

DREF operation update

Yemen/MENA: Food insecurity

DREF operation n° MDRYE003 GLIDE n° OT-2012-0000073-YEM Update n° 01 – 2 September, 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.

Period covered by this update: 8th June to 15th August, 2012.

Summary: CHF 276,447 was allocated from the IFRC's Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF) on 8th June, 2012 to support the Yemen Red Crescent Society **to carry out assessments of food insecure communities, and to deliver assistance and provide health awareness messaging to some 16,000 persons affected by the current food insecurity situation.**

The food security situation in Yemen is at crisis levels and there is a need for scaled up action. According to OCHA, some 44 percent – 10 million people - of the country's population is food insecure. SMART nutrition survey (UNICEF, July 2012) stated that Lahj governorate (south Yemen) documents a global acute malnutrition (GAM) rate of 23% and a severe acute malnutrition (SAM) rate of 4.5% in the lowland ecological zone. In Rayma governorate (central Yemen), a SMART survey measures stunting prevalence at 71.4%, with severe stunting at 41.3%. These findings exceed WHO 'critical' levels. This includes not only Yemenis, but also migrants and refugees from other countries to whom Yemen is host today. Of these, half are unable to produce or buy enough food and in many areas families are resorting to desperate means - skipping meals and reducing portion sizes. The impact of this is especially worrying for women and children.

Recent reports have stated that more than one million children in Yemen under the age of five are estimated to suffer from malnutrition. Susceptible to common conditions and diseases such as diarrhoea, malaria and acute respiratory infections, 267,000 children are at risk of dying without proper nutrition interventions. Many more are vulnerable to longer-term and often irreversible health problems. Although the focus of the international community has, until recently, been on northern Yemen, further

assessments have shown that governorates in the south, west and north of the country are all at a critical level in terms of malnutrition. In a chronically underdeveloped country, characterised by unrest and



Assessment team field visit and interaction with local communities in the suburb of Sana'a. Photo: IFRC

conflict, water scarcity and poor access to sanitation, as well as a growing population and collapsing state services, the needs are extreme nationwide.

The implementation of the DREF operation was delayed due to certain changes of management and structure in the National Society, the holy month of Ramadan and Eid celebrations and due to the necessity to advertise for a country representative for Yemen.

The assessment team deployed between 10th to 15th June, with the intention of identifying the areas where Yemen RC could assist those most affected, met with Federation staff and other partners to identify potential support to address the food insecurity and its consequences in specific regions of Yemen. The team drafted a plan and options for support, however, the decision to move forward and to discuss the options for an emergency appeal are on hold until the new country representative is in place.

In mid August (11 – 15th), about 30 participants, representing the targeted governorate branches, namely Sana'a, Baydah and Hajjah, subsequently attended the training workshop in Sana'a., The training focused on health and nutrition awareness, with the aim to for trainers to further train community members and spread the message on health and nutrition. This will help to improve the health conditions in the targeted areas, and will support the distribution of the supplementary plumpy food that will be provided by Yemen RC through their joint MoU with WFP.

Moreover, Yemen RC intend to use the DREF funding allocated initially for the children's porridge, for the purchasing of food parcels for the mothers and family members of the targeted malnourished children, to complement and supplement the plumpy ration provided to the children through with WFP. This DREF update confirms these proposed changes.

Therefore, this DREF operation will be extended to the end of October 2012 to accomplish the objectives of the operation.

The major donors and partners of DREF include the Australian, American and Belgian governments, the Austrian Red Cross, the Canadian Red Cross and government, Danish Red Cross and 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 government, the Netherlands Red Cross and government, the Norwegian Red Cross and government, the Spanish Government, the Swedish Red Cross and 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 national society, would like to extend thanks to all for their generous contributions.”

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The situation

The food security situation in Yemen has reached crisis levels and there is a need for scaled up action. According to OCHA, some 44 percent – 10 million people of the country's population is food insecure. This includes not only Yemenis, but also migrants and refugees from other countries to whom Yemen is host today. Of these, half are unable to produce or buy enough food and in many areas families are resorting to desperate means skipping meals and reducing portion sizes. The impact of this is especially worrying for women and children.

Recent reports in July 2012 from Sana'a have stated that one million children in Yemen under the age of five are estimated to suffer from malnutrition, as families struggle to pay for food in one of the Arab world's poorest countries. Susceptible to common conditions and diseases such as diarrhoea, malaria and acute respiratory infections, 267,000 children are at risk of dying without proper nutrition interventions. Many more are vulnerable to longer-term and often irreversible health problems.



