

DREF operation final report



International Federation
of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

Mongolia: Cold waves

DREF operation n° MDRMN003
GLIDE n° CW-2010-000010-MN
Final Report
21 September 2010

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: The International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) allocated CHF 400,000 (USD 381,982 or EUR 271,687) from its Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF) to support the Mongolian Red Cross Society (MRCS) in delivering relief assistance to some 1,200 families in the five most disaster-affected provinces. A part of the funds were also used to replenish disaster preparedness stocks with essential non-food items.

The emergency phase of the relief operation (the distribution of goods) took place alongside a health education and psychosocial support campaign. These were successfully completed by the end of March 2010.

Originally it was planned that the cold waves operation was to be completely implemented by 15 June 2010. However, due to the unusually prolonged winter and the needs for a comprehensive response of the MRCS/IFRC in support of affected population a planned lesson learnt workshop to evaluate the effectiveness of the response had to be postponed. A brief extension was approved and the operation was completed by 30 August.

Savings were made in procurement which resulted in an unspent balance of CHF 37,411, which was returned to DREF in Geneva.

The European Commission's Humanitarian Aid Office (DG ECHO), Canadian and Netherlands governments as well as AusAID made contributions towards the replenishment of the DREF for the allocation made to 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 [here](#).

IFRC, on behalf of Mongolian Red Cross Society, would like to thank all partners for their generous contribution to this operation.

[<click here for the final financial report, or here to view contact details>](#)



In Sant *Soum* of Uvurkhangai province a total of 40 families were supported through the DREF operation. The selected herders gathered at the central square of the *soum* to receive relief parcels distributed by Mongolian Red Cross Society. Photo: MRCS

The situation

The 2009-2010 winter season was a devastating period for Mongolians, especially for herding families which number around one third of the total population. The herders were most affected due to their unique lifestyle which is primarily traditional pastoralist. As a result of extreme weather conditions that continued for almost eight months (from November 2009 until June 2010), up to 800,000 individuals or 220,000 herding households were affected in varying levels of severity. A total of 44,000 households have been reported to have lost all their livestock and left with no means of livelihood. Most affected among these are subsistence herders who have been the primary focus of the Red Cross response.

The onset of *dzud*¹ disaster and its seriousness urged the Mongolian government to oversee the response actions and call upon the international community and international organizations to assist the disaster affected population.

MRCS responded initially by releasing the emergency stock items from its warehouses around the country.



MRCS branch staff and volunteers jointly with local authorities have delivered relief goods to those families blocked by snow while clearing roads. It was reported by some of the families that they've been isolated for more than two months from the society. Photo: MRCS

The National Society later sought IFRC and partner national societies' support to respond more adequately to the growing needs.

The United Nation's (UN) resident coordinator's office was requested by the Mongolian government to coordinate response actions of the international donor community. With an aim to make an effective coordination, the UN in Mongolia activated four clusters on survival, health and nutrition; education; agriculture and early recovery. The IFRC country office, together with the National Society, actively participated in coordination efforts and all cluster meetings to ensure that its response is implemented in a well-coordinated manner and avoids duplication and over-targeting.

MRCS and IFRC took the following steps to ensure that all local agencies and the Mongolian government are fully aware of activities undertaken:

- The results of the rapid needs assessment report was shared with partners
- List of selected households for relief assistance were shared with organizations running similar activities in the same areas
- Calculation of food basket was based on the Sphere project's Humanitarian Charter and minimum standards in disaster response and was promoted to partners distributing food items to the disaster affected population.

Red Cross Red Crescent action

Progress towards objectives

Relief distributions (food and basic non-food items)

Objective: To ensure that up to 1,200 herder families (approximately 4,800 individuals) most affected by the *dzud* disaster in the five provinces receive essential food and non-food items to meet their immediate needs for up to three months.

Expected Results	Activities
1,200 vulnerable families (4,800 people) affected by <i>dzud</i> have directly benefited with food packages (flour, rice, sugar,	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dispatch an international team to assess the current situation and identify needs for the Red Cross actions (immediate and longer-term) in order to assist the most-affected communities; • Define the critical needs of the most-affected communities;

¹ *Dzud* – A natural occurring phenomenon resulting from continuous heavy snowfall combined with extreme cold and preceded by dry summers, resulting in the mass death of livestock.

vegetable oil and salt) and non-food items (warm clothes and warm boots for adults and children) distributed by MRCS.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a selection criteria of target locations; • Develop a selection criteria of beneficiaries; • Identify and register 1,200 herder families worst-affected by the <i>dzud</i> disaster; • Procure food and non-food items in accordance with IFRC procurement standards; • Distribute food and non-food items to the identified beneficiaries; • Continuously monitor the relief activities and provide reporting on relief distributions; • Conduct an additional assessment on impact of the <i>dzud</i> in March and define further support strategies; • Organize lessons learnt workshop.
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Impact:

All activities planned in line with the set objective were successfully completed. Surveys of the affected population were conducted and completed in a timely manner. Coordination with local and national authorities were pursued to minimize duplication.

