

DREF operation final report



International Federation
of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

Guatemala: Food Crisis

DREF operation n° MDRGT001
GLIDE No. [OT-2009-000169-GTM](#)
19 March 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: 30,000 Swiss francs (28,907 US dollars/19,832 Euros) were allocated from the Federation's Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF) on 15 September 2009 to support the Guatemalan Red Cross (GRC) in conducting assessments in the high risk areas where the population's livelihoods were lost.

The Guatemalan Red Cross completed rapid assessments to evaluate the food insecurity situation in the departments of Jalapa, Chiquimula and Izabal. The assessments covered 2,053 families in 21 communities. The GRC volunteers and personnel assessed the areas of breastfeeding and complimentary feeding, water and sanitation, promotion of health practices, logistics and security and monitoring. An evaluation report and a plan of action were completed.



A Guatemalan Red Cross volunteer assessing damaged crops.
Photo source: Guatemalan Red Cross

The European Commission Humanitarian Aid Office (ECHO) contributed 30,000 Swiss francs to the DREF in replenishment of the allocation made for 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 on <http://www.ifrc.org/what/disasters/responding/drs/tools/dref/donors.asp>

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The situation

Since March 2009, the Guatemalan government has been implementing an emergency food assistance contingency plan. On 8 September 2009, the Guatemalan President declared a state of emergency due to a high incidence of malnutrition resulting from the loss of crops caused by persistent drought combined with high food and fuel prices. According to the authorities, approximately 54,000 families reside in areas prone to extreme weather conditions.

The lack of rainfall has led to the degradation and loss of crops especially in the Eastern Dry Corridor (departments of Baja Verapaz, El Progreso, Zacapa, Jalapa, Chiquimula, Santa Rosa and Jutiapa) since

July 2009. Reports from the Guatemalan Ministry of Environment indicated that half the country's territory is threatened by desertification due to high susceptibility to drought, affecting the lives of nearly two million people. The Guatemalan government has been on alert since 8 September 2009 and declared a state of public emergency to act against hunger and dengue.

Although the emergency situation was nationwide, the most affected areas were the aforementioned departments of El Progreso, Jalapa, Santa Rosa, Jutiapa, Chiquimula, Zacapa and Baja Verapaz in the Eastern Dry Corridor, where nearly 700 communities were affected. Although food insecurity is a chronic problem in Guatemala, 2008 had a devastating effect on agriculture that has made the situation even more critical with declining food stocks and rising food prices. In the last harvest of 2008, floods weakened the crops, which were mostly maize and bean crops. The yield of the first harvest for 2009 was 60 to 80 per cent lower than normal due to the lack of rainfall and the persistent drought.

In February 2010, the *Famine Early Warning System Network (FEWS NET)* informed the public that the food insecurity and nutritional problems have not been exacerbated since the high demand for seasonal unskilled labour in activities including agro exports (sugar cane, coffee, cardamom, melon and watermelon as well as vast extensions of maize and bean crops in the department of Petén) concludes between March and April 2010. Employment options have increased, enabling low income families to acquire sources of income that allow them to purchase food items. However, once these sources of income diminish at the end of April, the purchasing power of the population will be severely affected, causing the quality and quantity of the population's diet to deteriorate and aggravate the food insecurity and malnutrition situation.

Red Cross and Red Crescent action

Several Partner National Societies in country including the Netherlands Red Cross, the Norwegian Red Cross and the Spanish Red Cross were coordinating an intervention programme with the Guatemalan Red Cross, in addition to participating in the Humanitarian Network meetings to coordinate immediate actions.

The International Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies' (IFRC) Pan-American Disaster Response Unit (PADRU) and the Regional Representation for Central America and Mexico, also based in Panama, were in constant communication with the GRC to launch the DREF and to support the GRC in all activities to respond to the food crisis. IFRC delegates specialized in public health in emergencies and disaster management were deployed to Guatemala to provide support in assessment planning and in the development of the plan of action.