Meeting with community leader during the field visit to the rural area of Sana'a. Photo: IFRC

Although the focus of the international community has, until recently, been on northern Yemen, further assessments have shown that governorates in the south, west and north of the country are all at a critical level in terms of malnutrition. In a chronically underdeveloped country, characterised by unrest and conflict, water scarcity and poor access to sanitation, as well as a growing population and collapsing state services, the needs are extreme nationwide.

The operation was expected to start as early as the 10th of June and continue for three months to realize its full objectives. There has been a delay in implementation of activities due to NS demands concerning the following points:

- Questions were raised concerning provision of porridge which was removed from the plan based on the recommendation by the assessment team around the risk of contamination from unsafe water at local community level. The NS proposed to provide food baskets to families consisting of other local food items such as wheat, rice, oil, sugar, etc. As this does not comply with the original plan it has been agreed with the DREF management and is being submitted through this update.
- There was a considerable delay in implementation because of some organisational challenges with YRC, the onset of the holy month of Ramadan and the celebration of Eid and the process to recruit a country representative.

The Secretary General of the Yemen RC therefore approached the Federation, asking for the extension of the DREF until the end of October and for the agreement to procure the food parcels instead of the porridge. Due to all these reasons, the Yemen RC and the Federation need to extend the implementation period of DREF for another two months to ensure a well-organized and implemented operation, reaching out to the most vulnerable in the target communities.

In the meantime, the IFRC arranged for deployment of an experienced health and nutrition delegate, who has been working closely with the Yemen RC in support of the DREF implementation and implementation has been ongoing but at a slower pace than originally foreseens.

Coordination and partnerships

The IFRC and YRCS have kept in close coordination and contact with WFP in Yemen, which is a key partner in the operation. WFP has proposed to provide supplementary food items (Plumpy) for distribution to children under five suffering or vulnerable to moderate acute malnutrition (MAM). The distribution of plumpy will start in the second half of September 2012 and will go through until the end of October 2012.

In a separate meeting between WFP and YRCS, an MoU was reviewed and agreement was reached directly with YRCS. WFP expressed their strong intention to continue cooperation with YRCS to extend their support to other governorates, especially in Taiz, Aden, and Lahj with focus on western coastal areas. They are also ready to provide special food items for pregnant and lactating mothers in upcoming phases. Within the coming few days, the final version of the MoU will be signed between WFP and YRCS identifying roles and responsibilities of each party in the process of food distribution operations in target areas as part of the DREF operation.

The UAE RC has also been very active during the reporting period as it combined its usual Ramadan charitable activities with an emergency operation to respond to the food insecurity crisis in Yemen. Four planes arrived in Sana'a loaded with about 270 MTs of food items, medicines, clothing, etc. The YRCS worked closely with UAE RC office in Yemen to distribute food baskets consisting of wheat, oil, dates, sugar, and rice, to needy families in five governorates. A fundraising campaign was launched in UAE for one day where about 18 millions UAE Dirham (USD 5 million) were collected in favour of vulnerable people affected by food insecurity in Yemen. At the official government level, UAE donated about 500,000 Dirham (USD 136,000) for the Yemeni people through the Sheikh Khalifa Foundation. The funds will be used to provide food items and reach directly to the beneficiaries.

Within the RC/RC Movement regular updates and information on the DREF implementation has been shared by the Yemeni RC and the Federation with partners through the Movement Operation Coordination (MOC). Yemeni RC is taking the lead on the DREF implementation, supported by the Federation, and also coordinates with other stakeholders such as the local authorities, UN agencies and local communities at the targeted areas.

Red Cross and Red Crescent action

Progress towards outcomes

Relief / food distributions	
<p>Outcome: The health and malnutrition levels of 1,000 children under the age of five are improved through the provision of high energy porridge in the three food insecure governorates of Sana'a, Al Baida, and Hajja for three months through the YRCS health care centres.</p>	
<p>Outputs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1,000 vulnerable children suffering from food insecurity have received the necessary food items which contributed to improving their health and nutrition. 	<p>Activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Train/retrain NS volunteers on assessment and distribution techniques and methods Assess most vulnerable children in need of assistance accessed via YRCS health centres Distribute of porridge to 1,000 children below five years, providing 10 kilograms to each child on a monthly basis over three months in each the three mentioned governorates. Distribute of Plumpy (92 grams daily) to 1,000 children below five years, providing 2800 grams to each child on a monthly basis over three months in each the three mentioned governorates. Distribute of food package to 1,000 Households of the children below five years on a monthly basis over three months in each the three mentioned governorates. Purchase and transport of food items. Prepare distribution tools using the list of the beneficiaries targeted Ensure monitoring, evaluation and reporting on the distribution Appointment of a local Operations Support Officer full time who will also oversee the implementation and maintain the information flows between all parties. The costs will include his salary and office costs related to the position

