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Disaster relief emergency fund (DREF) Kosovo: Extreme winter condition

 International Federation
of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

DREF operation n° MDRKV004
GLIDE n° CW-2012-000006-SRB
13 January 2012

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.



Strong winds and heavy snowfall hit several municipalities in Kosovo and caused damage to dwellings and the natural environment.
Photo: RC Branch Istog

CHF 148,635 has been allocated from the IFRC's Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF) to support the Red Cross organisation in Kosovo in delivering immediate assistance to some 700 families (3,500 beneficiaries). Unearmarked funds to repay DREF are encouraged.

Summary: Due to strong winds that lasted for 24 hours in Kosovo followed by heavy snowfall that started late on January 6th and 7th, several municipalities in Kosovo have been affected by the natural disaster. The most affected municipalities are Istog, Kamenica and Peja. As a result of electricity blackout and broken communication lines, the flow of information was hampered.

This operation is expected to be implemented over three months, and will therefore be completed by 12 April 2012; a Final Report will be made available three months after the end of the operation (by 12 July 2012).

[<click here for the DREF budget; here for contact details; here to view the map of the affected area>](#)

The situation

Due to strong winds lasting for 24 hours in Kosovo and the heavy snowfall that started late on January 6th and 7th, several municipalities in Kosovo have been affected. The most affected Municipalities are Istog, Kamenica and Peja. The electricity cut and the disruption of communication channels, caused by the extreme weather conditions, hampered the flow of information.

Istog:

A strong wind in Istog Municipality (including 25 villages) caused material damage to 6,000 family houses and public buildings such as the police station, the local Community Centre (where the local Red Cross branch is also located), schools, etc. As a result of the strong wind, Istog municipality was without electricity for several days. Red Cross of Kosova Branch disaster response teams in the field were informed that the winds had destroyed roofs of houses, uprooted trees, and smashed windows. For fear of their lives and safety, many families left the place during the night of the strongest winds on January 7th but some of them came back the next day to look after their properties and belongings.

Due to the disrupted communication lines and electricity problems, normal communication with this Red Cross branch has been severed. Also access to most of the villages has been difficult. The branch reported that the majority of the Red Cross volunteers' property suffered damages as well. According to the initial assessment conducted by the Red Cross branch in Istog, approximately 4,000 families have been affected. There are at least 400 families that need urgent assistance due to a high level of vulnerability. The items identified as urgently needed are: food, blankets, plastic sheets and firewood for heating as well as materials to repair the damaged roofs and windows.

The Red Cross disaster response teams of Istog Municipality received requests from citizens for food, and assistance in repairing the windows and roofs. The Red Cross of Kosova branch in Istog is organizing its activities in coordination with the Emergency Directorate of the municipality of Istog.

Kamenica:

The Red Cross of Kosova branch in Kamenica reported that the snowfall followed by the wind that began on January 7th caused great damages and cut off 26 mountain villages: Karaqeva e epërme, Muhoci, Sedllari, Kranidelli, Terstena, Laqiqi, Desivojca, Velegllava, Vriqeci, Zajqeci, Zhuja, Tugjeci, Svirca, Poliqka, Maroci, Lisocka, Lajqiqi, Gmica, Dazhnica, Kremenata, Meshina, Rahovica, Firiqeva, Krileva Leshtari, Strezoci and Busavata. The number of families affected by the deep snow is 1,178, which means 6,981 beneficiaries in total. The number of the most affected families is 290. The majority of the villages are in the rural and poorer part of Kosovo and the disaster represents an additional factor in deteriorating their already difficult situation. Most of the affected residents are already listed as most vulnerable beneficiaries in Red Cross lists.

Red Cross volunteers of Kamenica branch are assisting the Directorate for Civil Protection, Kosovo Police and Fire Brigade in their action to clear the roads to the villages mentioned above. Only one family was evacuated. There are still seven villages that are completely inaccessible. Red Cross of Kosova branch in Kamenica was able to assist only 13 families with blankets and mattresses from its emergency stock. Due to the inaccessible areas the rest of the most vulnerable families were not reachable for assistance at this stage.

Peja:

The stormy winds also hit the town of Peja and led to a considerable material damage to 900 houses (roofs of four houses have been completely destroyed with another 400 partly destroyed). Electricity network was destroyed but there were no injured people. The storm has affected the city of Peja and its 6 villages, such as Jabllanic e Madhe, Jabllanic e vogel, Novosellë, Radac, Dubovë, Vitomiric. Eight families in the villages left their homes because their houses were completely damaged and found shelter with their relatives. Even though the damages are high in this Municipality, the number of most vulnerable families is not higher than 10.

Coordination and partnerships

Besides the limited assistance that was provided by Kamenica Red Cross branch, no other assistance has so far been provided by any other actors in Kosovo. The International Federation of the Red Cross / Red Crescent Societies and the Red Cross of Kosova will closely cooperate in the response to this emergency. Also close coordination will be maintained with the authorities at both local and national level. The operation will be coordinated by the Red Cross of Kosova branch secretaries in their areas of responsibility. Red Cross volunteers will be responsible for delivering the emergency assistance. Red Cross of Kosova is participating

in the meetings organized by the Agency of Emergency Management, and all activities will be carried out in coordination with them.