The Guatemalan Red Cross received technical support from the Regional Representation of Central America and Mexico. This support focused on revising the initial results from the assessments and the preparation of the final report of the assessments. Also, the Regional Representation facilitated the contact with other international organizations in the country such as FAO, World Food Programme and OCHA to complement the information collected in the assessments. Moreover, the GRC was also supported to develop a concept paper that will help the National Society to mobilize additional resources after the results from the assessments.

IFRC's assessment methodologies (How to conduct a food security assessment — a step-by-step guide) and tools (questionnaire developed in conjunction with the training) specifically designed for the food crisis were used in the operation. A National Intervention Team (NIT) used these tools in the field to perform rapid assessments in the affected communities. Additionally, the Guatemalan Red Cross used the personnel trained in previous food security emergency operations, such as the Hurricane Felix operation.

The NIT teams were mobilized to conduct assessments in the three areas where GRC branches are located: Jalapa, Chiquimula, and Izabal. Additionally, GRC volunteers assisted the NITs in performing needs assessments. This assessment served to identify nutrition patterns, food intake, source of food items and income generating activities carried out by each family in an effort to determine the appropriate intervention. After the completion of the assessments, a plan of action was drafted. The plan of action consists of providing immediate humanitarian aid to 2,000 families in Guatemala affected by the food insecurity in the north-eastern region of



Community rice crops in the department of Izabal. Photo source: Guatemalan Red Cross.

the country. The sectors included in the plan of action are: distribution of food and non-food items, community health activities, water and sanitation and hygiene promotion in the departments of Izabal, Chiquimula and Jalapa. In addition, the plan of action includes a family rehabilitation micro-project which would provide essential agricultural tools, seeds and fertilizers for families to develop orchards and plant crops.

Additionally, in October the GRC participated in a joint assessment with the humanitarian network. Twenty eight NITs, representing 70 per cent of the multi-agency evaluation team, contributed to provide an overview of the Dry Corridor and an inter-agency analysis of the situation. This joint assessment promoted a better coordinated and integrated humanitarian response.

Achievements against objectives

This DREF allocation covered the per diem and mobilization of volunteers, fuel and maintenance costs of vehicles, visibility materials (vests and caps) and supplies used during the workshops and assessments.

Damage and need assessments	
Objective: 50 Guatemalan Red Cross NIT members will perform damage and need assessments in the affected departments due to the food crisis and will elaborate a plan of action.	
Expected results	Activities planned
A plan of action will be elaborated to respond to the needs of the most vulnerable people affected by the food crisis and the dengue outbreak.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct assessment workshop for NITs • Conduct emergency damage and needs assessments. • Elaborate a plan of action

Impact:

The GRC conducted 2 workshops and a total number of 52 NIT members were trained. Trainings were held over a two-day period and included guidelines, methodology, drafting of an assessment questionnaire and simulation to review feasibility and communication techniques. The trainings were facilitated by the GRC department of Relief and Health in Emergencies. The trainer team included a RIT member specialized in public health, a nutritionist and the national coordinator in community health and risk reduction.

The second workshop added lessons learnt from the assessment and guidelines and tools application during the assessment. The content of the workshop was enhanced due to the contributions of the regional workshop about emergency evaluation facilitated by the Federation's Regional Centre of Reference in Disaster Preparedness.

Assessments:

Over an eight-day period, damage and needs assessments took place in three of the most affected and vulnerable departments within the Dry Corridor: Izabal, Chiquimula and Jalapa.

The assessment covered the following aspects:

- Breastfeeding and complementary feeding
- Water, sanitation and hygiene promotion
- Access, availability and use of food
- Logistics and security
- Malnutrition (monitoring the arm circumference in children)

A total of 31 GRC volunteers participated in the assessments. The 24 trained NIT members were divided into two groups (the Izabal team and the Jalapa and Chiquimula team); both were led by the National Disaster Secretariat, in coordination with the National Health Secretariat of the GRC. In the three branches, GRC local volunteers joined the team. In addition, seven people from the National Society's headquarters participated in the planning, training and field visits.

The selection criteria of the communities assessed was based on the following vulnerability aspects:

- High risk of food insecurity communities declared by SESAN (Government Secretary for Food Safety) within the Dry Corridor.
- Infant morbidity and mortality cases.
- Livelihood background.