Progress:

- Three field coordinators have been identified at the three targeted governorates branches in addition to one coordinator at the HQ to coordinate and be in charge of the DREF operation implementation and reporting.
- The porridge will be replaced by the plumpy food items that will be provided by WFP, in addition to the food parcels that will be procured by Yemen RC with the support for the Federation from the local market. A MoU document is already prepared to be signed by YRCS and WFP and YRCS will resume food distributions for the malnourished children and their families based on this support.
- The following table indicates the plumpy distribution plan for the three targeted areas (Sana'a, Hajja and Al Baydah). Yemen RC propose to use the budget line allocated for children's feeding materials to be reallocated for food parcels to be distributed for the mothers of the children and other members of the families, in a targeted distribution to complement the supplementary food ration provided to the malnourished children.

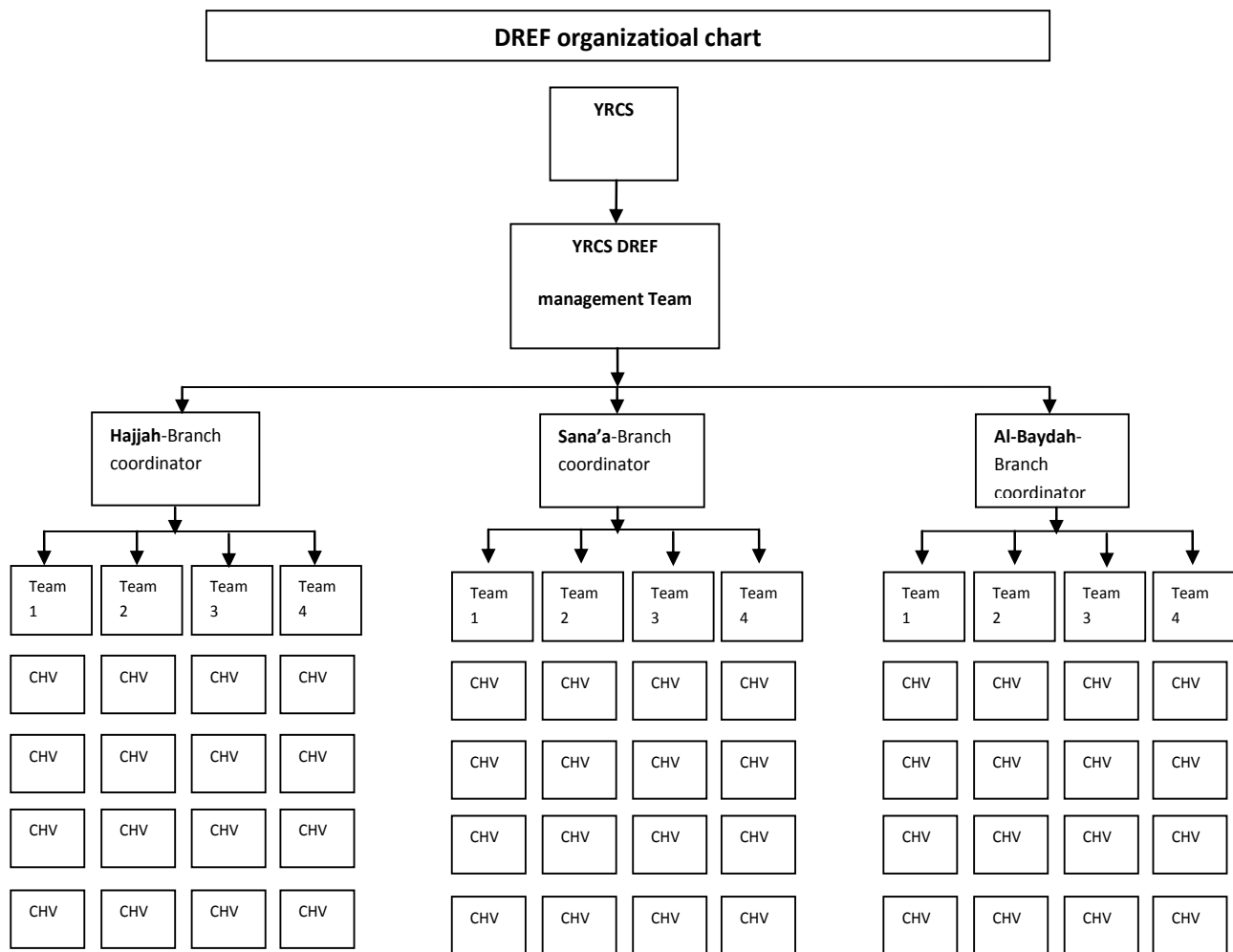
Date of expected distribution	Target area	Number of targets	Plumpy	Food parcel
1 st September 2012	-Sana'a -Baydah -Hajjah	1000 malnourished children	2800 kg	0
		1000 Households	0	1000 Pack
1 st October 2012	-Sana'a -Baydah -Hajjah	1000 malnourished children	2800 kg	0
		1000 Households	0	1000 Pack
1 st November 2012	-Sana'a -Baydah -Hajjah	1000 malnourished children	2800 kg	0
		1000 Households	0	1000 Pack

