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

 International Federation
of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

DREF operation n° MDRMD004
GLIDE n° CW-2012-000006-MDA
22nd 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 123,061 has been allocated from the IFRC's Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF) to support the Red Cross Society of the Republic of Moldova in delivering immediate assistance to some 1,000 families and individuals (4,000 beneficiaries). Unearmarked funds to repay the DREF are encouraged.

Summary: Like many other countries in Europe, Moldova has been affected by extreme winter conditions. Particularly hard hit are rural communities whose households, already affected by poverty, are suffering from the cold weather, the lack of basic necessities and social exclusion. The Moldova Red Cross Society has been asked by the Government of Moldova to mobilise support for the ongoing relief operation. The National Society is already making efforts to assist the most vulnerable. For the consolidation of inputs by various agencies, the Moldova Red Cross and the Government of Moldova are holding regular meetings with the UN Disaster Management Team, which has established a task force to discuss the situation in terms of outstanding needs and coordination matters.



Moldova Red Cross assistance reaches lonely elderly in the village Bulboka
Photo: Moldova Red Cross

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This operation is expected to be implemented over two months, and will therefore be completed by 30th April 2012; a Final Report will be made available three months after the end of the operation (by 31th July 2012).

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

The situation

Like other countries in the region, Moldova has been facing plunging temperatures over the past weeks claiming victims and disruption of public services. According to the data of the Civil Protection and Emergency Situations Service, the cold wave has caused eight casualties, and at least 20 people are daily registered with frostbites. By 21st February, the Ministry of Health reported 280 cases of hypothermia and 10 fatalities. Four people were affected by frosts in the last 24 hours.

Due to the extensive use of firewood, the number of fires causing deaths at household level is rising on a daily basis. At 17th February, 371 cases with 41 victims were registered because of household fires.

The week from 30th January to 5th February was exceptionally cold (minus 16 to minus 12 degrees Celsius, lower than the usual average of minus 12 to minus 9.5 degrees Celsius) – for the first time over the past 20 years. The lowest temperature was recorded on 2nd February with minus 21.5 to minus 19 degrees (lower than the usual average of minus 17 to minus 15 degrees) for the first time over the last 50 years. During the nights following 14th February, the temperature in Northern Moldova dropped down to 31C below zero, and the soil froze to a depth of 60-100 cm.

On 14th February the authorities reported that 108 remote communities were cut off due to heavy snowfall. Relevant government structures are taking measures to clear the blocked roads. Four communities have been reported to have no electricity. However, this problem has been resolved by now.

One hundred and fifty educational institutions, including 79 kindergartens, still remain closed due to the frost; at several schools lessons are reduced to 30-35 minutes.

Also, according to sources in the Ministry of Agriculture, approximately 70 per cent of winter crops have been damaged by the frost and ice. Basically, this year, Moldova, known as an agrarian country, is facing shortage of food, especially wheat, in summer. Vine plantations and orchards are reported to have also been affected; however, the extent of the damage is still to be estimated.

More heavy snowfalls are forecast for the next days, which may again block the roads and isolate some remote communities.

Coordination and partnerships

The Red Cross Society of Moldova is participating in the coordination of response efforts together with the Civil Protection and Emergency Situations Service of the Ministry of Internal Affairs, as well as the UNDP Office in Moldova, the Ministry of Labour and Social Protection and IOM. Coordination meetings with all involved organizations and institutions are held every 2-3 days in order to discuss the situation and the disaster response measures and coordinate further steps.

The Civil Protection and Emergency Situations Service has not declared a state of emergency. However, it has asked the Moldova Red Cross to take action for supporting the national relief efforts. In close collaboration with UNDP, Civil Protection and Emergency Service, local authorities, and other stakeholders the Red Cross of Moldova is committed to contribute to the mitigation of the consequences of extreme cold temperatures and heavy snowfalls.

