

# DREF operation



International Federation  
of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

## Russian Federation: Explosion

DREF operation n° MDRRU004  
24 August 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 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.

**CHF 29,973 (USD 28,127 or EUR 19,762) has been allocated from the International Federation's Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF) to support the National Society in delivering immediate assistance to some 2,100 beneficiaries.**

**Summary:** An explosion at the Sayano-Shushenskaya hydropower station in eastern Siberia killed 69 people and left another 6 people missing. One settlement close to the station lost its water supply due to the oil slick in the Yenisei river. The Russian Red Cross will distribute bottled water among the most vulnerable people and provide psychosocial support to the families of power station workers affected by the explosion.



Consequences of the blast in the turbine room at Sayano- Shushenskaya hydropower station. Photo: Russian Ministry of Emergencies

**This operation is expected to be implemented over four months, and will therefore be completed by 22 December 2009; a Final Report will be made available by 22 March 2010. Unearmarked funds to repay DREF are encouraged.**

[<click here for the DREF budget, here for contact details, or here to view the map of the affected area>](#)

## The situation

On 17 August 2009 an explosion at Sayano- Shushenskaya hydropower station in eastern Siberia destroyed the walls and the ceiling of a turbine room which then flooded. The Russian Ministry of Emergencies (EMERCOM) reports that 69 people died and another 20 were injured. As per 24 August, 6 people remain missing and are feared dead.

Rescue teams are pumping out the remaining water from the damaged engine room and use divers to try to find workers of the power station trapped in the turbine room under water. In total the Russian authorities

have mobilized some 1,822 rescue workers, including psychologists to the disaster site. The emergency minister Sergei Shoigu and the energy minister Sergei Shmatko flew to the area to take personal control of the crisis. The Russian Prime Minister Vladimir Putin is visiting the power plant on 21 August.

The accident also produced an oil slick that by 18 August stretched over 80 kilometers down the Yenisei river. Although EMERCOM workers have localized the slick and started the rectification of the river, one of the settlements, Maina will be still cut off from portable water supply for about one week.

## Coordination and partnerships

In assessing the situation the regional Red Cross branch of Khakasia cooperates with the crisis center established by the Ministry of Emergencies as well as local authorities and community leaders in neighbouring settlements. The Russian Red Cross branch in Kemerovo region that has built up experience in psychosocial support following a coal mine explosion has pledged its full support to the Khakasia branch and is ready to send its staff to assist in preparing the operation and in providing training to the local staff and volunteers.

## Red Cross and Red Crescent action

Immediately after the disaster the regional Russian Red Cross branch in the republic of Khakasia started assessing the situation and collecting money for the people affected. The psychologist from the branch went to Sayanogorsk, the nearest administrative centre to provide psychosocial support to the local population. The National Society is elaborating a plan of action that will focus on the provision of psychosocial help to the families of deceived workers and on the distribution of portable water to the most vulnerable people.

## The needs

In Cheremushki settlement where the majority of the population works at the hydropower station, there is a strong need for psychosocial support to the families that lost their members as a result of the explosion and to those who are still waiting for the news about missing workers. The response operation will build on the profound experience of the Russian Red Cross in providing psychosocial support gained through operations responding to recent disasters such as the Beslan crisis, mine explosion in Kemerovo and the South Ossetia refugee crisis.

About 1,800 most vulnerable people including people with disabilities, elderly people living alone, multi-child families and single-parent families from Maina settlement are in urgent need of portable drinking water as their only source of water, the Yenisei river is currently polluted with transformer oil licked from the power station. Although one of the tracks of the local authorities brings water to the settlement once a day, it is difficult for the elderly people and people with disabilities which constitute the majority of the population in the village to take this water home. Moreover, there were cases when the quality of this water was not appropriate for drinking. Authorities of the settlement provided the regional Red Cross branch with a list of the most vulnerable people and asked the Red Cross to organize the supply of bottled water directly to the beneficiaries' homes.

## The proposed operation

The operation will focus on two areas. The emergency health and care component will concentrate on the provision of psychosocial support to the families of the workers affected by the disaster. The water and sanitation component will address the lack of portable water to the most vulnerable people in the settlement affected by the oil slick in the Yenisei river.

The Russian Red Cross has already started purchasing water and distribution will start on 25 August.

Emergency health and care	
<b>Objective:</b> The psychological effects in the aftermath of the hydropower station explosion are reduced through the provision of psycho-social support to the affected families (300 people) and to the rest of the community in Cheremushki settlement.	
Expected Results	Activities planned
Psychosocial support is provided to 300 family members.	Red Cross staff and trained volunteers will provide psychosocial support to 300 family members affected by the explosion to address their needs and improve their psychological condition.



## 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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