

DREF operation final report



International Federation
of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

Bangladesh: Cold Wave

DREF operation n° MDRBD008
18 July 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 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: CHF 253,527 (USD 235,418 or EUR 202,822) has been allocated from the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies' (IFRC) Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF) to support the Bangladesh Red Crescent Society (BDRCS) in delivering immediate assistance to some 100,000 beneficiaries.

A severe cold wave with dense fog had swept through all over Bangladesh in the early winter of 2011. According to the Meteorological Department, the temperature was recorded as low as two to five degrees Celsius less than the normal average temperature. More than 50 people, most of whom were children and the elderly, died due to the severe cold and cold related diseases. At that time, many people – mostly infants and the elderly – were also hospitalized because of cold related illnesses.



Beneficiaries with blankets and shawls in hand and woollen cap on her nephew's head in Panchagar district.
Photo credit: IFRC

BDRCS and IFRC responded quickly to address the adverse situation and a DREF operation was launched on 14 January 2011. With the support from IFRC, BDRCS assisted 20,000 severely affected families (approximately 100,000 people) with the distribution of warm clothing and blankets.

This operation was planned to be implemented over three months, and was scheduled to be completed by 15 April 2011 as per the standard time. The distribution of warm clothing and blankets was completed well in advance and by 14 February 2011, each family had received a package which comprised of two blankets, one shawl and one woollen cap. Impact monitoring was carried out within the operational period in the targeted communities to assess the effectiveness of the support package among the beneficiaries and found that all beneficiaries were happy as the package helped them to ward off the bitter winter.

Of the allocated DREF of CHF 253,527, CHF 230,261 was spent. The remaining balance of CHF 23,266 has been returned to DREF.

The major donors to the DREF are the Irish, Italian, Netherlands and Norwegian governments and ECHO.

The IFRC, on behalf of the BDRCS, would like to thank all donors and partners for their generous support to this DREF.

The situation

Bangladesh, a tropical country, usually enjoys a moderate winter. However, from 7 January 2011 the temperature dropped sharply as a result of a severe cold wave with dense fog. January has always been the coldest month when the average temperature for most of the areas of the country is about 10°C. However, according to the meteorological department, the temperature was recorded as 2 to 5 degrees Celsius less than the average temperature during that time of the year. The recorded temperature of 4-6 degrees Celsius, and in some places 4.5 degrees Celsius, according to the Meteorological Department, was the lowest temperature ever recorded in the country for the last 45 years.

The intense cold wave affected the seedlings of high yielding variety of paddy commonly known as IRRI. The farmers of Lalmonirhat and Dinajpur district said that the *Blight* disease of potato had affected their potato field due to absence of sunlight. There were some cases of poultry and livestock damages in villages of Kurigram, Lalmonirhat and Dinajpur districts.

The cold wave impacted mostly on the poor people who did not have enough warm clothing to protect themselves from the cold (a high proportion of the country's population is living under the poverty line). Women, children and the elderly were major victims of cold related diseases like respiratory infection, pneumonia, cold diarrhoea, etc. Their plight increased particularly during the night due to non-availability of warm clothes. Apart from health problems, some cases of deaths due to exposure to excessive cold were reported. According to Network for Information, Response And Preparedness Activities on Disaster (NIRAPAD), at least 50 people died due to exposure to the severe cold.

The national-level response was only limited to blanket distribution from the Prime Minister's Office and Ministry of Food and Disaster Management. The District Relief and Rehabilitation Office (DRRO) had received only 3,000 to 6,000 blankets from these two sources mentioned. However, those were inadequate compared to the huge need, therefore BDRCS and IFRC had launched a DREF operation to provide packages of warm clothing and blankets to the affected population.

Coordination and partnerships

Coordination between European Commission of Humanitarian Aid Office (ECHO) and BDRCS has been established in terms of the possibility of exploring support for humanitarian assistance to the cold affected vulnerable population. Discussions were held between BDRCS, IFRC and Ministry of Food and Disaster Management in targeting geographic locations. In addition, BDRCS units of most affected districts in Rajshahi and Rangpur divisions have been maintaining contact with district administration for identifying remote locations that still remain uncovered by government or other organizations for possible intervention by BDRCS. Within the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement responses, discussions were held between BDRCS and partner national societies to divert allocation of relief items to Chapainawabganj district to other affected areas as Swiss Red Cross is planning to distribute blankets among the affected people in Chapainawabganj district.