Red Cross and Red Crescent action

Due to the unexpectedly strong winds and the fact that the houses of the Red Cross staff and volunteers were also affected, during the initial 12 hours the Red Cross was not able to respond in a coordinated way, as most of the staff and volunteers had to assist their own families and protect their own property.

Shortly afterwards, however, the Red Cross volunteers started doing the assessment of the affected areas in their respective municipalities. The assessment has been hindered by difficulties to access all the affected areas due to the roads being blocked by debris and snow. Still, efforts are being made to gather the necessary information in order to initiate an appropriate response. The International Federation Office in Kosovo has been in constant contact with the local Red Cross organizations.

Due to limited emergency stocks, the Red Cross of Kosova has so far been able only to assist a limited number of affected people with a small amount of mattresses and blankets. A detailed assessment of needs is being conducted by the Red Cross volunteers and branch secretaries.

Preliminary assessments from the branches have identified food, blankets, and firewood for heating as immediate needs followed by materials needed to fix roofs and windows of the damaged houses. So far the affected population has not received any help. According to reports from the field, the disaster response teams could identify 400 families in urgent need for firewood.

The damages caused by the wind and snow are endangering the livelihood of the affected people, that is why food is part of the assistance included in this DREF request. Repair tool kits (hammers, nails, etc.) are available in place or will be borrowed from relatives. There will be one distribution of food items and another one for non-food items (wood, blankets, and plastic sheets).

The needs

Based on the preliminary assessment made so far, the Red Cross of Kosova has prepared the list of all affected families and identified the most vulnerable residents among those families for support. So far 10 Red Cross staff members and 66 Red Cross volunteers have been engaged.

The table below lists the needs of 700 most vulnerable families:

Item	No. of units
Food (family food parcel containing wheat flour, cooking oil, sugar, pasta, rice, beans, potatoes, onion and salt)	700
Blankets	2,800
Firewood for 400 families	800 cubic metres
Plastic sheets	700 pcs

Table 1: Most urgent needs among the affected population as identified by the Red Cross of Kosova

The proposed operation

Relief distributions (food and basic non-food items)
<p>Objective: Providing emergency assistance (basic food and non-food items) to 700 families (approximately 3,500 people) during a three month period (distribution will be done once for basic food and once for non-food items)</p>
<p>Output: The nutritional and winterisation/health needs of 700 families/3,500 people are met over a three month period during difficult period due to their damaged and blocked homes</p>
<p>Activities planned:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preparation of final beneficiary lists. • Preparation of distribution plan. • Procurement of emergency items in Kosovo. • Distribution of emergency items by RC branches and their volunteers according to the prepared beneficiary lists. • Coordination with local emergency departments and social welfare authorities. • Monitoring and reporting.

Contact information

For further information specifically related to this operation please contact:

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Click here

1. To see the DREF operation Budget [below](#)
2. To see the Map of the affected area [below](#)
3. [here](#) to return to the title page

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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DREF OPERATION

12/01/2012

MDRKV004 Kosovo: Extreme winter condition

Budget Group	DREF Grant Budget CHF
Shelter - Relief	10,010
Shelter - Transitional	
Construction - Housing	
Construction - Facilities	
Construction - Materials	
Clothing & Textiles	29,120
Food	37,856
Seeds & Plants	
Water, Sanitation & Hygiene	
Medical & First Aid	
Teaching Materials	
Ustensils & Tools	
Other Supplies & Services	41,600
Emergency Response Units	
Cash Disbursements	
Total RELIEF ITEMS, CONSTRUCTION AND SUPPLIES	118,586
Land & Buildings	
Vehicles Purchase	
Computer & Telecom Equipment	
Office/Household Furniture & Equipment	
Medical Equipment	
Other Machinery & Equipment	
Total LAND, VEHICLES AND EQUIPMENT	0
Storage, Warehousing	
Distribution & Monitoring	1,430
Transport & Vehicle Costs	3,822
Logistics Services	
Total LOGISTICS, TRANSPORT AND STORAGE	5,252
International Staff	
National Staff	6,256
National Society Staff	2,075
Volunteers	1,170
Total PERSONNEL	9,501
Consultants	
Professional Fees	
Total CONSULTANTS & PROFESSIONAL FEES	0
Workshops & Training	
Total WORKSHOP & TRAINING	0
Travel	
Information & Public Relations	650
Office Costs	4,200
Communications	1,000
Financial Charges	
Other General Expenses	
Shared Support Services	375
Total GENERAL EXPENDITURES	6,225
Programme and Supplementary Services Recovery	9,072
Total INDIRECT COSTS	9,072
TOTAL BUDGET	148,635



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