Core criteria were developed in order to identify the most vulnerable population to provide support to:

- # of households who counted up to 200 heads of livestock before this winter and now left with up to 50 heads of livestock due to *dzud*
- # of elderly (above 70)
- # of individuals with physical and mental disabilities; bedridden, seriously ill
- # of pregnant and breastfeeding mothers
- # of children under 16

The actual identification and registration process was carried out by the Red Cross mid and primary level branches with local authorities. The beneficiary name list was consolidated at MRCS headquarters and shared with other organization that were implementing or planning an intervention in the same areas in order to avoid duplication or overlap of assistance.

The relief distribution was completed as follows:

Target province	# of <i>soums</i> ²	# of beneficiaries	Completion date
Arkhangai	9	170	20 March
Gobi-Altai	12	295	20 March
Khuvsgul	13	230	21 March
Uvurkhangai	18	305	23 March
Zavkhan	14	200	23 March

Distribution efforts were carried out according to the previously approved plans and in compliance with the IFRC Code of Conduct and minimum standards of delivering humanitarian assistance. Given the seriousness of the situation which was deteriorating day-by-day, the National Society decided to extend the scope of its operation and at the end of March, the National Society, with assistance from the IFRC country and Asia Pacific zone offices, launched an emergency appeal at international level. For more information, click [here](#) for the latest updates on the Severe winter emergency appeal (MDRMN004).

Challenges:

Even with the existence of a strong volunteer network and mid and primary level branches in every corner of the country, the identification and registration of beneficiaries was the most time-consuming process due to the vast territory affected by *dzud* and sparsely populated herding families. No data except the loss of animals was available from the government. MRCS and other humanitarian organizations were working in conditions where there was a demonstrated lack of situational analysis, information management and mapping which compromised the overall effectiveness of the donor community's emergency response³.

In order to overcome these challenges, the MRCS headquarters appointed a staff member to be fully responsible for the data collection and analysis in the selected five provinces. A comprehensive survey was developed and distributed to the *soums* in order to systematize prioritization of *soums* and identification of households. The gap analysis of targeting that was done late July has showed that DREF operation targeting was effective due to this survey. During the lessons learnt workshop it was discussed that MRCS could have adequately compiled and shared information with partners to complement and fill in the gaps of the NEMA

² A *soum* is the second level administrative subdivision below the provinces, roughly comparable to a county in the United States of America. Each *soum* is again subdivided into *bags*.

³ "Mongolia, Dzud Appeal", launched by the UN Mongolia and other international non-governmental organizations.

updates. By doing that, the MRCS could have further promoted its capacity and responsiveness to the government and international donor community.

In general, Red Cross relief distributions were delivered in a timely manner. However, it could have been even timelier if MRCS had in place the required logistics capacity. Prolonged processes of procurement and transportation have caused a considerable gap between survey and actual dates of distribution. As in similar operations throughout the world there was some dissatisfaction amongst community groups as not everybody received aid – simply because not enough resources were available.

Health

Objective: To ensure health status of the *dzud*-affected population is improved through provision of psychological support, health education (including hygiene promotion and first aid training) and clean-up activities over the next five months.

Expected Results	Activities
Target population receives psychological support and health education messages through information dissemination and household visits by MRCS.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mobilize MRCS psychosocial support and first aid volunteers; • Organize refresher psychosocial support and first aid training for MRCS volunteers; • Refine existing health education materials; • Produce printing materials; • Volunteers conduct household visits to support affected families and disseminate information; • Produce mass media messages (public service announcements and special programmes on TV and radio) and regular broadcasting; • Organize clean-up activities to bury dead animals; • Continuously monitor health situation in coordination with local health authorities.

Impact:

The application of lessons learnt from the 2009 floods has meant that the MRCS has made concrete efforts to ensure that programmes are integrated effectively during the *dzud* response. Health education and promotion activities were designed to complement relief distributions.

These included an education and awareness raising campaign for which the MRCS developed, printed and distributed more than 21,000 copies of three types of brochures which include the following:

- Health recommendations, with a section on what do to with frostbites;
- Psychosocial support messages;
- Traditional herding methods (developed jointly with experts from Ministry of Food, Agriculture and Light Industry).

A comic-leaflet that teaches children basic first aid was also distributed to all schools across the country.

The awareness raising and education brochures were developed in consultation with relevant specialists. However, to maximize the impact of those distributed materials the effort should have been combined with behavioural change communication campaign.

