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Emergency Plan of Action (EPoA) Armenia: Hailstorm

 International Federation
of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

DREF n° MDRAM005	Glide n° OT-2019-000078-ARM
Date of issue: 11 July 2019	Expected timeframe: 3 months Expected end date: 10 October 2019
Category allocated to the disaster: Yellow	
DREF allocated: CHF 344,501	
Total number of people affected: 3,900 households	Number of people to be assisted: 4,300 people (960 households)
Host National Society presence: The Armenian Red Cross Society (ARCS) works countrywide through its 11 regional, 1 territorial and 52 community branches and with the support of over 3,500 volunteers.	
Red Cross Red Crescent Movement partners actively involved in the operation: The operation will be implemented by ARCS with the support from IFRC.	
Other partner organizations actively involved in the operation: Shirak regional authorities, local village level authorities	

A. Situation analysis

Description of the disaster

On 27 June 2019 a hailstorm has damaged almost all yield capacity of 14 communities in Shirak region in Armenia. This storm was already the third to hit Armenia within a month. According to results of the rapid assessment conducted by the Armenian Red Cross Society (ARCS) and Shirak regional authorities, 14 communities and about 3,900 households have been affected. 960 households in the four most affected communities have lost 80 to 100 per cent of their yield capacity. Therefore, these four most affected communities were selected to be targeted by the DREF operation.

According to information provided by regional authorities, in Karnut community, the hail damaged 100 per cent of 214.4 hectares of wheat, barley, oat, potatoes and other crops. Basen community has 619.5 hectares of damaged crops. According to local information, the crops have been left without leaves after the hail and thus the annual harvest is completely destroyed. Hovit has 255 hectares of cultivated land destroyed by the hail. Saratak community had approx. 400 hectares of wheat destroyed by the hail. Damages to other communities count from 30 to 60 per cent for almost all types of crops. Moreover, a few houses and cattle farms had roofs and windows damaged, but not in a large scale.



Image 1: Hailstones that damaged crops on 27 June 2019. *Photo: News.am*

Table 1: Scope of damage in the 14 affected communities (*descending by % of destroyed crops*)

Community	Percentage of crops destroyed (%)	Damaged land area (ha)	Number of people affected
Karnut	100	214.4	929
Saratak	90	400	1210
Hovit	86	255	510
Basen	75	619.5	1651
Arevik	62	203.3	1803
Jradzor	60	33.7	289
Tshoghamarg	56	36.5	566
Goghovit	56	211	380
Gtashen	56	152.9	249
Hoghmik	52	81.2	526
Lernaghyugh	40	20.5	35
Torosgyugh	34	74.9	308
Hovtun	30	8	221
Amasia	30	15.8	2210

The Armenian Red Cross Society together with its Shirak Regional branch has conducted several meetings with regional authorities and has organized needs assessment in four communities (Karnut, Basen, Hovit, Saratak) which have been most affected, based on the information provided by local authorities. After meeting with regional government representatives and presenting ARCS's initiative, ARCS has developed the criteria for the selection of people to work with in affected communities. Afterwards, the ARCS assessment team conducted an additional meeting with local authorities from the affected four communities, and presented the selection criteria, based on which authorities were assigned to prepare a list of affected people/ families.

The government's provincial commission visited the disaster area to estimate the amount of damages caused by the hailstorm. Once the damage assessments are completed by the provincial commission authorities, the results of the calculations of damage are sent to the central government. Only after the final information is analysed by the authorities, the Government takes a decision on the feasibility and type of assistance to be provided.

At present, authorities have not yet made a decision on the possibility to compensate the losses of affected communities. This process can take between one to two months. However, in most cases the state budget is not able to provide sufficient compensation. For example, the people affected by a similar disaster in 2018 did not receive compensation from the state. The ARCS will closely coordinate with the authorities and provide information on implemented activities.

