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Emergency appeal operations update

Ukraine: Civil unrest

 International Federation
of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

Emergency appeal n° MDRUA007		GLIDE n° OT-2013-000151-UKR
Operations update n° 2		Timeframe covered by this update:
Date of issue: 13 August 2014		29 May 2014 – 31 July 2014
Emergency operation start date:		Timeframe: 6 months
13 December 2013		End date: 30 November 2014
Appeal budget:	Appeal coverage:	Total estimated Red Cross and Red Crescent response to date:
CHF 1,375,100	68 %	CHF 932,412 (excluding DREF allocation)
Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF) allocated: CHF 317,790		
N° of people being assisted: 5,000		
Host National Society(ies) presence (n° of volunteers, staff, branches):		
60,000 volunteers, 865 staff, 27 branches		
Red Cross Red Crescent Movement partners involved in the operation (both multilaterally and bilaterally):		
ICRC, American Red Cross, Red Crescent Society of Azerbaijan, Austrian Red Cross, Canadian Red Cross, Czech Red Cross, Danish Red Cross, German Red Cross, Estonian Red Cross, Finnish Red Cross, French Red Cross, Hungarian Red Cross, Italian Red Cross, Japanese Red Cross, Latvian Red Cross, Monaco Red Cross, Netherlands Red Cross, Polish Red Cross, Russian Red Cross, Slovenian Red Cross, Slovak Red Cross and Spanish Red Cross.		
Other partner organizations actively involved in the operation:		
State authorities, local NGOs and UN agencies, DG ECHO, Japanese Government, Canadian Government, Italian Government, Netherlands Government		

This Emergency Appeal seeks a total of CHF 1,375,100 in cash, out of which amount CHF 317,790 has already been allocated from IFRC's Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF).

History:

Since the very first moment of the crisis, the Ukrainian Red Cross Society has been responding to the needs of the vulnerable people with the financial assistance and technical support of the IFRC Secretariat and the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement.

Continued fighting over last two months has led to a further increase in displacement both within and beyond the Donbas region in Eastern Ukraine, and further damages to the local infrastructure, electricity and water supply system, and to public and residential buildings. Hundreds of thousands of people are fleeing the conflict area, seeking safety and shelter. The UNHCR estimates that more than a quarter of a million people have been displaced. Those who remain in the affected regions can have only limited access to food, water and electricity. Displaced residents are moving to other regions of Ukraine or crossing the border into the Russian Federation.

Between 1 July and 4 August 2014, there was an increase of over 58,000 in the number of displaced persons. According to the latest OCHA report, the total number of IDPs is 139,170, out of whom 87 per cent come from Eastern Ukraine. 27 per cent of the IDPs in Ukraine are staying in one of the 500 collective centres established by the Ukrainian authorities to provide them



Displaced people queuing up at a distribution point of the Ukrainian RC for relief items.
Photo: URCS

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temporary shelter. In view of the danger of a prolonged crisis, URCS and IFRC are currently assessing the situation in order to plan a possible revision of the Emergency Appeal, focusing on the increasing humanitarian needs in the country.

Coordination and partnerships

Hundreds of thousands of displaced people are spread across Ukraine and the neighbouring countries. The Ukrainian Red Cross is directly involved in providing assistance to the most vulnerable people, especially families with young children. Coordination between the National Society, IFRC, ICRC and the government authorities is essential in order to effectively meet the growing needs.

The task of ensuring the safety of Red Cross volunteers and staff in this volatile conflict zone is extremely challenging, and henceforward, there are no direct National Society activities in any active conflict zone and all humanitarian interventions are closely coordinated with ICRC.

There are regular Movement Coordination Meetings hosted by Ukrainian RC at its HQs- where NS, ICRC and IFRC share operational information and analysis of humanitarian situation as to avoid duplication of efforts and plan future humanitarian activities.

Operational implementation

In recent months, Ukrainian Red Cross Society has placed particular emphasis on emergency preparedness, preposition of emergency stocks such as tents, hygiene kits, etc., and the training of emergency medical response teams. The worsening security situation has required the mobilization of all the resources of the Ukrainian National Society: emergency response teams, trained volunteers, and the use of all available emergency supply stocks. The Ukrainian National Society has assisted more than 24,300 displaced people across all Oblasts (administrative units) of the country, as well as in Kyiv city. Some of the main forms of assistance included the distribution of clothes, hygiene products, food parcels, bed linen, and medicine.

There is an increase in the humanitarian needs among the internally displaced population. The capacity of the existing collective centres is limited, and the most vulnerable segments need both food and non-food items. The needs and challenges of the IDPs from Crimea are different from those of the IDPs from the East who arrive with few personal belongings. Due to the malfunction of the Ukrainian banking and postal services in the conflict zone, the majority of IDPs coming from the East have not received their salaries, pensions and social allowances for the last three months.

Ukrainian Red Cross is launching a domestic appeal for food donations. Agreement was reached with two supermarkets to maintain bins to collect donations and to announce the most needed food items.

