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DREF operation update India: Sikkim Earthquake

 International Federation
of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

DREF operation n° MDRIN008
GLIDE n° EQ-2011-000136-IND
Update n°3
23 December 2011

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:
21 October to 20 December 2011.

Summary: CHF 97,137 has been allocated from the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies' (IFRC) Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF) to support the National Society in delivering immediate assistance to some 5,000 beneficiaries. Unearmarked funds to repay DREF are encouraged.

In response to the Sikkim earthquake, Indian Red Cross Society (IRCS) immediately mobilised the relief supplies from its disaster preparedness stocks along with the water purification unit located in Bahadurgarh warehouse. The national disaster response team (NDRT) and national disaster water and sanitation response team (NDWRT) members were also deployed to Sikkim to surge the capacity of the Sikkim state branch.

The field level activities have been concluded during the reporting period with the completion of the distribution of the relief items. IRCS will soon bring back its water purification unit from Chung Thang.

The operation is in its last phase and this DREF operation is extended to 29 February 2012 to document the learning from the operation through a lessons learnt workshop with the national headquarters, branch staff and volunteers, and a short documentary for sharing/training. This will help IRCS in the long run to analyse the best practices and the gaps to further improve Red Cross national disaster response mechanism. A final report will be available by 29 May 2012.



A beneficiary of the Sikkim earthquake relief operation carrying his allotment of relief supplies. **Photo:** Indian Red Cross Society.

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The Canadian Red Cross replenished the DREF for this allocation.

The major donors and partners of DREF include the Australian, American and Belgian governments, the Austrian Red Cross, the Canadian Red Cross and government, Danish Red Cross and government, the European Commission Humanitarian Aid and Civil Protection (ECHO), the Irish and the Italian governments, the Japanese Red Cross Society, the Luxembourg government, the Monaco Red Cross and government, the Netherlands Red Cross and government, the Norwegian Red Cross and government, the Spanish Government, the Swedish Red Cross and government, the United Kingdom Department for International Development (DfID), the Medtronic and Z Zurich Foundations, and other corporate and private donors.

IFRC, on behalf of IRCS, would like to extend thanks to all for their generous contributions. Details of the contributions to the DREF can be found on www.ifrc.org/dref.

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The situation

Following an earthquake with a 6.8 magnitude on the Richter scale on 18 September 2011, IRCS provided assistance to earthquake affected people in Sikkim by mobilizing stocks and reinforcing the Sikkim branch capacities to deliver services to people in need. The worst affected area was the northern district which witnessed severe damage to infrastructure. With the help of the Union Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Army and Air Force, IRCS assistance reached areas which were inaccessible by road.

The collaboration with the other private partners like FedEx also enabled IRCS to reach affected people with the appropriate assistance in a short span of time.

The operation has been successful in delivering services like family news service, relief distribution and purified water despite of the several challenges like damaged roads, landslides and after shocks.

As time passed, people started salvaging material from their damaged houses, and constructed temporary and permanent houses (shelter). The Red Cross S has lent its hand to the most vulnerable people by providing shelter tool kits to salvage material from their damaged houses and to rebuild the same.

The operation has been implemented very smoothly because of committed Red Cross volunteers and staff under the guidance of senior management.

Coordination and partnerships

Close coordination has been maintained with the local government authorities in Sikkim which facilitated access to the information available with the governmental bodies as well as their cooperation to implement the planned activities of the operation. This coordination availed helicopters to transport personnel and equipments to the disconnected remote areas after the earthquake.

The Ministry of Health and Family Welfare which is also a nodal ministry of IRCS facilitated access to the aircraft to transport relief supplies from Delhi to Bagdogra.

FedEx which was the corporate partner which transported shelter tool kits free of charge from the Asia Pacific regional logistics unit (RLU) warehouse in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia to Gangtok by arranging special facilities for the movement of goods.

Red Cross and Red Crescent action

Progress towards outcomes

Relief distributions (food and basic non-food items)

Outcome: The immediate needs of 1,000 earthquake affected families (5,000 beneficiaries) have been met through relief distributions in Sikkim.

Outputs and activities planned:

- Detailed need assessment by IRCS and mobilization of national disaster response team (NDRT) and national disaster water and sanitation response team (NDWRT) members and volunteers.

- Procurement of non-food item stocks.
- Dispatch and transportation by IRCS to the distribution sites.
- Distribution of relief items (woollen blankets) by trained IRCS volunteers and staff.
- Re-stock relief items distributed. Regular detailed monitoring and reporting of distributions.

