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# Disaster relief emergency fund (DREF) Romania: Extreme winter condition

 International Federation  
of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

## DREF operation n° MDRRO003 GLIDE n° CW-2012-000006-ROM 13<sup>th</sup> 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 165,927 has been allocated from the IFRC's Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF) to support the Romanian Red Cross in delivering immediate assistance to 800 families (3,200 beneficiaries). Unearmarked funds to repay DREF are encouraged.**

**Summary:** Extreme cold and excessive snowfall in the past two weeks have caused many problems in the south-eastern regions of Romania. On 10<sup>th</sup> February, more than 310 villages were reported to be totally isolated because of the snow. Governmental institutions are still working on clearing the roads from snow.



Red Cross volunteers in action to assist people whose wells got frozen.  
Photo: Romanian Red Cross

The Romanian Red Cross has undertaken to respond immediately by meeting the basic needs of the vulnerable population through the distribution of hot meals, warm clothing and blankets. Several branches of the Red Cross with their rescue teams are providing the necessary items (food, drinks and medicine) to the snow-buried residents.

This operation is expected to be implemented over a period of two months, and will therefore be completed by 14<sup>th</sup> April 2012; a Final Report will be made available three months after the end of the operation, by 14<sup>th</sup> June 2012.

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

## The situation

The unusually cold winter weather conditions that affected Romania in the form of heavy snowfalls and extremely low temperatures, reaching minus 25 degrees Celsius in some places, have resulted in numerous traffic problems especially in rural areas, and have led to the lack of food supplies and medical assistance, creating hunger and frostbites especially among the homeless.

The cold wave that has reached Romania starting 23<sup>rd</sup> January, along with heavy snowfalls, first hit the south-eastern part of the country, and later extended to the whole territory of the country. Roads got blocked by the snow and people stranded in their homes, cars or trains. Government and municipal authorities have been mobilized to provide support to those in need. According to the General Inspectorate for Emergency Situations, an overall number of 504 localities in 27 counties have been affected by the extreme winter conditions. At this moment, the counties worst affected are: Teleorman, Buzau, Vrancea, Ialomita, Calarasi, Braila, Galati, Constanta. The most severe situation is in Vrancea and Buzau Counties, where a state of emergency has been declared.

The situation at present can be described as follows.

- 310 localities are inaccessible by road or rail.
- 179 villages are experiencing power shortages.
- There are malfunctions in the communications systems (both mobile and landlines) in 10 localities.
- Water supplies are hindered in 10 localities.
- 12 railway lines, one highway of local connection, and 60 motorways and signed routes have been fully or partially closed.
- 4,000 schools have been temporarily closed.

In the last 24 hours, the ambulance services have treated or hospitalized 239 people suffering from hypothermia.

The total number of deaths caused by severe hypothermia amounts to 65.

The state institutions and agencies that are part of crisis management system, are mobilized and actively working to improve conditions back to normal for the citizens of Romania.

## Coordination and partnerships

The secretaries of the Red Cross branches across Romania are members of the local Commands for Emergency Situations and are participating, along with the representatives of the General Inspectorate for Emergency Situations, in the planning, coordination and decision-making so as to combat the effects of the harsh weather. During the coordination meetings the situation was evaluated and certain measures were taken to reduce the possible consequences of the cold wave. At the moment it is difficult to arrive at a more detailed assessment of needs due to blocked roads and difficult travel, but also due to interruptions in Internet and telephone communications with areas that are buried under snow.

At the national level, the General Inspectorate for Emergency Situations and other public institutions are closely monitoring the developments and are intervening when necessary. At the local level, all activities are implemented by the local self-government units, focusing on cleaning the roads and streets from snow, ensuring that medical assistance, life-saving evacuation, and distribution of drinking water are provided. All the activities are implemented in cooperation with the Red Cross offices at the local and the national level.

## Red Cross and Red Crescent action

In coordination with the local authorities, Romanian Red Cross teams have taken part in the evacuation process of people trapped by the snow.

In response to the cold wave, the National Society has prepared itself to be able to act immediately and to provide assistance to the most vulnerable.

14 Romanian Red Cross branches (Vrancea, Arad, Giurgiu, Ilfov, Botosani, Braila, Dambovita, Calarasi, Satu Mare, Iasi, Neamt, Bacau, Ialomita, Teleorman) have been carrying out activities to assist the people most affected by the cold. Over 600 people (150 families) have received assistance so far.



The Romanian Red Cross has prepared and distributed clothes, blankets and bedding. In addition, the Romanian Red Cross has supported the local authorities in setting up temporary shelter for the homeless.

Romanian Red Cross branches had also provided distribution of hot meals, tea and drinking water.

Part of the DREF allocation will be used for replenishment of the emergency stocks of the National Society for the already distributed items.