The Civil Protection and Emergency Situations Service has established 18 rehabilitation centres in a number of urban areas, including Chisinau, Briceni, Anenii Noi, Balti, Singerei, Soldanesti and Cahul. The centres are managed by the staff of the Civil Protection and Emergency Situation Service. These rehabilitation centres are heated with 'heating cannons' running on fuel, and provide temporary shelter for those needing to warm up. More than 2,100 persons of different ages and social categories receive assistance on a daily basis, including tea, biscuits and medical assistance when needed.

The United Nations has responded to the Government of Moldova's request for assistance by allocating USD 70,000 (of which, USD 66,000 coming from OCHA emergency grant). UNDP, as the holder of the emergency grant, is providing clothes, blankets, food, fuel, heaters as well as 'heating cannons'. UNHCR supports the operation with heating fuel. Part of the UN assistance is directed towards supporting the functioning of the rehabilitation centres, while part of the assistance will be provided to the most vulnerable individuals and households in rural areas of the country.

By 15th February, the United Nations Office, in close collaboration with Civil Protection and Emergency Situations Service, Moldova Red Cross and Caritas has finalized the distribution of humanitarian assistance to the most vulnerable families and elderly people in the following communities:

- Soroca District: communities of Schineni, Schineni Noi, Bulbocii Noi, Bulboci
- Ocnita District: communities of Sauca, Unguri, Birnova
- Briceni District: communities of Bulboaca, Cotiujeni, Coteala, Marcauti.
- Singerei District: communities of Slobozia Magura, Taura Veche, Cotiujenii Mici, Coada iazului, Ciuciueni.
- Soldanesti District: communities of Raspopeni, Gauzeni, Alcedar, Curatura.

IOM has provided warm clothes in the amount of 8,000 MDL (approximately CHF 600) for distribution in municipality of Chisinau through the Civil Protection and Emergency Situations Service on 12 February 2012.

The Moldova Red Cross has continued to provide volunteers to support the operation of the rehabilitation centres.

Red Cross and Red Crescent action

Since the first days of the snowfalls, Moldova Red Cross volunteers have actively supported people in the rehabilitation centres in Chisinau, Comrat and Balti, and contributed to delivering aid to homes in remote areas. A total of 107 volunteers and seven RC staff have been mobilised so far to reach over 5,523 people affected by extreme weather conditions.

In Balty and Comrat the Red Cross announced a public fundraising campaign in support of the affected population. As a result, Red Cross volunteers collected funds to purchase biscuits, tea, coffee and sugar for those visiting the rehabilitation centres. The Red Cross branch in Balty set up a table outside the office offering hot tea for elderly people. Some remaining stocks of second-hand clothing donated earlier by the Swiss Red Cross were also used for distributions.

The Moldova Red Cross and Caritas as partners of UNDP, distributed humanitarian aid provided by UNDP in Briceni and Soroca. People affected by cold weather received 200 units of warm clothes, 80

sweaters, 400 pairs of gloves, 200 blankets and 80 food parcels. A total of 681 people were assisted with humanitarian items donated by UN.



**An older woman welcoming Red Cross volunteers delivering warm blankets. Village Markauts
Photo: Moldova Red Cross**

The Moldova Red Cross already has previous experiences in DREF operations, including *Severe Winter, Draught and Floods* operations in 2006, 2007, 2008 and 2010. One staff of the IFRC Belarus Country Representation has been deployed in Chisinau to provide support to the National Society in collecting and compiling the information that represents the basis of this bulletin.

The needs

Government, UN and other agencies are providing assistance, but there are gaps remaining in rural areas, where most poor people reside. The local branch level preparedness and response capacities are very limited to deal with the current emergency.

The situation is assessed by the government agencies in close collaboration with the UN Disaster Management Team, the Red Cross and other players. The meetings of the task force coordinated by the UN have identified the following most urgent needs: warm clothing, sleeping bags, food, blankets and hygiene items.