BDRCS's national headquarters has been communicating with the Bangladesh Meteorological Department to monitor the weather situation. In addition, BDRCS has been gathering situation updates from different agencies including NIRAPAD. Through BDRCS, local units' coordination will be made between BDRCS and other social organizations in maximizing the coverage of assistance. Since BDRCS and IFRC are active members of the disaster emergency response (DER) group, information and operation updates will be shared with other humanitarian agencies and the national government in order to avoid any overlapping of distribution.

Red Cross and Red Crescent action

The situation was closely monitored by BDRCS and IFRC. The joint assessment on the situation was part of the process that was carried out by BDRCS and IFRC through BDRCS district units located in northern and north-western parts of the country. Some BDRCS units offices have distributed locally collected warm cloths among the most affected people. BDRCS procured 10,000 blankets from its own fund. In addition to this, BDRCS had launched a national appeal on

Movement partners	No. of family assisted	Items
BDRCS NHQ	15,000	Blanket
BDRCS district branches	2,500	Blanket
IFRC (through DREF)	20,000	Blanket, shawl and woollen cap

19 January 2011 for contribution from the business community, philanthropist and civil society organizations. A total of 5,000 blankets were collected from different sources and distributed among the people of the cold wave affected districts. In addition, with support from the IFRC's DREF allocation, warm clothing and blankets were procured and distributed to 20,000 severely affected families in 16 districts of Rajshahi and Rangpur division.

Achievements against outcomes

Relief distributions (food and basic non-food items)
<p>Outcome: 20,000 families (100,000 beneficiaries) in 16 districts will receive packages of clothing and blankets and each package includes two blankets, one shawl and one woollen cap to withstand the cold weather.</p>
<p>Output (expected results) and activities planned: Families who received warm cloths are better protected from the effect of cold wave.</p> <p>Activities planned:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Door-to-door assessment for beneficiary selection by Red Crescent volunteers. • Beneficiary registration. • Procurement of relief items according to IFRC's standard procedures. • Dispatch and transportation of items by BDRCS to the distribution sites. • Storage and distribution of items especially at unit level. • Distribution by trained Red Crescent Youth volunteers. • Regular detailed monitoring and reporting of distribution. • Ongoing monitoring and technical advice by the BDRCS national headquarters and IFRC.

The rapid assessment of cold wave was completed on 15 January 2011 and was based on the vulnerability criteria identified through the assessment conducted jointly by BDRCS and IFRC. The volunteers from the most affected 16 cold wave operational districts, eight BDRCS officers and four IFRC field-monitoring officers, were deployed to assist the BDRCS respective units for beneficiary selection, card distribution and to organize the overall distribution.

While the beneficiary registration was going on in the field, procurement of 40,000 blankets, 20,000 shawls and 20,000 woollen caps had taken place. All the three items in the package: the blankets, shawls and woollen caps were procured following the IFRC's procurement procedure. Prior to dispatching to the BDRCS district units, the inspection of quality was conducted by a joint team of BDRCS and the IFRC logistics and disaster management officials.

The relief goods were transported to the BDRCS district units from the national headquarter through the BDRCS own vehicle. As soon as the inspection was done and quality of goods were accepted as per the specifications, the vehicles moved with the items so that the distribution plans in the field do not get hampered due to non-availability of the distribution items. The disbursement plan was prepared in such a way that sending of goods was given priority to those areas where beneficiary selection was completed. The availability of BDRCS's own vehicle for relief goods transportation was an added advantage to managing the relief operation within a short time.

BDRCS officers from the national headquarters and IFRC's field monitoring officers assisted respective units in the registration of affected people. They also assisted in the physical distribution as well as the coordination with government and other stakeholders in order to prevent any duplication and overlapping in terms of coverage. The respective unit executive committee members, unit-level officers and unit-level volunteers were involved in the entire distribution process. The beneficiary selection process was done through door-to-door assessment by the trained volunteers as well as by the BDRCS's life members.



Beneficiary giving their thumb print mark to Red Cross volunteers before receiving relief goods in Rangpur district.