- Rainfall patterns.
- Food accessibility.
- Isolated communities
- Water accessibility
- Beneficiaries that did not receive any assistance

The presence of a GRC branch and local logistics capacities was also considered when selecting communities.

The communities identified were:

21 Communities / 2,053 Families prioritized for rapid assessments

Izabal	Jalapa	Chiquimula
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 8 communities 620 families 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3 communities 315 families 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 10 communities 1,118 families

Methodologies and Tools:

Primary Information: interviews with healthcare professionals, community leaders, direct observation, discussion groups with community focal persons, seasonal calendars and mapping.

Tool: Questionnaires

- The questionnaire consisted of 40 questions in the following sectors: breastfeeding and complementary feeding, water, sanitation and hygiene promotion; access, availability and use of food; logistics and security.
- Measurement of arm circumference for boys and girls aged between 6 to 60 months.

Secondary Information used for the final report:

- Previous Vulnerability and Capacities Analysis diagnoses of the communities (if available).
- Information gathered by the GRC branch.
- Information gathered from by the health institutions and local centres, the Guatemalan Secretariat for Food Security and Nutrition (SESAN in Spanish), municipality and the COCODEs (Community Committees)

Results:

An evaluation report was completed regarding the history and sequence of events, demographic profiles, livelihoods, access to food, health, water access and adequate use, sanitation facilities and hygiene practices. This evaluation report is available upon request.

A plan of action was drafted combining an integrated approach: a disaster relief operation as response to ensure immediate food security needs if the situation worsens reaching a level of acute food insecurity and a disaster recovery and vulnerability reduction strategy as a broader intervention to enhance and invest in food security coping strategies and resilience of the communities. Additionally, a component for institutional capacity strengthening of the GRC was included to enable the GRC to evaluate, monitor (early warning) and respond to food insecurity situation with increased capacities.

The Guatemalan Red Cross, in coordination with the Netherlands Red Cross, is working of mobilizing resources to support the plan of action based on the results of the evaluation report.

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

The International Federation'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 International Federation'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

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International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

MDRGT001 - Guatemala - Food Insecurity

Final Financial Report

Selected Parameters	
Reporting Timeframe	2009/9-2010/3
Budget Timeframe	2009/9-2009/12
Appeal	MDRGT001
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	30,000					30,000
B. Opening Balance	0					0
Income						
<u>Other Income</u>						
<i>Voluntary Income</i>	25,146					25,146
C6. Other Income	25,146					25,146
C. Total Income = SUM(C1..C6)	25,146					25,146
D. Total Funding = B + C	25,146					25,146
Appeal Coverage	84%					84%

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	25,146					25,146
E. Expenditure	-25,146					-25,146
F. Closing Balance = (B + C + E)	0					0

Selected Parameters	
Reporting Timeframe	2009/9-2010/3
Budget Timeframe	2009/9-2009/12
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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)	30,000						30,000	
Transport & Storage								
Transport & Vehicle Costs	4,000	357				357	3,643	
Total Transport & Storage	4,000	357				357	3,643	
Personnel								
National Society Staff	13,000	6,545				6,545	6,455	
Consultants		4,147				4,147	-4,147	
Total Personnel	13,000	10,692				10,692	2,308	
Workshops & Training								
Workshops & Training	3,500	7,302				7,302	-3,802	
Total Workshops & Training	3,500	7,302				7,302	-3,802	
General Expenditure								
Travel	1,766	1,788				1,788	-22	
Information & Public Relation		796				796	-796	
Office Costs	4,500	2,174				2,174	2,326	
Communications	334	431				431	-97	
Professional Fees		96				96	-96	
Financial Charges	950	-126				-126	1,076	
Total General Expenditure	7,550	5,160				5,160	2,390	
Programme Support								
Program Support	1,950	1,635				1,635	315	
Total Programme Support	1,950	1,635				1,635	315	
TOTAL EXPENDITURE (D)	30,000	25,146				25,146	4,854	
VARIANCE (C - D)		4,854				4,854		