Progress:

1. IRCS NDRT/NDWRT members carried out needs assessment in Sikkim. Secondary data was collected from the local authorities and non-governmental organisation (NGO) coordination mechanism established by Sphere. Due to the damaged infrastructure, movement of the teams to the worst affected areas was time consuming and expensive. The secondary information received from the NGOs network and local authorities was very crucial.
2. The beneficiaries' lists were prepared and relief supplies such as tarpaulins, kitchen sets, stoves, woollen blankets and shelter tool kits were distributed in a time span of two and half months to these remote affected areas. This included the time required to mobilize the stocks from the IRCS warehouses as well as from the IRCS RLU warehouse in Kuala Lumpur.
3. This operation has supported the distribution of shelter tool kits (1,000 pieces), kitchen sets (500 pieces), blankets (2,000 pieces) and tarpaulins (500 pieces).
4. Shelter tool kits were dispatched from the IFRC RLU warehouse in Kuala Lumpur and distributed, while other items were distributed from the disaster preparedness stocks of IRCS located in Bahadurgarh warehouse. These items are now being replenished. Woollen blankets and kitchen sets have already been procured and stored in Bahadurgarh and Kolkata warehouses respectively. The tarps which have been imported from Kuala Lumpur have arrived at Kolkata port and soon will be cleared in customs. The replenishment of the stocks is likely to be completed by 31 December 2011.



National disaster response team (NDRT) members, along with Sikkim branch volunteers, reached to remote areas with relief assistance. **Photo:** Indian Red Cross Society.

Table 1: List of relief items procured and distributed.

Relief Item	Procured	Distributed
Shelter tool kits	1,000	999
Woollen blankets	2,000 (50% wool)	2,000 (50% wool)
Stoves	0	200
Tarpaulins	800	500
Kitchen sets	500	500

All distributed items were based on the needs of the beneficiaries.

Emergency health

Outcome: First aid and referral services for the injured and sick people in severely-hit areas are available.

Outputs and activities planned:

- Procurement of first aid kits.
- Provision of first aid to earthquake affected people in Sikkim

Progress:

As the government has deployed a team of doctors and paramedics to render assistance to the affected people, IRCS has decided to concentrate its efforts on providing non-food relief, purified safe drinking water

and shelter. However in Mangan, on request of the district administration, the IRCS team members helped in segregating medicines.

Water, sanitation, and hygiene promotion

Outcome: Water and sanitation related diseases are reduced for 1,000 families through access to safe drinking water.

Outputs and activities planned:

- Assess the damage to existing water supply systems and requirement for emergency water supply.
- Selection of most vulnerable people as beneficiaries.
- Deployment of water treatment unit.
- Treatment and distribution of safe drinking water for up to 5,000 people (1,000 families).
- Monitoring and evaluation.

Progress:

During the reporting period, many people have moved out of Chung Thang camp. At present 60 families (approximately 300 people) are using the treated water provided by Red Cross. IRCS will soon withdraw the water purification unit. Due to snowfall within the next month and rainfall in the coming months, it will be difficult to withdraw the unit from Sikkim. Local authorities have requested a three-day advance notice before the unit is withdrawn.



Treated water being collected by the beneficiaries from the tap stand. **Photo:** Indian Red Cross Society.

Emergency shelter

Outcome: 1,000 families have received tools to repair their damaged houses and to salvage material of the damaged houses.

Outputs and activities planned:

- Identification of beneficiaries.
- Procurement of shelter kit and tarpaulin.
- Distribution of the shelter kits along with tarpaulin by trained staff and volunteers.
- Monitoring the use of shelter kit.
- Regular detailed monitoring and reporting of distributions.

Progress:

A total of 1,000 shelter tool kits have been distributed to the families whose houses were damaged by the earthquake. At the time of distribution of the shelter tool kits, beneficiaries received explanations about the contents and use of shelter tool kit in the local language.

Around CHF 30,000 was saved on the transportation of these shelter tool kits from Kuala Lumpur to Gangtok, Sikkim as FedEx transported these kits free of charge.

Contact information

For further information specifically related to this operation please contact:

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DREF history:

- This DREF was initially allocated on 22 September 2011 for CHF 97,137 for 4 months to assist 5,000 beneficiaries.
- 3 DREF operation updates issued.



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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.

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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.
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