

DREF operation n° MDRBY001 GLIDE n° CW-2012-000006-BLR 30th July 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 95,871 was allocated from the IFRC's Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF) to support the Belarus Red Cross Society in delivering assistance to more than 4,000 homeless and other vulnerable people throughout Belarus.

Summary: Due to the sudden onset of extremely cold weather, many Belarusians' livelihoods already hit hard by the financial crisis came under extreme pressure. The severe winter increased the vulnerability of the homeless in particular.



Belarus Red Cross disaster management coordinator on duty with the mobile rescue team providing immediate assistance on the Minsk ring road. **Photo: Belarus Red Cross**

The Belarus Red Cross carried out response activities immediately by addressing the basic needs such as hot meals, warm clothing, and blankets of those mostly affected.

The situation was aggravated by heavy snowfalls and continuation of extremely low temperatures. In this context, the operation responded to the increased needs of beneficiaries by setting up winterized tents with equipment to function as stations in the cities where people can warm up and receive services and relief from the Belarus Red Cross Society. Additional food packages, clothes, winter boots, blankets, and mattresses were also provided for the beneficiaries, especially the homeless.

In order to ensure proper support to the affected people, Belarus Red Cross rescue teams received tools to remove the snow and help trapped vehicles on the roads. Also in order to efficiently assist other vulnerable city inhabitants, Red Cross volunteers working on the streets were provided with big thermos flasks to hand out hot drinks.

Furthermore, in April 2012, the operation enabled Belarus Red Cross to provide 100 food parcels to the people affected by spring floods in Gomel region, as well as to supply basic technical equipment for 20 Red Cross emergency response volunteers and staff, as it was recommended by the "lessons learned" workshop co-facilitated by IFRC in Minsk on 12-13 March 2012.

The operation was successfully completed by end of April 2012 and covered 57 locations. There is a remaining balance of CHF 1,591, which needs to be returned to the DREF funds.

The donors who contributed to the DREF in replenishment of the allocation made for this operation were the following: Austrian Red Cross with CHF 18,114, Icelandic Red Cross with CHF 15,000 and DG ECHO with CHF 47,936.

The major donors and partners of DREF include the Australian, American and Belgian Governments, the Austrian Red Cross, the Canadian Red Cross and the Canadian Government, the Danish Red Cross and the Danish Government, the European Commission Humanitarian Aid and Civil Protection (ECHO), the Irish and the Italian Governments, the Japanese Red Cross Society, the Luxembourg Government, the Monaco Red Cross and the Monaco Government, the Netherlands Red Cross and the Netherlands Government, the Norwegian Red Cross and the Norwegian Government, the Spanish Government, the Swedish Red Cross and the Swedish Government, the United Kingdom Department for International Development (DFID), the Medtronic and Z Zurich Foundations, and other corporate and private donors. The IFRC, on behalf of the Belarus National Society, would like to extend thanks to all for their generous contributions. Details of all donors can be found on: http://www.ifrc.org/docs/appeals/Active/MAA00010_2012.pdf

[<click here for the DREF final financial report; here for contact details >](#)

The situation

Freezing weather killed hundreds of people in Central and Eastern Europe in the first two months of 2012.



Red Cross rescue team assisting stranded drivers.
Photo: Belarus Red Cross

The second half of January 2012 was marked by severe frosts and snowfalls, for which many of Belarus citizens appeared to be unprepared. People were affected both by extreme frosts and black ice. Only in Minsk, during the harsh winter period, 129 people were hospitalized with various traumas caused by frostbite and 248 received traumas falling on black ice. Overall, it was estimated that more than 700 people were affected and five people died of hypothermia.

