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Disaster relief emergency fund (DREF) Montenegro: Extreme winter conditions

 International Federation
of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

DREF operation n° MDRME005
GLIDE n° CW-2012-000006-MNE
7th February 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.

CHF 104,884 has been allocated from the IFRC's Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF) to support the National Society in delivering immediate assistance to some 1,500 families (7,500 beneficiaries). Unearmarked funds to repay DREF are encouraged.

Summary: Heavy snowfall and freezing temperatures that started on January 31st caused emergency situations in the central and northern part of Montenegro. The most affected municipalities are: Kolasin, Mojkovac, Berane, Andrijevica, Plav, Rozaje, Bijelo Polje, Pljevlja, Zabljak, Savnik, Pluzine, Niksic, Cetinje and Bar. Approximately 1,500 families live in the villages of these municipalities, which are completely cut off from the towns and from the rest of the country. Most of them are missing electricity supply due to severe breakdowns caused by heavy snowfalls and blizzards.

The beneficiaries are mostly families consisting of elderly citizens, many others also with children and people who live below the poverty line.

Montenegro Red Cross is a part of the National Coordinating Body for emergency situations, and local Red Cross branches participate in the work of the Local Crisis Headquarters. The Montenegro Red Cross Society has already distributed some relief items (hygiene, tea, blankets, jackets, heaters) among people who were trapped on the roads, as well as to some individuals who urgently needed these items in some of the villages.

According to the conducted assessment, Montenegro Red Cross will provide assistance by providing blankets, rubber boots, food parcels and hygiene items, gas heaters.

This operation is expected to be implemented over 2 months, and will therefore be completed by 7th April 2012; a Final Report will be made available three months after the end of the operation (by 7th July 2012).

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



Local RC branch Kolasin in rescue action.
Photo: Montenegro Red Cross

The situation

In these days, starting from January 31st, Montenegro, like many other parts of Europe, is completely paralyzed by heavy snowfall and freezing temperatures. There is more than 30 cm of snow in Podgorica (capital of Montenegro) and more than half a meter in Cetinje (old royal capital of Montenegro). The situation is similar in other municipalities. The temperatures are set to drop even further according to weather forecast, with blizzards and icy rain.

The situation is the worst in the following municipalities: Kolasin, Mojkovac, Berane, Andrijevica, Plav, Rozaje, Bijelo Polje, Pljevlja, Zabljak, Savnik, Pluzine, Niksic, Cetinje and Bar.

The northern part of the country is completely cut off from other regions. The snow was falling constantly for two days in Plav, Gusinje, Murino - towns in the northern part of the country. All primary schools and high school in the affected municipalities are closed.

All the villages in the affected municipalities are completely cut off. They don't have electricity and due to high snow, which is reaching almost 2 meters, the inhabitants cannot get access to their firewood or cattle food. These are mainly families consisting of elderly citizens, also families with children, most often below the poverty line. Some of them are in an urgent need of health service. Two people died as a consequence of the extreme weather conditions.

The main highway Podgorica-Kolasin is closed from traffic. The road Kolasin – Mojkovac is also closed, as well as the road Mojkovac-Djurdjevica Tara. All the roads towards the northern part of the country are blocked and closed. A special unit of the Ministry of Interior, together with the Agency for Emergency Situations rescued 120 passengers from their cars which were blocked on the way Podgorica-Kolasin. They were put up in a police barrack near Podgorica. Montenegro Red Cross sent them 120 blankets, 120 jackets, 120 heaters, 50 litres of water, some bread and tea.

The Government of Montenegro was considering declaring emergency situation in the northern part of the country but as the situation is under control, they decided against it.



Coordination and partnerships

Local Crisis headquarters were established in all affected municipalities, and the local Red Cross branches are participating on the meetings and local disaster response teams are constantly in the field. An operational team was established at the national level, in Podgorica, consisting of all relevant ministers and directors of institutions which are part of disaster response system in Montenegro. Montenegro Red Cross is part of that team. The team meets on a daily basis in order to discuss the current situation and make plans of action for the day. The army of Montenegro and police forces also assisted in the evacuation of the affected population.

