later on by the beneficiaries themselves. The briefing will take place on 27 August 2009.

Two sessions have been organized by CAR Red Cross volunteers in all affected subdivisions of Bangui to sensitize the populations to the need to properly use gutters and clean them regularly.

Challenges: The main challenge is to pursue water and sanitation activities and extend them to the installation of washing spaces, a rain and waste water drainage system, and a garbage management system, and ensure the maintenance of latrines without delay. Most importantly, all Watsan activities need to be based on hygiene promotion in order to limit the spread of faecal and waterborne diseases.

In addition, there is the need to open talks with Government services in charge of hygiene and refuse disposal to facilitate the management of the sites of the operation. Moreover, advocating for the installation of a drainage system in zones at risk is also important. Discussions to that effect are ongoing with local administrative authorities.

Logistics

| | |
|---|--|
| Objective: To ensure good logistics coordination to ease the implementation of the operation as described in the above sections. | |
| Expected results | Activities planned |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Timely delivery of quality relief goods has been ensured at low cost. The CARRCS logistics capacity has been increased with a functional warehouse. The coordinated mobilization of relief goods is achieved. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provision of rental vehicles from regional VRP stocks. Logistic capacity building of the CARRCS with management and logistic (motorbikes, computers, a printer and accessories). In-depth training of the logistics and finance officers of the CARCS, especially on the management of the resources made available for the purpose of operation. Mobilization of relief items through the RLU and zone warehouse network. Rehabilitation of the National Society warehouse. |

Progress: The CAR Red Cross has been benefiting from the logistics support of the International Federation in the form of a vehicle that has been made available for the operation. An additional two vehicles from the West and Central Africa Zone Office are being sent to Bangui to facilitate the management of the operation.

Early recovery

Objective: To assess early recovery needs together with the affected communities and key local, national and international stakeholders.

Progress: So far, all activities carried out in the field are linked with the emergency phase of the operation. Early recovery activities will start as soon as flood affected people are transferred to the secured sites provided by Government for the operation.

Communications – Advocacy and Public Information

Two press releases have been published by the International Federation, in collaboration with the CAR Red Cross Society communications department. A media briefing is scheduled to take place on the occasion of the official installation of flood affected people in the sites prepared to welcome them, notably in the premises of the agricultural council and that of the city council of the second subdivision of Bangui.

Food item distribution reports are produced and submitted to WFP on a regular basis to keep them informed about the work being done in the field. A comprehensive report on non-food items is currently being finalized by the disaster management department of the CAR Red Cross society.

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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