On 1st and 2nd February temperatures had dropped down to 25-29 degrees Celsius below zero, and in some places to 30-32 degrees. From 8th February the average night temperatures were around 15-22 degrees Celsius below zero, falling

down to 25-28 and even to 31-34 by 12th February. In addition, strong wind and snow hampered road traffic, including transportation of people and delivery of basic supplies to remote areas. This extremely cold weather continued until 20th February when severe frosts subsided, however wind and snow showers were still registered in most parts of the country. After a short rise in temperature, mid-March was again marked with low night temperatures of 11-15 degrees below zero. The homeless who had left temporary shelters were hit by cold. At the end of March, spring floods started in Gomel region, Gomel, and Zhitkovichi districts.

With DREF assistance and its own emergency fund, the Belarus Red Cross effectively responded to the evolving needs.

The most affected regions and cities were the following:

- Vitebsk region (Vitebsk, Miory, Glubokoe, Polotsk, Novopolotsk and Postavy)
- Minsk region (Minsk city and Stolbtsy, Molodechno, Borisov, Zhodino, Slutsk)
- Gomel region (Gomel city and Rechista, Zhlobin, Mozyr)
- Grodno region (Lida, Slonim, Volkovyssk)
- Brest and Mogilev regions

Coordination and partnerships

From the very beginning of this emergency Belarus Red Cross branches were in close contact with local authorities and emergency response units of the Belarus Ministry of Emergencies, who provided the Belarus National Society with hands-on information on the evolving situation and the needs of the people. The IFRC representation in Belarus and the National Society cooperated closely in assessing the needs and preparing the response to this emergency.

The operation was coordinated by Belarus Red Cross branch chairpersons in their areas of responsibility. Red Cross volunteers were responsible for delivering the emergency assistance.

The Belarus Red Cross liaised with local authorities to identify the sites where homeless usually gather, which included also dump sites. Red Cross staff and volunteers visited these sites regularly, bringing aid or personally informing people where they can receive assistance. Posters with information about distributions were also placed at glass bottle buy-back centers, where the homeless often appeared. The Red Cross also mobilized national and local media to raise public awareness on prevention of traumas and chilblains.

A cooperation agreement between Coca-Cola Belarus Bottler and Belarus Red Cross was signed and a joint press conference was held in the National Press Centre on 28 March 2012. During this press conference also the results of the operation were presented to the general public.

A number of food companies also provided food items, such as bread and instant food, for the homeless. In addition, a shoe factory in Vitebsk donated shoes for the homeless. A factory in Minsk, which manufactures blankets, provided a discount on all blankets purchased for those affected by extreme weather conditions.

The Minsk Auto Channel 7 FM mobilized 70 auto-amateurs to join the Red Cross operation as active volunteers assisting the people on snowy roads with their own vehicles, fuel, equipment, and time.

A car maintenance station in Minsk agreed to do the servicing Red Cross heavy duty vehicles free of charge.



Press conference in the National Press Centre dedicated to the summarizing of the preliminary results of DREF operation and the cooperation agreement with Coca Cola. **Photo: Belarus Red Cross**

Red Cross and Red Crescent action

The DREF action was partly supported by the Belarus Red Cross emergency fund (approx. USD 5,000). With these funds a total of 200 first aid kits were procured to equip Red Cross volunteers taking part in the operation. The composition of the first aid kit was the following:

| Item | Quantity |
|---|----------------------------|
| Blunt-ended scissors | 1 pair |
| Vinyl gloves | 2 pairs |
| Masks for the cardio-pulmonary resuscitation | 2 pieces |
| Rescue blanket of foil (to protect from overheating / overcooling) | 1 piece |
| Triangular bandages | 4 pieces |
| Pins | 6 pieces |
| Plasters of different sizes | 10 pieces (or one package) |
| Alcohol-free antiseptic cleansing wipes (each individually wrapped) | 5 pieces |
| Adhesive plaster | 1 roll |
| Belt bag | 1 piece |

The Belarus Red Cross also appealed to the public for donation of clothing. A total of 5,501 units of clothes such as warm jackets, trousers, sweaters, etc. were collected and distributed to those in need.

In pursuance to the signed cooperation agreement, Coca-Cola donated approximately CHF 1,340 for repair works at the Red Cross warehouse for emergency stocks. Belarus Red Cross added CHF 2,000 required for completion of the works at the warehouse. The warehouse was used for the storage of emergency items, including the equipment purchased under DREF operation so that it is maintained in working condition for immediate delivery to the affected regions.