Red Cross and Red Crescent action

Out of its own emergency relief stock, Montenegro Red Cross distributed the following items to the affected population:

MUNICIPALITY	RELIEF ITEMS			
	Rubber boots	Blankets	Hygiene parcels	Jackets
Pljevlja	100	100	100	
Bijelo Polje	100	100	100	
Niksic	50	100	100	

Podgorica		120		120
Kolasin	100	100	100	
Bar	50	50	20	

Berane	100	100	100	
TOTAL	500	670	520	120

Local Red Cross branches are quite active in providing assistance to the evacuated and affected population.

Staff and volunteers from the local Red Cross Kolasin participated in a rescue action in Kolasin, on February 03rd, where a citizen from Serbia was completely buried by avalanches. With their winter equipment (motor skis and probes) the branch staff succeeded to locate a man, who was rescued, and who suffered minor injuries.

In the same evening, Red Cross Kolasin participated in the rescue action, on the road Kolasin – Podgorica, in the place Mioska, when two people were rescued from the avalanches, and one person died on the way to the hospital. This was the first victim of the extreme winter conditions in Montenegro.

Local Red Cross branch Kolasin used their own vehicle to transport food to the most urgent cases, and during the night with their motor skis transported one man to his home. They also transported medical staff to the people who needed therapy. They also put at disposal their vehicle to the Deputy Minister of Ministry of Interior and Minister of Labour and Social work, who were on the field in their municipality.



Staff from the local Red Cross branch Mojkovac, together with their local disaster response team members visited the evacuated population who were put up in the hotel at their municipality. 18 people were accommodated in the hotel, and the Red Cross delivered clothes, food, mattresses, hot beverages. Red Cross volunteers visited the evacuated population in order to give them PSP, since most of them were in a state of shock.

On 4th February, Local Red Cross branch Pljevlja visited 20 evacuated persons who were accommodated in the Fire-fighter Centre, and delivered blankets, sheets, tea. In cooperation with the Centre for Social Work, support was provided to elderly persons and other people in social need, after the local units cleaned some of the side roads.

Local Red Cross Niksic is currently gathering their local disaster response team and will visit older persons in the villages, to check their condition.

Red Cross Berane distributed food supplies that they have in their stock to the elderly people who are socially vulnerable in their municipality and who are isolated due to the winter weather. Their volunteers also assisted in cleaning the snow from the roof of the houses.

On 5th February Montenegro Red Cross with the assistance of the Army of Montenegro and their helicopter, distributed 100 pairs of rubber boots, 100 blankets and 100 hygiene parcels per municipality to Pljevlja, Bijelo Polje and Niksic. Some 50 Red Cross staff and volunteers participated in these actions.



The needs

According to the preliminary assessment from the field and beneficiary selection criteria, some 7,500 beneficiaries (1,500 families) will be supported through this operation.

Item	Unit	Number	No. of people supported
Blankets	pcs	1,500	830 persons+ 670 replenishment
Food parcels	parcel	1,500	1,500 families (parcel for 10 days)
Hygiene parcels	parcel	1,500	980 families + 520 replenishment
Rubber boots	pcs	500	500 replenishment
Gas heaters	pcs	100	100 families

The Red Cross operation aims also to support those families, whose savings were spent to secure firewood and heating fuel for themselves or cannot reach food distribution points due to the extreme weather conditions.

Gas heaters will be distributed to the families in the villages that are cut off from electricity. Due to snow height, they cannot reach their firewood, and the electric breakdown is serious. The teams from the Electricity Company are not optimistic that the breakdown will be fixed easily.

The beneficiaries' needs are mostly for warm clothes, hygiene items and food due to the fact that the extreme cold has led to a situation where most of their efforts and funds have gone into securing firewood and heating fuel.

Local Red Cross branch Kolasin is renting a Toyota Land Cruiser, which is a special vehicle with a trailer that could be used in winter weather conditions. During this emergency situation, the vehicle will be used for the transport of people, motor skis, and relief items at the whole territory of Montenegro. Red Cross Kolasin will readily put at disposal the vehicle for other local Red Cross branches that might need it, in order to conduct relief distribution. The vehicle will be rented for three months so that the other local Red Cross branches could use it for relief items distribution.

