

DREF operation update

 International Federation
of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

ALBANIA: FLOODS

DREF operation n° MDRAL002
GLIDE n° FL-2009-000266-ALB
Update n° 1
14 April 2010

The International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent (IFRC) 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 emergency response. 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: 11 January to 7 April, 2010.

Summary: CHF 302,500 was allocated from the International Federation's Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF) on 11 January, 2010 to support the National Society in delivering assistance to some 2,200 families and to replenish disaster preparedness stocks.

The Red Cross Society of Albania, with support from IFRC, has already addressed the needs of 2,200 families through the distribution of food and non-food relief items including blankets, hygiene kits, soaps and mattresses.

Awareness-raising activities were also conducted to inform the communities about different health and hygiene issues, including water contamination.

To replenish the non-food items distributed from the disaster preparedness stock of the National Society, a tendering procedure has been initiated. However this procedure has lasted longer than expected.

Due to this situation, the Albania Red Cross is extending the operation by one month until 11 May, which will allow the National Society to finalize the purchase of the items to be replenished. The final report will be issued by the end of June 2010 .

The Netherlands Red Cross contributed CHF 59,085, the Canadian government CHF 49,940, and ECHO CHF 162,325 to the DREF in replenishment of the allocation made for this operation. Details of all donors can be found on <http://www.ifrc.org/what/disasters/responding/drs/tools/dref/donors.asp>

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Relief distribution in Bacallak suburb of Shkodra town. Photo: Albanian Red Cross

The situation

Shkodra prefecture is located in the north-western part of Albania, 120 km far from the capital of Tirana. It is situated beneath three high hydroelectric power dikes which present a great risk for the area. Due to the rainfall in January 2010, accompanied with the melting of snow in the northern area of Albania, the Drini river

flows were increasing. Consequently the levels of water in the three hydroelectricity power lakes of Fierza, Koman and Vau i Dejes which are built on this river were increasing.

As a result of this situation, even though the maximum of water was used to produce electricity in order to keep the level of water under control in the lakes, the relevant authorities were obliged to open the emergency doors to release water from the lakes.

The water flow together with heavy rainfalls caused flooding on the flat area of Shkodra prefecture.

Albanian authorities declared a natural disaster on 5 January in Shkodra and Lezha prefectures, where raging floodwaters forced the evacuation of thousands of people.

In accordance with the Emergency Situation Law, an emergency management group was set up in Shkodra and Lezha prefectures with the task of managing the situation. The Shkodra and Lezha Red Cross branches were represented in this emergency management group.

Despite appeals by the authorities that called on women, children and older people to leave their homes to avoid the worst, some of the inhabitants of the villages refused to leave their homes and cattle, fearing that they would lose them in the floods.

During the implementation of the disaster response operation, the Shkodra area was flooded again two or three times due to heavy rainfall and the release of water from dams.

According to the latest official data from local authorities, in total 11,500 hectares of land was flooded, 4,600 people evacuated and 4,100 houses flooded.

Furthermore, 11 Roma families were accommodated in a military building in the village of Renc, while 83 women and children were accommodated on the sites of a local religious NGO. In Shkodra town 12 families were accommodated in a student dormitory.

Assessments conducted by Albania Red Cross staff revealed the following damages to the households:

- houses
- home equipment and furniture
- winter reserves of corns and vegetables
- livestock and livestock food
- corn plants

Coordination and partnerships

The Albania Red Cross has been closely coordinating with the authorities at both local and national level. The secretary of Shkodra branch has been participating in the meeting of the emergency management group (Shtab) in this prefecture. The National Society had regular meetings with the director of civil emergency at the Ministry of the Interior and the prefect of Shkodra.

An assessment was conducted to assess the damage done to houses, food reserves, livestock and to determine the needs of the affected population. The disaster management coordinator from the headquarters advised and assisted the Shkodra branch staff involved in the response. Around 30 trained volunteers are involved in the activities.

The Red Cross volunteers were involved right from the beginning in supporting the evacuation by raising awareness, in collecting information, assisting 11 Roma families and 83 women and children, conducting preliminary assessment and monitoring the situation. The Shkodra branch purchased locally daily fresh food during a period of four days for 11 Roma families accommodated in a communal building in the village of Renc. After the fourth day a local NGO continued providing them with food. When returning to their homes, they received the standard ration of food and non-food items from the Albanian Red Cross. Some 200 hygiene kits were also distributed to 83 women and children who were accommodated on the sites of a local religious NGO and 12 other families accommodated in a student dormitory.

Seven local Red Cross branches organized local fund-raising campaigns to assist the people in need in Shkodra. The collected food items and clothes were delivered to the Shkodra branch for further distribution.

In response to the situation, several partners within the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement sent relief assistance or offered support.