Red Cross distribution of relief items in Gomel region. Photo: Belarus Red Cross

The Minsk-based Red Cross team with psychological support skills (trained with funds from Austrian Red Cross) was actively involved in the operation.

During the reporting period there was a gas explosion in Logoisk, where the Red Cross could cover the needs of the affected people, who lost their homes, with clothing and blankets. In the meantime fundraising activities were organized by the Belarus Red Cross for treatment and rehabilitation for one of the victims of the domestic gas explosion who was severely injured.

The Belarus National Society mobilized its vehicle fleet to provide the necessary technical assistance during the operation and to transport the injured people to health care institutions.

With DREF funds Belarus Red Cross Gomel regional branch also provided assistance to 100 families affected by the spring floods. The food parcel composition was as follows: 1 can of meat, 1 can of fish, 1 can of pearl-barley, 10 packs of instant soup, 5 liters of bottled drinking water, 5 packs of crisp bread.

Achievements against outcomes

Relief distributions (food and basic non-food items)

Objective: Providing emergency assistance (basic food and clothing items) to approximately 2,000 homeless and other vulnerable people during a two month period

Output: The nutritional and winterisation/health needs of 2,000 homeless people are met during the period of harsh winter frosts

Activities planned:

- Local procurement of emergency items
- Local procurement of three power generators and barrels for water heating.
- Preparation of distribution plan
- Setting up Red Cross distribution points and tents for 2,000 homeless and other vulnerable city dwellers
- Reaching potential beneficiaries to inform them about assistance available at the Red Cross
- Distribution of emergency items by RC branches and their volunteers through the established distribution points.
- Coordination with local emergency departments and local authorities.
- Monitoring and reporting



Red Cross volunteer in Minsk City Photo: Belarus Red Cross

Impact: The project objective has been fully achieved. Belarus Red Cross relief activities received genuine support from the authorities and the public. The homeless were also actively involved in the operation – their leaders helped disseminate information about Red Cross distributions. During the operation a total of 16,835 people were assisted. 4,054 homeless people received assistance with food and clothing, and 12,781 vulnerable city dwellers were assisted through Red Cross warming stations and mobile teams.

The operation responded to the increased needs of beneficiaries by setting up winterized tents equipped with power generators, heating system and basic foldable furniture (chairs, tables, beds) for the people to sit on, take some rest, or change clothing. A total of eight tents (one per region) functioned as stations, where people could warm up and receive services and relief from the Belarus Red Cross Society. Key services of the warming stations were: the provision of hot tea, canned meat, and clothing. In two cities, Gomel and Molodechno, jointly with military units, the Red Cross added soup kitchens to the services provided by the warming stations. Furthermore, Red Cross volunteers distributed hot tea at district polyclinics and open markets, often visited by people from rural areas, as well as at unheated small railway and bus stations. In addition, the Brest Red Cross organization provided hot tea to the people queuing up at border crossing checkpoints.

211 staff members and 918 volunteers were mobilized all over the country to provide assistance during the extreme winter conditions.

The homeless were mainly reached by mobile Red Cross units deployed at municipal landfills and recycling points, as well as at temporary night-stay shelters for the homeless or social protection centers. Restoring family links and re-socialization support were added to the activities undertaken by the Red Cross in order to improve the situation of the homeless. The attitude towards the homeless has in general improved among the wide public.

The essential relief component of the extreme weather assistance consisted of sandwiches, canned meat, instant soups, porridge or potato puree and tea. A total of 4,106 food packages were assembled and distributed over the reporting period. Warm clothing, footwear, blankets, and mattresses were also provided according to individual needs.¹ In addition, Red Cross offered advocacy and psycho-social support to the homeless, restoring documents, doing the necessary paperwork for obtaining pensions, finding lodging and employment.