Progress

At the moment, the Ukrainian Red Cross Society has got 43 First Aid teams with a total of 617 members, of whom 79 are staff and 538 volunteers. First Aid training was conducted throughout the regions during June and July. The 48-hour course funded by the Emergency Appeal was held for a total of 418 participants in 12 regions. The psycho-social support (PSP) and disaster management (DM) trainings are planned for late August – early September.

The procurements outstanding as of the previous Operational Update were largely completed: 260 flashlights were purchased, and all of the items purchased so far have been distributed among the regional committees. 347 jackets with URCS logos have been received, and the remaining 200 such jackets were also delivered in August. The following items have been procured and distributed for the URCS first aid teams until the publication of this operations update:

Procured and distributed items	Amount
Vests with the logo of the URCS	515 pcs.
Jackets with the logo of the URCS	547 pcs.
First aid kits for volunteers	2,000 pcs
Backpacks	550 pcs.

First Aid tents	37 pcs.
Family tents ¹	400 pcs.
Blankets	2,180 pcs.
Food thermos boxes	50 pcs.
Generators	15 pcs.
Flags	1,000 pcs.
Armbands with the symbol of Ukrainian RC	5,000 pcs.
Two-way radios – walkie-talkies	100 pcs.
Helmets	300 pcs.
Bed linen	4,425 pcs.
Flashlights	260 pcs.
Digital cameras	2 pcs.

The next batch of funding under the Emergency Appeal has been transferred to the URCS, and the NS is now organizing a procurement of more bed linen, identified as a priority among the non-food items (NFIs) for the IDPs. Hygiene kits and the remaining first aid items will be procured shortly as well.

The donations to the Emergency Appeal by the Government of Japan, and the American Red Cross were targeted at shelter capacity, and made it possible for the IFRC to ship from its Dubai warehouse, 400 family-sized tents to be distributed among the regional URCS committees based on expected needs for emergency IDP shelters and related uses, e.g. operations centres to assist migrating people. The tents arrived in several air shipments during July, and on 17 July, the Ukrainian Red Cross hosted a ceremony devoted to a symbolic hand-over of the tents, attended by Foreign Minister of Japan.

In July the URCS Secretary General and the IFRC DM Delegate traveled on a monitoring mission to eastern Ukraine, visiting the regional operations in Kharkov, and the local work of the URCS staff and volunteers in Slavyansk and Nikolaevka, two towns in the Donetsk region where fighting had recently ended. The mission also met with ICRC colleagues, local officials, and representatives of UNHCR. This was important to get first-hand information and confirm the needs of vulnerable and displaced people in these regions, and to demonstrate URCS Head Office and IFRC Secretariat support for the Red Cross staff and volunteers and the work they are doing under extremely stressful and challenging conditions.

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As a result of emerging needs in terms of communication support and need in dissemination of information about Ukrainian RC work and promote respect to the work of the volunteers –Finnish RC Communication team jointly with Ukrainian RC and IFRC Europe Zone Office completed the production of a 10-minute film promoting the activities, readiness and neutrality of Ukrainian RC in addition to another short video spot based on photographs produced in May.² The main goal with two videos was to inform the population of Ukraine about the roles and responsibilities and added value of the Ukrainian Red Cross. Also, to generate a sense of trust and emotional connection to the work of Ukrainian RC and at the same time to reinforce the protective mandate of the emblem.

With the purpose of support to National Society (NS) internal development, capacity building, a Programme Support Delegate was deployed in Kyiv, with support of Danish RC. Besides providing technical support to the National Society, the delegate is also supporting the implementation of IFRC/Danish RC supported projects. In agreement with Canadian RC the mission by IFRC DM delegate was extended for another two months.

¹ 400 tents procured and delivered by IFRC through its warehouse in Dubai.

² The 10-minute video can be accessed via the following link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=08XQO4Gd8Nw>

Challenges

As the conflict in the east continues, the URCS and all who are working there continue to face the challenge of safe access to where the vulnerable people are actually located. The Ukrainian Red Cross staff and volunteers, along with their colleagues in ICRC, work constantly to ensure that all people, most importantly those engaging in the conflict, understand and respect the Red Cross emblem and permit the critical work of the Red Cross to continue. The conflict is also hindering the delivery and distribution of relief items, as transport companies are often unwilling to deliver relief supplies to areas of an on-going armed conflict.

In addition to respect for the Red Cross emblem, the Ukrainian Red Cross also faces the challenge of making the public understand and accept the nature of a Red Cross national society. Beneficiaries often approach the URCS with the expectation of receiving on-going social assistance, not always understanding that the Red Cross's mandate is to assist people in times of emergency, and that the Red Cross cannot become a source of regular income. URCS staff notes that some wealthy people have contributed quite generously to the current needs of IDPs, and they hope that regular, more predictable levels of support, including membership fees from many in the public, would enable them to better manage their operations.

In view of the lengthy clearance procedures, the IFRC Emergency Appeal still seeks cash donations, since in-kind donations might take a long time to reach the beneficiaries.

Contact information

For further information specifically related to this operation please contact:

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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.