The following segments of population in rural areas are in need of Red Cross emergency assistance:

- Lonely elderly with low pensions
- Persons with disabilities and low income

- Multi-child families with low income
- Unemployed people from vulnerable families

The table below lists the needs of the 1,000 most vulnerable families and individuals:

Item	No. of units
Family food parcels (two packages per family/individual)	2,000
Family hygiene parcels	1,000
Blankets (two units per family)	1,000
Sleeping bags	500
Clothing (winter coats)	1,000

The proposed operation

Relief distributions (food and basic non-food items)
<p>Objective: Providing emergency assistance (basic food and non-food items) for 1,000 families (approximately 4,000 people); distribution will be done for basic food, clothes and non-food items</p> <p>Output: The nutritional and winterisation/health needs of 1,000 families/4,000 people are met over this period of extreme winter conditions</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 Moldova. • 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.

Contents of family food parcel	Units	Quantity
Sugar	kg	2
Buckwheat	kg	2
Rice	kg	2
Wheat flour	kg	2
Cooking oil	Litre	2
Canned fish	Can of 250 g	3
Canned pate	Can of 290 g	4
Tea	pack	2
Pasta	kg	2

Contents of family hygiene parcel	Units	Quantity
Washing powder	Pack of 2 kg	1
Toilet soap	Bar of 100 g	3
Washing soap	Bar of 200 g	4
Shampoo	Litre	1

At the end of operation, a workshop will be organized for the local authorities, Red Cross and other partners to share best practices and lessons learned during the disaster response operation, as well as to improve disaster preparedness mechanisms.

The local Red Cross branches in Moldova will monitor the progress and provide the necessary reports to the Moldova Red Cross Headquarters. Technical expertise and support will be provided to the Moldova Red Cross from the IFRC Europe Zone Office in Budapest. The IFRC Europe Zone office will conduct a monitoring visit to the field during the operation to follow up on the progress of the implemented activities.

Visibility of the Red Cross volunteers will be ensured during the operation through cooperation with the local media.

Contact information

For further information specifically related to this operation please contact:

- **Moldova Red Cross:** Vasile Cernenchi, Executive Director, phone: +373 692 94 856; email: vasile.a.c@gmail.com
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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
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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.
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DREF OPERATION