One of the achievements of this operation was that the National Society assisted the in development of support networks for those affected by the current and future disasters by conducting regional trainings for volunteers who would be providing psychosocial support to disaster affected population. During the lessons learnt workshop it was raised the branches shall have a roster of trained volunteers and mobilize them quickly when disaster hits the country.



Each relief parcel was complemented by a box called “Full of Love” that contained brochures and first aid comic as well as a letter from the MRCS that encourages herders to be strong and optimistic. Photo: MRCS

Conclusion

A lessons learnt workshop was conducted in early August. The forum focused on the various challenges and constraints as well as ways to improve and increase the efficiency of every aspect of the operation, with participants sharing best practices and experiences. MRCS led the process to ensure greater effectiveness.

Main findings from the workshop are:

- As a result of discussions on relevance and appropriateness of other possible types of an intervention the food aid was proved to be the most relevant and required intervention by that time.
- MRCS assistance has reached the affected population in a timely manner.
- Data collection was systematic and effective (given the logistical challenges in winter conditions).
- Logistics capacity of the National Society will be up-scaled to ensure effective and timely response to disasters and emergencies.
- For future emergencies the MRCS will consider capacity of local vendors especially of those who provide non-food items to speed up procurement process and increase relevance and usefulness of goods.
- The role of volunteers would require some revision to maximize the efficiency of the response capacity of MRCS.

The main outcome of the workshop was that there was a mutual agreement on a need to develop standard operational procedures for disasters and emergencies before next winter arrives. The document will be issued in order to increase overall effectiveness of the emergency operation taking into consideration key components such as targeting, data collection, logistics arrangements, coordination and communication, monitoring and evaluation, as well as reporting standards.

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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[<final financial report below; click here to return to the title page>](#)

International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

MDRMN003 - Mongolia - Cold Waves

Final Report

Selected Parameters	
Reporting Timeframe	2010/1-2010/8
Budget Timeframe	2010/1-2010/6
Appeal	MDRMN003
Budget	APPEAL

All figures are in Swiss Francs (CHF)

I. Consolidated Response to Appeal

	Disaster Management	Health and Social Services	National Society Development	Principles and Values	Coordination	TOTAL
A. Budget	400,000					400,000
B. Opening Balance	0					0
Income						
<u>Other Income</u>						
Miscellaneous Income	3					3
Voluntary Income	400,000					400,000
C6. Other Income	400,003					400,003
C. Total Income = SUM(C1..C6)	400,003					400,003
D. Total Funding = B + C	400,003					400,003
Appeal Coverage	100%					100%

II. Balance of Funds

	Disaster Management	Health and Social Services	National Society Development	Principles and Values	Coordination	TOTAL
B. Opening Balance	0					0
C. Income	400,003					400,003
E. Expenditure	-362,592					-362,592
F. Closing Balance = (B + C + E)	37,411					37,411

Selected Parameters	
Reporting Timeframe	2010/1-2010/8
Budget Timeframe	2010/1-2010/6
Appeal	MDRMN003
Budget	APPEAL

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III. Budget Analysis / Breakdown of Expenditure

Account Groups	Budget	Expenditure					TOTAL	Variance
		Disaster Management	Health and Social Services	National Society Development	Principles and Values	Coordination		
A		B					A - B	
BUDGET (C)	400,000						400,000	
Supplies								
Clothing & textiles	180,870	141,893					141,893	38,977
Food	77,952	60,175					60,175	17,777
Medical & First Aid	17,250	18,883					18,883	-1,633
Total Supplies	276,072	220,951					220,951	55,121
Transport & Storage								
Distribution & Monitoring		18,086					18,086	-18,086
Transport & Vehicle Costs	20,938	4,038					4,038	16,900
Total Transport & Storage	20,938	22,125					22,125	-1,187
Personnel								
International Staff	8,000	7,848					7,848	152
Regionally Deployed Staff	4,000	473					473	3,527
Total Personnel	12,000	8,321					8,321	3,679
Workshops & Training								
Workshops & Training	25,500	19,886					19,886	5,614
Total Workshops & Training	25,500	19,886					19,886	5,614
General Expenditure								
Travel	34,570	41,645					41,645	-7,075
Information & Public Relation	461	23,119					23,119	-22,658
Office Costs	2,154	2,041					2,041	113
Communications	2,105	2,128					2,128	-23
Professional Fees		103					103	-103
Financial Charges	200	101					101	99
Other General Expenses		43					43	-43
Total General Expenditure	39,490	69,179					69,179	-29,689
Programme Support								
Program Support	26,000	22,130					22,130	3,870
Total Programme Support	26,000	22,130					22,130	3,870
TOTAL EXPENDITURE (D)	400,000	362,592					362,592	37,408
VARIANCE (C - D)		37,408					37,408	