All the supplies planned under the DREF operation have been procured and put in place: eight winterized tents with foldable furniture (chairs, tables, beds), 30 big thermos flasks for hot water and soup, 1,500 units of clothing, 625 blankets, 65 mattresses and 60 pairs of winter boots for the homeless, five sets of radio stations and antennas, tools for Red Cross rescue teams; three power generators, heating fuel and utensils.

A “lessons learned” workshop was held in Minsk on 12-13 March 2012. The purpose of the workshop was to analyze the Red Cross extreme winter condition response operation, strengthen preparedness and response capacities of the Belarus Red Cross in regards to possible floods or other crises, as well as to explore partnership possibilities for joint preparedness efforts. The workshop was attended by 30 Red Cross branch staff and volunteers who have been actively involved in the DREF operation. The participants shared their experiences and lessons learned from the operation, analyzed their capacities and scenarios for response to possible spring floods. The workshop was co-facilitated by IFRC staff from the Minsk office and from the IFRC Europe Zone office.

The homeless people supported by the operation remain grateful and committed to support the Red Cross in fulfilling its mission. Thus during the local fundraising campaign on AIDS Memorial Day organized by

¹ [Please click here to see at the end of the report the detailed list of distributed items.](#)

Belarus Red Cross for the benefit of children living with HIV, a group of homeless people took active part in the action and donated to the Red Cross all their money collected during the day.

The Belarus Red Cross Headquarters, in close cooperation with the IFRC Country Representation, monitored the progress of the operation and provided the necessary technical expertise. Regional focal persons provided regular updates for meetings of the coordination committee set up at the Belarus Red Cross headquarters. The committee meetings were also attended by IFRC. Monitoring of the operation was carried out in Gomel, Vitebsk, Minsk city, and Minsk region by members of the coordination committee and Belarus Red Cross Secretary General.

This IFRC-supported training helped retain the volunteers mobilized for the operation. In June 2012 these volunteers attended Belarus Red Cross national DM School, the first event of this kind since 2001. The equipment purchased through this operation enabled Red Cross rescue teams to respond to extreme weather conditions in spring and summer. For the first time since 2000, Belarus Red Cross was invited to take part in simulation exercise conducted by EMERCOM of Russia. The national mechanism of emergency response in Belarus is currently being reviewed with the purpose of giving a more significant role in disaster management and response to Belarus Red Cross. The Red Cross rescue team remains stable and even receives new volunteers who learned about the winter emergency operation.

During the period of extremely hot weather on 1-9 July 2012, 27 Belarus Red Cross volunteers assisted 1,000 people in Minsk city and Gomel region. The tents procured with the support of the DREF funds were set up in public places for distribution of drinking water and provision of first aid. Red Cross volunteers with radio equipment patrolled municipal beaches in order to provide immediate assistance when required.

Contact information

For further information specifically related to this operation please contact:

- **Belarus Red Cross Society:** Viktor Kolbanov, Secretary General; Minsk; phone/ fax: +375 17 327 14 17 email: info@redcross.by
- **IFRC Office in Belarus:** Zlatko Kovac, IFRC Representative for Belarus and Ukraine; phone +375 17 223 34 46; fax: +375 17 223 90 60; e-mail: zlatko.kovac@ifrc.org
- **IFRC Europe Zone:** Alberto Monguzzi, Acting Disaster Management Coordinator; office phone: +36 1 8884 500; email: alberto.monguzzi@ifrc.org
- **IFRC Geneva:** Christine South, Operations Support, Phone: +41.22.730.4529, email: christine.south@ifrc.org

DREF history:

- The budget of the DREF operation was extended and DREF allocation for CHF 49,799 has been formally signed off on 07.02.12. This brings the total allocation to CHF 95,871.

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Click here

1. To see the DREF financial report **[below](#)**
2. To see the detailed list of distributed items **[below](#)**
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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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.