Since the situation in the villages is extremely difficult, the only way to reach those people is to use motor skis. Local Red Cross Kolasin branch has one motor ski, but this cannot cover all the needs, having in mind the number of affected municipalities. One additional rented motor ski would be used by the local Red Cross offices in the municipalities in Berane, Plav and Andrijevica, and another one in Zabljak and Savnik. Two motor skis would be rented for the period of one month.

The proposed operation

Relief distributions (food and basic non-food items)
Outcome: Population from the municipalities most affected by the heavy snowfall 1,500 (7,500), 14 municipalities, is provided with emergency relief items according to the needs assessment from the field
Outputs (expected results) and activities planned: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> All the affected population is provided with the necessary emergency relief items. Continuous cooperation with local crisis headquarters and other partners at the field. Conduct rapid emergency needs and capacity assessments. Develop beneficiary targeting strategy and registration system to deliver intended assistance. Monitor and evaluate the relief activities and provide reporting on relief distributions. Develop an exit strategy.

Since Montenegro Red Cross already distributed 670 blankets to the affected population, the request for assistance will be 1,500 blankets, out of which 830 persons will receive the blankets, and the remaining quantities will be used for stock replenishment.

1,500 food parcels consisting of different types of canned food and ready-to-serve meals will be distributed to the affected families, where every family will receive one parcel.

520 hygiene parcels, consisting of washing powder, liquid detergent, toilet paper, tooth paste, soap, were already distributed, so the request for assistance is for 1,500 parcels, out of which 980 parcels will be distributed to the families (one parcel per family), and the rest will be used for stock replenishment.

100 gas heaters will be distributed to the families in isolated villages. They don't have electricity and according to the information from the Electrical Company, the breakdown is quite serious. These people cannot get access to their firewood, and they urgently need other ways of heating.

Contact information

For further information specifically related to this operation please contact:

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Click here

1. DREF budget is available [here](#)
2. Map of the affected area is available [here](#)
3. Click [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.