**Image 2:** Damaged crops. *Photo: ARCS*

Summary of the current response

Overview of Host National Society

The Armenian Red Cross Society's auxiliary role to the Government of the Republic of Armenia is mandated by the 1993 Presidential decree. The mission of the organization is to reduce the vulnerability of the population through mobilization of the power of humanity, to be prepared to cope with situations, which may cause vulnerability among the population and to provide essential support by assisting people becoming vulnerable due to harsh socioeconomic conditions. ARCS implements its mission countrywide through its 11 regional, one territorial and 52 community branches and with the support of over 3,500 volunteers. ARCS focuses its activities in the spheres of health and social care, disaster preparedness and response, disaster risk reduction, population movement, youth and first aid among other activities.

The Disaster Response Team assigned by ARCS have met with the Shirak Region (Marz) representatives where the situation was presented in detail. The ARCS has a reserve stock of household items to be provided to people affected by disasters. The stock consists of blankets, household dishes, water containers and kerosene heaters. The issue of assisting the affected population by the items from the reserve stock was discussed and it was decided that it was not suitable to distribute the available household items for this case as the main need is related to the loss of livelihoods. The items from the reserve stock are planned to be distributed to displaced people affected by major disasters or conflicts.

Hailstorms often hit different regions of Armenia. Shirak region is one of the areas vulnerable to such hazards. In 2018 a hailstorm damaged the agricultural crops of 11 communities and ARCS with a support of DREF provided cash assistance to 5,051 people in the three most affected communities. The issue of implementing preventive measures is being discussed in the Government and the state is planning to install more anti-hail stations. Alternative measures are being discussed such as using nets as protecting from hails, although while being effective for gardens and small land plots, such solution is not effective for crops like wheat or barley.

Taking into account the lessons learned from the previous DREF operation, the plan is to provide cash by bank transfer, as it proved to be transparent and appropriate. Special attention will be given to the registration of beneficiaries to avoid dissatisfaction and misunderstandings. The volunteers will be briefed on Cash Transfer Programming (CTP).

Overall, Armenian RC has conducted the following activities:

- Data collection from official sources, partners and media.
- Needs assessment in the four most affected communities (out of 14 in total).
- Meeting with Shirak regional administration and other regional government representatives, where the ARCS's initiative was presented.
- Selection of communities to be targeted.
- Development of the range of and approach to assistance distribution.
- Meeting with local authorities of 4 selected communities to assign preparation of list of people the Red Cross will work with.
- Initiated the collection of all lists presented by communities and preparation of the final/consolidated list of people the Red Cross will work with.
- Continuous information sharing with relevant stakeholders.

Overview of Partner National Societies in country

The ARCS maintains coordination with all partners in the country in sharing information. The Armenian Red Cross is working with partner National Societies (PNSs) on different programmes, but no direct support is being provided for this emergency by PNSs. The Swiss Red Cross is supporting projects related to primary health care, and aging people. The German Red Cross supports youth empowerment, protection and health. The Danish Red Cross is running projects focused on disaster risk reduction and capacity building. The Austrian Red Cross is working on community resilience, disaster risk reduction and refugee assistance. The Italian Red Cross provides support in health and First Aid. The Icelandic Red Cross provides support in psychosocial support.

Overview of non-RCRC actors in country

Coordination and partnerships

Armenian Red Cross Society (ARCS) has conducted several meetings with national, regional and local authorities to identify consequences of the disaster as well as the size and needs of affected communities and population. On the regional level, the ARCS representatives met with the Shirak Region administration staff, where an agreement for cooperation and information exchange was reached. On the local level, ARCS met with local authorities of the affected communities and is receiving regular information updates regarding the situation. Moreover, ARCS Shirak regional branch team visited several affected communities to assess the situation and meet with locals.

The National Society, as a UN DMCT (Disaster Management Country Team) member receives and shares information on the situation with all stakeholders. For the time being, Armenian Red Cross Society is the only organization among INGOs and NGOs that takes action for provision of humanitarian assistance to the affected people. According to the available information, there are no other agencies planning assistance to the affected households. The UN DMCT has a strategy to respond to major disasters like earthquake or conflict escalation. There are no plans for responding to small-scale disasters.

The National society is in permanent contact with above mentioned structures to avoid any types of duplication and ensure that the most vulnerable and affected are reached.