List of distributed items

| Location | Criteria for beneficiary selection | | | Items distributed | | | | | | | Equipment purchased within DREF |
|-----------------|------------------------------------|---|---|--|-------------------------------|------------|--------------|----------|----------|----------|--|
| | Homeless | People suffering from cold temperatures | fire victims, ex-prisoners, families having many children, families with low income | Clothes collected from the population (unit) | Clothes purchased within DREF | Felt boots | Food parcels | Dishware | Mats | blankets | |
| City/Town/Place | | | | Quantity | Quantity | Quantity | Quantity | Quantity | Quantity | Quantity | |
| Brest | 276 | 686 | | 2,000 | | | 276 | 500 | 100 | 40 | Seasonal frame-tent with generator and fan heater |
| Baranovichi | 15 | | | | | | 15 | | | | |
| Vitebsk | 652 | 578 | | 2,431 | 150 | | | 1,000 | | | Seasonal frame-tent with generator and fan heater Generator - 1 unit Blankets - 15 units Thermos - 8 units 5 volunteer kits (clothes), summer-winter |

| | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---------------|-------|-------|----|-----|-----|----|-------|-------|----|-----|--|
| Gomel | 1,005 | | | 810 | | 15 | 850 | 1,000 | 15 | 10 | Seasonal frame-tent with generator and fan heater Thermos 3l - 4 units Kettle 4l - 2 units Generator - 1 unit Rollaway bed - 13 units Folding table - 5 units Folding chairs - 12 units 5 volunteer kits (clothes), summer-winter |
| Mozyr | 65 | | | | | | 65 | | | | |
| Zhlobin | 50 | | | | | | 50 | | | | |
| Rogachev | 68 | | | | | | 68 | | | | |
| Rechitsa | 54 | | | | | | 54 | | | | |
| Svetlogorsk | 70 | | | | | | 70 | | | | |
| Grodno Region | 112 | 426 | | | 203 | | 112 | | | | Seasonal frame-tent with generator and fan heater Thermos - 3 units Felt boots for volunteers - 5 |
| Minsk Region | 440 | 2,266 | 32 | | | | 2,016 | 950 | | 142 | Seasonal frame-tent with generator and fan heater Kettle - 14 units 3 volunteer kits (clothes), summer-winter |

| | | | | | | | | | | | |
|--------------------------------|--------------|---------------|-----------|--------------|------------|-----------|--------------|--------------|------------|------------|---|
| Mogilev Region | 32 | 8,226 | | | | | | | | | Seasonal frame-tent with generator and fan heater |
| Minsk City | 1,125 | 311 | | | | 26 | 530 | 2,120 | | 130 | Seasonal frame-tent with generator and fan heater Thermos - 12 units Kettle - 4 units Thermopot - 10 units Sanitizer - 100 l 5 volunteer kits (clothes), summer-winter |
| Red Cross Railway Organization | 90 | 288 | | | | | | | | | Seasonal frame-tent with generator and fan heater 6 volunteer kits (clothes), summer-winter |
| Red Cross Headquarters | | | | 260 | | | | | | | Radiostation - 7 units Folding beds - 15 units Thermos - 20 units Start-charger - 1 unit Entrenching tools |
| Total | 4,054 | 12,781 | 32 | 5,501 | 353 | 41 | 4,106 | 5,570 | 115 | 322 | |

MDRBY001 - Belarus - Extreme Winter Condition

Appeal Launch Date: 01 feb 12

Appeal Timeframe: 01 feb 12 to 30 apr 12

Final Report

| Selected Parameters | |
|---------------------|----------|
| Reporting Timeframe | 2012/1-6 |
| Budget Timeframe | 2012/1-4 |
| Appeal | mdrby001 |
| Budget | APPROVED |

All figures are in Swiss Francs (CHF)