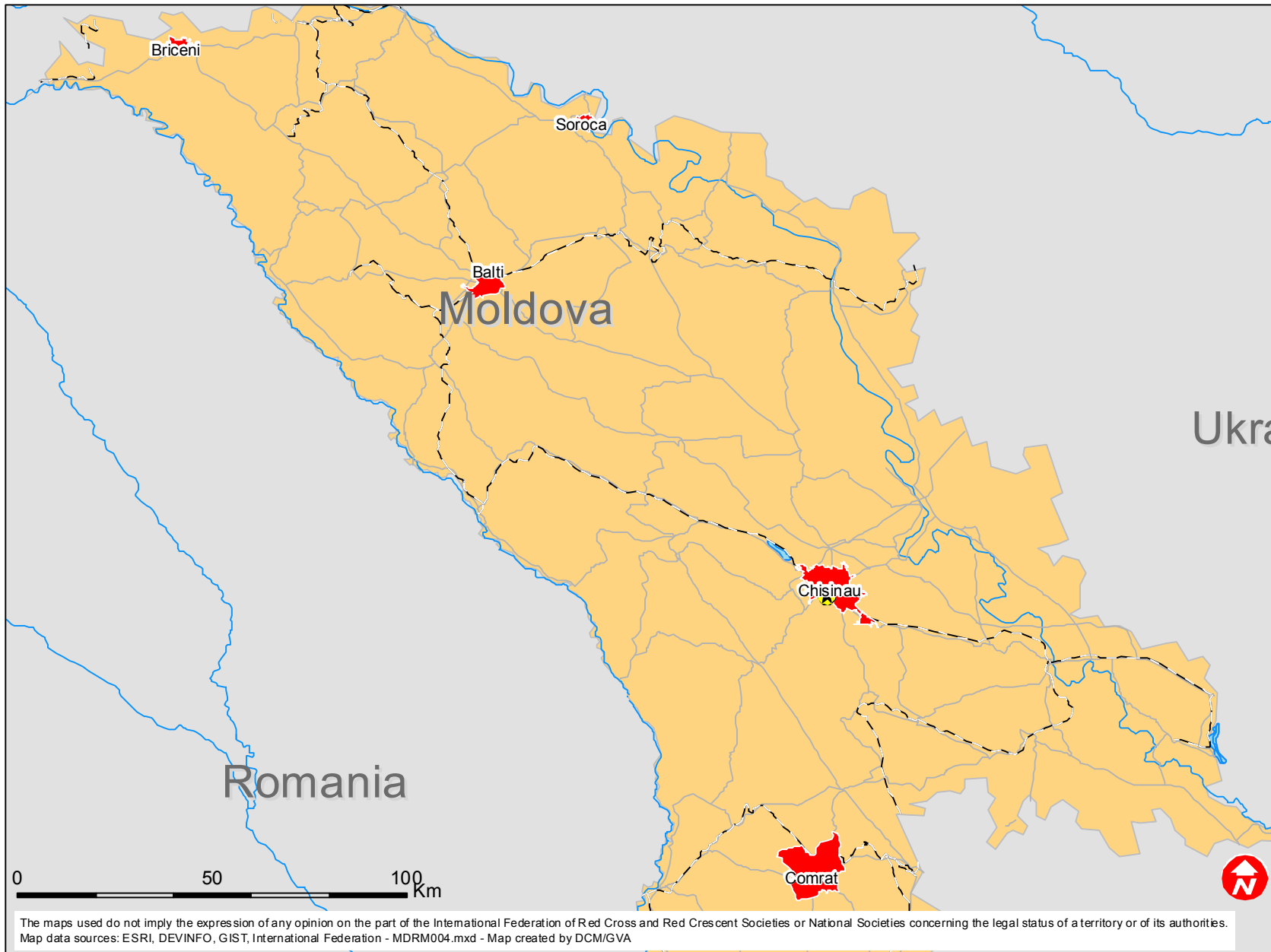
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


APPEAL APPEAL NAME

Budget Group	DREF Grant Budget CHF
Shelter - Relief	0
Shelter - Transitional	
Construction - Housing	
Construction - Facilities	
Construction - Materials	
Clothing & Textiles	48,050
Food	35,000
Seeds & Plants	
Water, Sanitation & Hygiene	15,790
Medical & First Aid	
Teaching Materials	
Ustensils & Tools	
Other Supplies & Services	0
Emergency Response Units	
Cash Disbursements	
Total RELIEF ITEMS, CONSTRUCTION AND SUPPLIES	98,840
Land & Buildings	
Vehicles Purchase	
Computer & Telecom Equipment	
Office/Household Furniture & Equipment	
Medical Equipment	
Other Machiney & Equipment	
Total LAND, VEHICLES AND EQUIPMENT	0
Storage, Warehousing	1,400
Dsitribution & Monitoring	2,520
Transport & Vehicle Costs	0
Logistics Services	
Total LOGISTICS, TRANSPORT AND STORAGE	3,920
International Staff	3,000
National Staff	0
National Society Staff	4,150
Volunteers	990
Total PERSONNEL	8,140
Consultants	
Professional Fees	
Total CONSULTANTS & PROFESSIONAL FEES	0
Workshops & Training	1,200
Total WORKSHOP & TRAINING	1,200
Travel	500
Information & Public Relations	500
Office Costs	1,100
Communications	1,050
Financial Charges	300
Other General Expenses	
Shared Support Services	0
Total GENERAL EXPENDITURES	3,450
Programme and Supplementary Services Recovery	7,511
Total INDIRECT COSTS	7,511
TOTAL BUDGET	123,061



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-  Districts where RC is working
-  Railroad
-  Main roads