DREF OPERATION

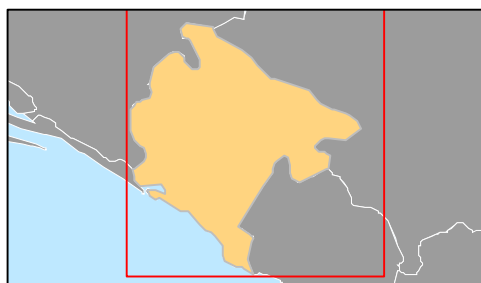
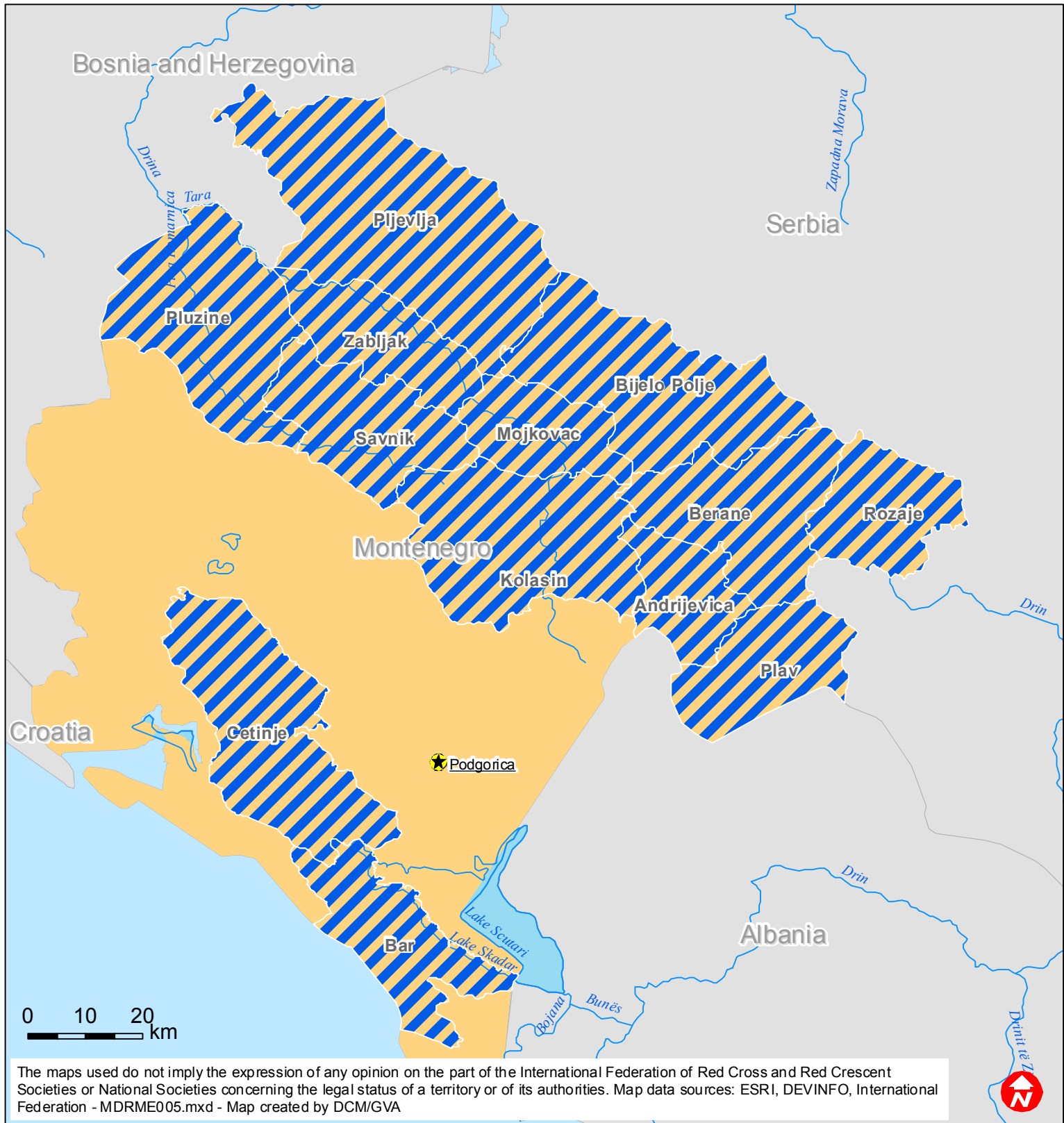
07/02/2012

Montenegro Extreme Winter Condition

Budget Group	DREF Grant Budget CHF
Shelter - Relief	
Shelter - Transitional	
Construction - Housing	
Construction - Facilities	
Construction - Materials	
Clothing & Textiles	22,635
Food	14,488
Seeds & Plants	0
Water, Sanitation & Hygiene	14,488
Medical & First Aid	
Teaching Materials	
Ustensils & Tools	18,110
Other Supplies & Services	0
Emergency Response Units	
Cash Disbursements	
Total RELIEF ITEMS, CONSTRUCTION AND SUPPLIES	69,721
Land & Buildings	
Vehicles Purchase	0
Computer & Telecom Equipment	
Office/Household Furniture & Equipment	
Medical Equipment	
Other Machinery & Equipment	0
Total LAND, VEHICLES AND EQUIPMENT	0
Storage, Warehousing	6,036
Distribution & Monitoring	1,207
Transport & Vehicle Costs	16,178
Logistics Services	
Total LOGISTICS, TRANSPORT AND STORAGE	23,421
International Staff	
National Staff	0
National Society Staff	966
Volunteers	3,772
Total PERSONNEL	4,738
Consultants	
Professional Fees	
Total CONSULTANTS & PROFESSIONAL FEES	0
Workshops & Training	0
Total WORKSHOP & TRAINING	0
Travel	0
Information & Public Relations	0
Office Costs	
Communications	603
Financial Charges	0
Other General Expenses	
Shared Support Services	
Total GENERAL EXPENDITURES	603
Programme and Supplementary Services Recovery	6,401
Total INDIRECT COSTS	6,401
TOTAL BUDGET	104,884



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 Most affected municipalities