I. Funding

| | Disaster Management | Health and Social Services | National Society Development | Principles and Values | Coordination | TOTAL | Deferred Income |
|--------------------------------------|---------------------|----------------------------|------------------------------|-----------------------|--------------|--------|-----------------|
| A. Budget | 95,871 | | | | | 95,871 | |
| B. Opening Balance | 0 | | | | | 0 | |
| Income | | | | | | | |
| <u>Other Income</u> | | | | | | | |
| <i>DREF Allocations</i> | 95,871 | | | | | 95,871 | |
| C4. Other Income | 95,871 | | | | | 95,871 | |
| C. Total Income = SUM(C1..C4) | 95,871 | | | | | 95,871 | |
| D. Total Funding = B +C | 95,871 | | | | | 95,871 | |
| Coverage = D/A | 100% | | | | | 100% | |

II. Movement of Funds

| | Disaster Management | Health and Social Services | National Society Development | Principles and Values | Coordination | TOTAL | Deferred Income |
|---|---------------------|----------------------------|------------------------------|-----------------------|--------------|---------|-----------------|
| B. Opening Balance | 0 | | | | | 0 | |
| C. Income | 95,871 | | | | | 95,871 | |
| E. Expenditure | -94,280 | | | | | -94,280 | |
| F. Closing Balance = (B + C + E) | 1,591 | | | | | 1,591 | |

| Selected Parameters | |
|---------------------|----------|
| Reporting Timeframe | 2012/1-6 |
| Budget Timeframe | 2012/1-4 |
| Appeal | mdrby001 |
| Budget | APPROVED |

All figures are in Swiss Francs (CHF)

III. Expenditure

| 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) | | 95,871 | | | | | 95,871 | |
| Relief items, Construction, Supplies | | | | | | | | |
| Shelter - Relief | 24,000 | 26,107 | | | | 26,107 | -2,107 | |
| Clothing & Textiles | 23,120 | 23,739 | | | | 23,739 | -619 | |
| Food | 8,250 | 7,965 | | | | 7,965 | 285 | |
| Medical & First Aid | | 609 | | | | 609 | -609 | |
| Utensils & Tools | 12,950 | 11,888 | | | | 11,888 | 1,062 | |
| Other Supplies & Services | 6,400 | 7,029 | | | | 7,029 | -629 | |
| Total Relief items, Construction, Supplies | 74,720 | 77,338 | | | | 77,338 | -2,618 | |
| Logistics, Transport & Storage | | | | | | | | |
| Distribution & Monitoring | 1,000 | | | | | | 1,000 | |
| Transport & Vehicles Costs | | 1,472 | | | | 1,472 | -1,472 | |
| Total Logistics, Transport & Storage | 1,000 | 1,472 | | | | 1,472 | -472 | |
| Personnel | | | | | | | | |
| National Staff | 2,500 | 2,500 | | | | 2,500 | 0 | |
| National Society Staff | 1,950 | 2,043 | | | | 2,043 | -93 | |
| Total Personnel | 4,450 | 4,543 | | | | 4,543 | -93 | |
| Workshops & Training | | | | | | | | |
| Workshops & Training | 4,500 | 3,584 | | | | 3,584 | 916 | |
| Total Workshops & Training | 4,500 | 3,584 | | | | 3,584 | 916 | |
| General Expenditure | | | | | | | | |
| Travel | 2,200 | 600 | | | | 600 | 1,600 | |
| Information & Public Relations | 600 | 502 | | | | 502 | 98 | |
| Office Costs | 550 | 976 | | | | 976 | -426 | |
| Communications | 1,000 | 654 | | | | 654 | 346 | |
| Financial Charges | 1,000 | -1,149 | | | | -1,149 | 2,149 | |
| Other General Expenses | | 7 | | | | 7 | -7 | |
| Total General Expenditure | 5,350 | 1,589 | | | | 1,589 | 3,761 | |
| Indirect Costs | | | | | | | | |
| Programme & Services Support Recov | 5,851 | 5,754 | | | | 5,754 | 97 | |
| Total Indirect Costs | 5,851 | 5,754 | | | | 5,754 | 97 | |
| TOTAL EXPENDITURE (D) | 95,871 | 94,280 | | | | 94,280 | 1,591 | |
| VARIANCE (C - D) | | 1,591 | | | | 1,591 | | |