The Turkish Red Crescent provided 350 food parcels and 7 large medical kits. Two branches of the Red Cross of Kosova have sent approximately 35 tonnes of food, clothes and mattresses. The Chinese Red Cross through the Embassy of People's Republic of China donated 30,000 US dollars to the Albanian Red Cross. The Red Cross Society of the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia contributed with 4 tonnes of hygiene materials, sleeping bags, and kitchen sets, as well as 22 tonnes of drinking water and non-alcoholic beverages. The Hungarian Red Cross donated 10 tonnes of pasta, corn flakes and sweet cereals. The Malta Red Cross contributed with 63 boxes of second-hand materials for accommodation such as blankets, pillows, covers, sheets and 214 pieces of mattresses.

Besides Movement partners, other stakeholders also contributed to the Albanian Red Cross efforts. USAID donated 50,000 US dollars, the Vodafon Foundation Albania gave 40,000 US dollars, and the Liahona foundation contributed with 18 tonnes of food in support of the relief efforts.

Red Cross and Red Crescent action

Progress towards outcomes

Relief distributions (food and basic non-food items)
Outcome: 2,200 families in the most affected villages in Shkodra prefecture are provided with humanitarian assistance in the form of basic food and non-food items.
Outputs and activities planned:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prepare the final lists of beneficiaries together with the local management commission and local authorities • Procure and deliver relief supplies to the beneficiaries • Organize seven awareness raising activities with the communities to discuss individual and community hygiene • Monitor and evaluate the relief activities and report on the relief distributions • As part of the monitoring and evaluation activities, conduct a survey among people reached to find out what they felt about the goods and services they received and whether their needs were met

Progress:

The Red Cross Society of Albania with support from IFRC has addressed the needs of 2,200 affected families through the distribution of food and non-food relief items.

The operation was carried out in the affected areas of Dajc, Ana Malit, Berdice, Gur i Zi, Bushat, Velipoje, Qender and Shkodra town itself.

The families to be assisted were selected according to the following criteria:

- Evacuated families accommodated with their relatives
- Roma families affected by the floods

The below items were distributed to each family:

Food parcel (for one month) item	Amount	Non-food item	Amount
White flour	25kg	Blanket	4
Rice	5kg	Hygiene kit	1
Vegetbale oil	5litres	Soap	8 pcs
Sugar	5kg	Mattress	1
White beans	5kg		

The non-food items were distributed from the disaster preparedness stock, while the food items were purchased from the suppliers with whom Albania Red Cross had signed contracts.

The purchase procedure for the replenishment of the items distributed from the disaster preparedness stock has been initiated. An announcement in different newspapers was placed about the tender. The process has

been managed by a tendering commission, following the necessary steps specified in the Albania Red Cross administrative regulation.

Only four companies gave their offers and after the screening of the documents, the commission qualified them as follows:

- for the mattresses two companies qualified
- for the hygiene kits two companies qualified
- for the blankets one company qualified

The commission has been discussing this outcome during its meetings but has not yet reached a decision about the next steps.

Due to this situation, the Albania Red Cross is extending the operation by one month until 11 May, which will allow the National Society to finalize the purchase of the items to be replenished.

Besides relief distributions, awareness-raising activities were conducted in order to inform the communities about different health issues:

- Materials were developed promoting individual and community hygiene. This was conducted in cooperation with the department for public health. Some 2,000 posters and 40,000 flyers on health issues were printed out and distributed by Shkodra branch volunteers in the affected areas.
- Meetings took place with teachers, students and community members in three elementary schools discussing topics such as water contamination and disinfection of the affected areas. In the framework of the health project recently implemented by the local branch, community actions were organized in Shkodra town with involvement of 30 volunteers. The actions included house cleaning, disinfection of trees and gathering of garbage with the aim of mobilizing community members to initiate and engage in these kind of activities themselves.

A member of the regional disaster response team (RDRT) was deployed by the IFRC to Albania for a two-week mission to support the Albania Red Cross in the implementation of the planned relief activities.

Challenges:

No major constraints occurred during the relief distributions. Minor challenges were faced in relation to beneficiary lists received from the community leaders; these issues were solved with additional verification of the beneficiaries.

The volunteers that had been previously trained in assessment and disaster response proved to be an invaluable part of the operation; this was a key success factor in conducting timely and accurate assessment as well as responding rapidly to the needs of the affected people.

While the purchase of food items was accomplished according to pre-signed contracts with the suppliers, the purchase of non-food items was delayed due to the longer than expected tendering procedure.

Communications

The president of the Albanian Red Cross organized a press conference where the media was informed about the conclusion of the first phase of the emergency relief operation in Shkodra; the president announced the continuation of mid-term support to the affected families.

How we work

All IFRC 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 the [Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Disaster Response \(Sphere\)](#) in delivering assistance to the most vulnerable.

The IFRC's vision is to inspire, encourage, facilitate and promote at all times all forms of humanitarian activities by National Societies, with a view to preventing and alleviating human suffering, and thereby contributing to the maintenance and promotion of human dignity and peace in the world.

The IFRC's work is guided by Strategy 2020 which puts forward three strategic aims:

1. Save lives, protect livelihoods, and strengthen recovery from disaster and crises.
2. Enable healthy and safe living.
3. Promote social inclusion and a culture of non-violence and peace.

Contact information

For further information specifically related to this operation please contact:

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