On 11<sup>th</sup> February the Romanian Red Cross has delivered, in collaboration with government authorities, approximately 3 tons of food (cooking oil, flour, rice, pasta, canned meat and bread) to the counties Ialomita and Buzau. 4,500 kg have been transported to Ialomita County (Mirosesti and Cacova communes) in a helicopter of the Ministry of Interior. Another transport of 1,450 kg of food items is being delivered to Buzau County (Boldu and Cochirleanca localities) on a truck of the Ministry of Defence. The relief has been already distributed to beneficiaries. A transport of 6,000 kg of drinking water and food items (canned meat, bread) was organized by the Prefect's office in coordination with Bacau Red Cross branch, to assist stranded persons in Garoafa commune, Vrancea County. Romanian Red Cross volunteers have accompanied the transport and helped out in the distribution to the beneficiaries.

## The needs

Based on the needs assessment conducted by the local Red Cross branches and also on the weather forecast and information provided by the Crisis Management Centre, the National Society has decided to target the most vulnerable 800 families (3,200 people) in those villages which are isolated due to snow blockades.

Those are mainly elderly households or older individuals living alone in remote areas with little to no family support, families with small children with low level of income and limited social security coverage. The Romanian Red Cross is also providing support to the homeless people in the affected counties.

The following needs have been identified to assist these families:

Items	Quantity
Blankets	1,600
Family food parcels	800
Family hygiene parcels	800
Sleeping bags	1,600
Heaters	200

One hot air generator will be purchased for the temporary shelter for homeless people to be set up and run during the cold weather.

## The proposed operation

### **Relief distributions (food and basic non-food items)**

**Objective: Providing emergency assistance ( food, non-food and clothing items) to approximately 800 families**

**Output:** The food and hygiene needs of the most vulnerable 3,200 people will be met through distribution of food and non-food items and clothes.

**Activities planned:**

- Coordination with local emergency departments and social welfare authorities.
- Preparation of final beneficiary lists.
- Preparation of distribution plan.
- Procurement of emergency items in Romania
- Distribution of emergency items by RC branches, staff and volunteers, according to the prepared beneficiary lists (as per table above).
- Beneficiaries will be notified regarding the time of distribution.
- Monitoring and reporting.

The contents of one food parcel are as follows:

- Cooking oil
- Flour
- Sugar
- Rice
- Pasta
- Canned meat

The contents of one hygiene parcel are as follows:

- Washing powder
- Hair shampoo
- Soap
- Toilet paper
- Tooth paste
- Tooth brush
- Shaving foam
- Razor
- Hygiene pads
- Detergent for dishwashing

The Romanian Red Cross Headquarters, in close cooperation with IFRC Europe Zone office, will monitor the progress of the operation and provide the necessary technical expertise. Visibility of the work of the Red Cross volunteers will be ensured during the operation through the local media. Weekly operation updates will be sent to the IFRC Europe Zone Office.

One RDRT member will be deployed to support the Romanian Red Cross Society in the implementation of the operation.

At the end of the operation, a workshop will be held for Red Cross staff and volunteers to share best practices and lessons learned, to update the National Society contingency plan and further improve its disaster management capacity.

## 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

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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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**Saving lives, changing minds.**