Needs analysis, targeting, scenario planning and risk assessment

Needs analysis

The main source of income for the people living in the targeted communities is agriculture. The season starts in spring and ends with harvest in autumn. During this period people take loans for purchasing seeds, fuel, fertilizers, etc. It is important to highlight, that the local business strategy (due to the local economy, social context and peoples' relations), is based on a mutually beneficial approach that allows small markets to sell their products from spring to autumn mostly without cash, being guaranteed that locals after harvest will receive money and repay their debts. The loss of crops, therefore, has an impact on the local market, as people's investments will be difficult to recover, which is putting a strain on the entire local market system.

Therefore, to meet people's basic needs, the ARCS is considering the option to provide unconditional cash to most affected households. The ARCS gained experience in providing unconditional cash to people affected by hails and mudflows during previous DREF operations. Agreements made with financial institutions are still active. Local markets are fully functional, and the selected communities are close to the second largest city of Armenia (Gyumri).

Based on the information received from local communities and from the ARCS assessment, the people affected by hail have a gap in their basic needs. ARCS is planning to provide a one-off distribution of unconditional cash to approx. 960 affected families including approximately 4,300 persons. The base for the amount suggested is in accordance with the monthly food basket cost in Armenia per person, which is AMD 35,215 (CHF 73) per person per month¹. The value of the food basket has increased over the last 10 months from 27000 AMD (CHF 55). The planned assistance will allow people to cope with the immediate needs which they are unable to cover from the income from the seasonal harvest (which was lost in the hailstorm). The assistance will provide people with the ability to cover essential food expenses for a month. It will enable families to repay debts that have accumulated throughout the season while purchasing essential items for their households. Taking into consideration above mentioned arguments, the ARCS decided to apply for DREF to provide cash to the affected population.

Although the Government has installed anti-hail stations in Armenia, but the number of such stations is limited due to high costs, and even if installed, these stations are often unable to prevent the damage caused by hails. There is no functioning and widely available agricultural insurance system in place in Armenia. Hailstorms pose a serious threat to agricultural areas, as communities often suffer losses due to its sudden and devastating effects. Taking this into account, the Government of Armenia is planning to initiate an agricultural insurance system for the farmers to minimize the losses from the expected harvest. The ARCS will follow the progress of this system and related forecast-based financing initiatives.

Targeting

Based on the needs in the affected region, the Armenian Red Cross Society - supported by the IFRC - aims to provide unconditional cash to approximately 4,300 most affected people in approx. 960 households. The main selection criterion is households who lost 75 to 100 per cent of their yield capacity. And according to the authorities, community members will be involved in the preparation of the lists of targeted households.

Based on the data available from official sources and the ARCS Shirak regional team, the ARCS DRT together with regional government representatives selected four communities suffering the most damage (Karnut, Basen, Hovit and

¹ Source: <https://168.am/2018/08/05/991124.html> (in Armenian).

Saratak) as a target of the operation. A meeting was held with the heads of the four most affected communities to present criteria for selecting people who the Red Cross will work with.

ARCS will closely coordinate with the regional and local level authorities to finalize the lists of people the Red Cross will work with and agree on the selection process and most appropriate distribution methods, time and place. ARCS will communicate with the affected families in order to keep them informed on the criteria and selection process for the one-off unconditional cash distribution. A feedback and complaint mechanism will be established, through which people will be able to raise concerns, ask questions and provide suggestions for improvement. The complaints and/or suggestions are submitted in closed envelopes to ARCS Shirak branch and then they are opened and discussed twice a month during coordination meetings. Complaints and suggestions will be responded to on an ongoing basis and will be used to inform adaptation of programme implementation, as well as being fully compiled, reviewed and discussed during the lessons learned event at the end of the project. This activity will not require additional costs.

B. Operational strategy

Overall operational objective

The Armenian Red Cross Society will provide immediate assistance to the 960 most affected households (approx. 4,300 people) through the provision of unconditional cash assistance (73 CHF per person), to help people cope with the consequences of the hailstorm.