Photo Credit: IFRC

Though most of the distribution of warm clothing and blankets was completed by first week of February 2011, distribution to all 20,000 families was completed by 14 February 2011 (*for details, please see DREF operations update 2*). The distribution had been delayed in Lalmonirhat district due to outbreak of *Nipha* virus and in Rajshahi district due to the absence of the BDRCS unit committee. In addition, the countrywide general strike called by the opposition on 7 February 2011 also delayed the distribution of relief packages in some places.

During the month of February and March, teams from BDRCS's national headquarters and IFRC disaster management department had made visits to some northern districts including Nilphamari, Rajshahi and Dinajpur to interact with some beneficiaries about the packages distributed there. During the visit, it was found that beneficiaries were very happy with the quality and quantity of the package of warm clothing and blankets. However, some beneficiaries recommended adding more shawls and caps for children in the package. The local administration and representatives from the local government, who were aware about Red Cross Red Crescent's cold wave distribution, appreciated the content and quality of the packages. The people who received the package were very happy and expressed that the package was gender sensitive and helpful to the entire family as opposed to only supporting one person as it contained two blankets, one shawl and one cap.

BDRCS organized a pre-disaster meeting, held on 20-21 June 2011 where the DREF operation was discussed. Specific issues on timely preparation of response plans, prepositioning of stocks of warm cloths before winter season, orientation of BDRCS unit personnel on beneficiary selection and relief distribution planning were highlighted in the meeting. BDRCS has taken initiative to further strengthen its response plans, in particular ones concerning cold wave disasters, as it has been a recurring phenomenon. Hence, prepositioning of warm cloths well in advance will help timely response.

Challenges:

- In some of the BDRCS units, the executive committees were new; hence the BDRCS officers and field monitoring officers had to orient them with the Red Cross Red Crescent Movement and the proper procedure of relief distribution and how to facilitate the quick distribution of materials.
- There was an outbreak of *Nipha* encephalitis in two northern operational districts of Lalmonirhat and Rangpur where 31 people died from viral infection. This led to postponement of the relief distribution in Lalmonirhat district for eight days.
- The opposition political party had called a strike on 7 February 2011 which had slowed down the whole distribution process.

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.

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

Appeal Launch Date: 13 jan 11

Appeal Timeframe: 13 jan 11 to 13 apr 11

Final Report

Selected Parameters	
Reporting Timeframe	2011/1-2011/5
Budget Timeframe	2011/1-2011/4
Appeal	MDRBD008
Budget	APPEAL

All figures are in Swiss Francs (CHF)

I. Consolidated Funding

	Disaster Management	Health and Social Services	National Society Development	Principles and Values	Coordination	TOTAL
A. Budget	253,527					253,527
B. Opening Balance	0					0
Income						
Other Income						
<i>DREF Allocations</i>	253,527					253,527
C4. Other Income	253,527					253,527
C. Total Income = SUM(C1..C4)	253,527					253,527
D. Total Funding = B + C	253,527					253,527
Appeal Coverage	100%					100%

II. Movement of Funds

	Disaster Management	Health and Social Services	National Society Development	Principles and Values	Coordination	TOTAL
B. Opening Balance	0					0
C. Income	253,527					253,527
E. Expenditure	-230,261					-230,261
F. Closing Balance = (B + C + E)	23,266					23,266

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III. Consolidated Expenditure vs. Budget

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)		253,527					253,527	
Relief items, Construction, Supplies								
Clothing & textiles	192,000	178,140					178,140	13,860
Total Relief items, Construction, Suj	192,000	178,140					178,140	13,860
Logistics, Transport & Storage								
Storage	769	108					108	662
Distribution & Monitoring	19,138	12,478					12,478	6,660
Transport & Vehicle Costs	12,231	11,499					11,499	732
Total Logistics, Transport & Storage	32,138	24,085					24,085	8,054
Personnel								
National Staff	400	386					386	14
Total Personnel	400	386					386	14
General Expenditure								
Travel	1,577	1,646					1,646	-69
Information & Public Relation	100	72					72	28
Office Costs	9,008	8,983					8,983	25
Communications	2,123	2,188					2,188	-65
Financial Charges	708	707					707	0
Total General Expenditure	13,515	13,596					13,596	-81
Indirect Costs								
Programme & Service Support	15,474	14,053					14,053	1,420
Total Indirect Costs	15,474	14,053					14,053	1,420
TOTAL EXPENDITURE (D)	253,527	230,261					230,261	23,266
VARIANCE (C - D)		23,266					23,266	