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

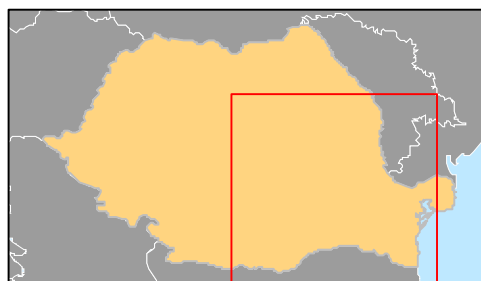
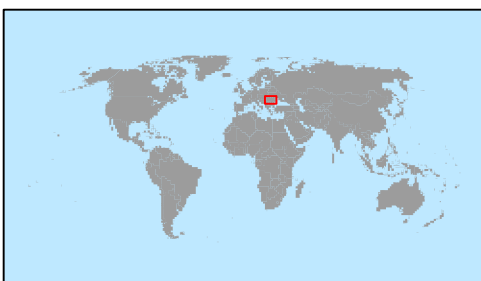
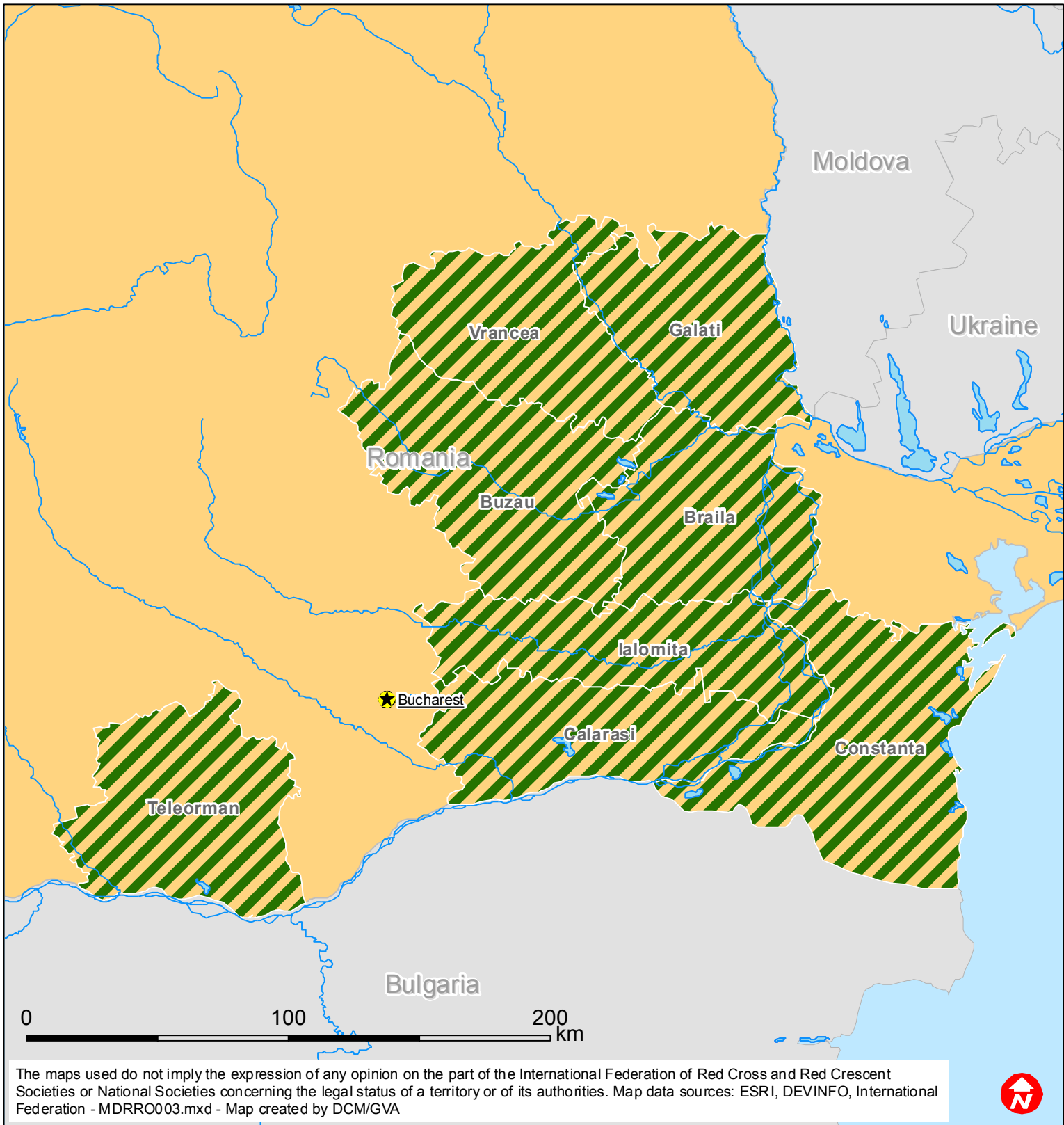
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MDRRO003 Romania: Extreme Winter Condition

<b>Budget Group</b>	<b>DREF Grant Budget CHF</b>
Shelter - Relief	
Shelter - Transitional	
Construction - Housing	
Construction - Facilities	
Construction - Materials	
Clothing & Textiles	73,200
Food	17,600
Seeds & Plants	
Water, Sanitation & Hygiene	28,000
Medical & First Aid	
Teaching Materials	
Ustensils & Tools	12,600
Other Supplies & Services	
Emergency Response Units	
Cash Disbursements	
<b>Total RELIEF ITEMS, CONSTRUCTION AND SUPPLIES</b>	<b>131,400</b>
Land & Buildings	
Vehicles Purchase	
Computer & Telecom Equipment	
Office/Household Furniture & Equipment	
Medical Equipment	
Other Machinery & Equipment	
<b>Total LAND, VEHICLES AND EQUIPMENT</b>	<b>0</b>
Storage, Warehousing	0
Distribution & Monitoring	10,000
Transport & Vehicle Costs	2,000
Logistics Services	
<b>Total LOGISTICS, TRANSPORT AND STORAGE</b>	<b>12,000</b>
International Staff	1,500
National Staff	
National Society Staff	3,000
Volunteers	100
<b>Total PERSONNEL</b>	<b>4,600</b>
Consultants	
Professional Fees	
<b>Total CONSULTANTS &amp; PROFESSIONAL FEES</b>	<b>0</b>
Workshops & Training	1,500
<b>Total WORKSHOP &amp; TRAINING</b>	<b>1,500</b>
Travel	2,000
Information & Public Relations	500
Office Costs	1,000
Communications	1,000
Financial Charges	800
Other General Expenses	1,000
Shared Support Services	
<b>Total GENERAL EXPENDITURES</b>	<b>6,300</b>
Programme and Supplementary Services Recovery	10,127
<b>Total INDIRECT COSTS</b>	<b>10,127</b>
<b>TOTAL BUDGET</b>	<b>165,927</b>



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 Worst affected counties