Proposed strategy:

The ARCS will assess the disaster area to identify the most affected households, develop the targeting strategy and registration system to deliver assistance, distribute cash by bank transfer, monitor and evaluate the activities and it will provide reporting on cash distributions. A monitoring system will be established to follow up every step of the implementation process. The base for the amount suggested is in accordance with the monthly food basket cost in Armenia per person, which is AMD 35,215 (CHF 73) per person per month. The ARCS, in close cooperation with regional and local authorities, will implement the community mobilization activities and will provide the necessary technical support throughout the programme cycle (such as in compiling lists of people the Red Cross will work with, encashment planning, information dissemination and post distribution monitoring).

The principle criterion to select the communities in the target area is the highest amount of losses (from 75 to 100 per cent) of the harvest. The planned assistance will allow the targeted people to cope with the immediate needs, which is not possible to cover from the expected income from the seasonal harvest. Small holder producers are particularly vulnerable and through the intervention it is expected that the affected people will have the choice to spend the cash provided for essential food items or to cover other basic needs including repaying debts which have accumulated during the season. The city of Gyumri is located near the affected communities and markets are accessible for purchasing the needed items for households. The unconditional cash distributed will also support the local economy indirectly.

The visibility of Armenian Red Cross Society activities and strengthening of the National Society's image will be ensured through maximizing the visibility of National Society during relief distribution, visits to the affected people and monitoring and evaluation by ARCS volunteers.

This operation is expected to be implemented within three months; a final report will be made available three months after the end of the operation.

Operational support services

Human resources

The ARCS will recruit one local coordinator and mobilize 10 volunteers from the National Society's HQ Disaster Response Team (DRT) and affected communities. For the operation, the ARCS will also assign Disaster Management staff, driver and other support staff as required to support the implementation of the operation. The IFRC Country Cluster Support Team (CCST) for South Caucasus will provide technical support to ARCS during the implementation of the DREF operation and will also conduct monitoring. The IFRC will deploy a Regional Disaster Response Team (RDRT) with cash expertise to support the implementation of the DREF operation.

Logistics and supply chain

The ARCS will provide a sufficient number of vehicles to implement the operation and the DREF budget will support with the fuel costs.

Information technologies (IT)

The ARCS website will be used to cover the process of the project implementation sharing the updates from the field, as well as photos and other relevant materials. IT support will be ensured by ARCS for establishing the database of people the Red Cross is working with.

Communications

The ARCS will ensure that all relevant press releases are produced, and media coverage is ensured to promote the operation and the profile of the National Society (NS).

Security

The area of the operation does not have major security issues. Cooperation with local authorities will ensure the safety and security at the distribution points.

Planning, monitoring, evaluation, & reporting (PMER)

The planning, monitoring and evaluation will be conducted by the ARCS DM department throughout the whole period of the project implementation. A lessons learned workshop is planned to be conducted at the end of the project. Technical support for the cash distribution will be provided by IFRC Cash Coordinator. Bi-weekly DREF operation progress reports will be shared with IFRC Regional Office for Europe (ROE) to inform on the operation progress and achievements. IFRC CCST team for South Caucasus / ROE staff will be also conducting monitoring visits. This operation is expected to be implemented over three months, a final report will be made available three months after the end of the operation.

Administration and Finance

ARCS NS Finance Officer will be following closely the financial component implementation and provide assistance through the implementation and provide inputs for the development of the final report.

Community Engagement and Accountability

The ARCS will ensure communities are consulted about their approach, and clearly informed of the ARCS mandate, methodology, selection criteria and rationale behind the selection criteria. A feedback and complaints mechanism will be established and integrated into the response, with clear mechanisms for how feedback will inform programme adaptation and decision making. Feedback mechanisms will be monitored to ensure people are aware of them, able to access them, and confident that giving feedback will result in a response. Monitoring will also include satisfaction monitoring, both of the suitability and effectiveness of the support provided, but also the manner in which the ARCS delivered support.

P&B Output Code	Outcome S3.2: The programmatic reach of the National Societies and the IFRC is expanded.																
	Output S3.2.1: Resource generation and related accountability models are developed and improved																
	Activities planned Weeks	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
AP058	Work on reporting, accountability to communities, community engagement and accountability	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x				
P&B Output Code	Output S4.1.3: Financial resources are safeguarded; quality financial and administrative support is provided contributing to efficient operations and ensuring effective use of assets; timely quality financial reporting to stakeholders																
		Activities planned Week / Month	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
AP064	Finance work	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x				
AP065	Administration work	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x				

D. Budget

The total budget of this DREF operation is **CHF 344,501**. Please click [here](#) to see the budget.



Click here

1. Click [here](#) to see the map of the operation.
2. Click [here](#) to return to the title page.

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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 (NGOs) in Disaster Relief and the [Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Humanitarian 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:



Save lives,
protect livelihoods,
and strengthen recovery
from disaster and crises.



Enable **healthy**
and **safe** living.

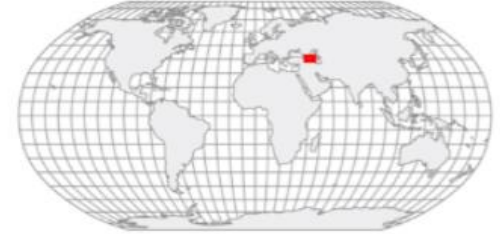


Promote social inclusion
and a culture of
non-violence and peace.



International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies
Fédération internationale des Sociétés de la Croix-Rouge et du Croissant-Rouge
Federación Internacional de Sociedades de la Cruz Roja y de la Media Luna Roja
الاتحاد الدولي لجمعيات الصليب الأحمر والهلال الأحمر

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Armenia, Hailstorm

Disaster Relief Emergency Fund



The maps used do not imply the expression of any opinion on the part of the International Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies or National Societies concerning the legal status of a territory or of its authorities. Map data sources: DEV/INFO, International Federation



DREF OPERATION

Armenia: Hailstorm
MDRAM005

11-Jul-19

Budget Group	Multilateral Response	Appeal Budget CHF	
500	Shelter - Relief	0	0
501	Shelter - Transitional	0	0
502	Construction - Housing	0	0
503	Construction - Facilities	0	0
505	Construction - Materials	0	0
510	Clothing & Textiles	0	0
520	Food	0	0
523	Seeds & Plants	0	0
530	Water, Sanitation & Hygiene	0	0
540	Medical & First Aid	0	0
550	Teaching Materials	0	0
560	Ustensils & Tools	0	0
570	Other Supplies & Services	0	0
571	Emergency Response Units	0	0
578	Cash Disbursements	313,900	313,900
	Total RELIEF ITEMS, CONSTRUCTION AND SUPPLIES	313,900	313,900
580	Land & Buildings	0	0
581	Vehicles	0	0
582	Computer & Telecom Equipment	0	0
584	Office/Household Furniture & Equipment	0	0
587	Medical Equipment	0	0
589	Other Machinery & Equipment	0	0
	Total LAND, VEHICLES AND EQUIPMENT	0	0
590	Storage, Warehousing	0	0
592	Distribution & Monitoring	300	300
593	Transport & Vehicle Costs	450	450
594	Logistics Services	0	0
	Total LOGISTICS, TRANSPORT AND STORAGE	750	750
600	International Staff	1,500	1,500
661	National Staff	0	0
662	National Society Staff	1,710	1,710
667	Volunteers	915	915
669	Other Staff Benefits	0	0
	Total PERSONNEL	4,125	4,125
670	Consultants	0	0
750	Professional Fees	0	0
	Total CONSULTANTS & PROFESSIONAL FEES	0	0
680	Workshops & Training	400	400
	Total WORKSHOP & TRAINING	400	400
700	Travel	3,000	3,000
710	Information & Public Relations	0	0
730	Office Costs	450	450
740	Communications	450	450

760	Financial Charges	400	400
790	Other General Expenses	0	0
799	Shared Office and Services Costs	0	0
Total GENERAL EXPENDITURES		4,300	4,300
		0	0
830	Partner National Societies	0	0
831	Other Partners (NGOs, UN, other)	0	0
Total TRANSFER TO PARTNERS		0	0
599	Programme and Services Support Recov	21,026	21,026
Total INDIRECT COSTS		21,026	21,026
TOTAL BUDGET		344,501	344,501
Available Resources			
	Multilateral Contributions		0
	Bilateral Contributions		0
TOTAL AVAILABLE RESOURCES		0	0
NET EMERGENCY APPEAL NEEDS		344,501	344,501