- The procurement process will be initiated by Yemen RC for the food parcels since the Federation has approved for the reallocation of the budget items from the children's porridge to food parcels through this DREF update, An approval has also been made through this update to enable the timeframe of the DREF funded operation to run through until the end of October 2012.
- The following items will be included in the food parcels:

<i>Item</i>	<i>Quantity per month/HH</i>
Wheat (kg)	50
Rice (kg)	10
Oil (L)	4
Fave beans(Box)	20
Lintels (kg)	2
Sugar (kg)	10
Salt (kg)	1
carton	1

Challenges: The implementation process of the DREF operation got delayed for many reasons can be summarised as follows:

- The understanding of the National Society leadership and high expectations of what DREF support includes, the need to reallocate budget lines, especially salary support to the staff and the links to the implementation of other projects.
- Some of the NS staff, who were deployed to work in the initial DREF operation, are seconded or funded by PNSs projects and had other responsibilities and this was one of the challenges to kick off the DREF implementation.
- The month of holy fasting (Ramadan) and the following Eid celebration, delayed the implementation process.



Emergency health / health awareness

Outcome: Health awareness is improved amongst approximately 15,000 or more expectant or lactating mothers attending YRCS health centres in three of the food insecure governorates (Sana'a , Al Baida, and Hajja) over the next three months

<p>Outputs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> MCH and health education is provided to 15,000 or more expectant and lactating mothers through outreach programmes linked to YRCS health centres 	<p>Activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Plan and develop appropriate health awareness training and materials Carry out awareness campaigns/education sessions and share appropriate materials with new or expectant mothers attending YRCS health centres. Recruit 60 volunteers - 20 per month in each of the three governorates – to work for seven days to hold education sessions
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Progress:

- A team has been formed by Yemen RC from the DM and CBHD units in addition to the Health/Nutrition delegate and the Federation Programme and Reporting Officer as well as a representative from the Ministry of Health, to work jointly on the health and nutrition awareness materials development.
- The Federation will use the CBHFA approach in the training as recommended by the Federation's health team. Therefore, the relevant units from the module will be used in Arabic as education materials.

Under-five malnourished children and Pregnant and lactating women

Supplementary Plumpy donated by WFP for 1,000 children between 6 – 59 months and food packages purchased by YRCS for 1,000 households (the families of the malnourished children or lactating and pregnant women) will be distributed monthly for three months

- A list of malnourished children under-five in each targeted area from the MoH will be verified.
- In each geographical area; one specific group will be selected based on the prevalence of malnutrition of under-five children.
- The total number of beneficiaries will be identified after local review and verification.
- The parents (mothers and or father) of those children will be invited for a health education sessions on monthly bases.
- A food package (enough for one month) will be given to the parents to feed their children and family members to supplement the ration provided by WFP for the targeted malnourished children.

Capacity building:

A five-days training on targeting and selecting the malnourished children has been completed on the 15th August 2012 for YRCS branches volunteers (28 volunteers) from the three targeted areas (Sana'a, Hajjah and Al Baydah), and they are the ones who will keep close monitoring to the implementation process and report from the branches to the Yemen RC – HQ. And They will act as team leaders and trainers in the field during the projects implementation period. And it was facilitated by: YRCS staff, 1 trainer from the MOH and IFRC delegate

Following on from this ToT completed in August, the YRCS will now do the following:

- o Establish a community health volunteers teams in each branch
- o Conduct a training sessions for the community health volunteers for 4 days.
- o Number of volunteers to be trained is 30 in each branch.
- o Expected date to start 2 sept 2012 at the same time in the three branches

After the trainings are completed, the YRCS will start implementation of the intervention activities of the project.

Challenges:

- The security situation in the country and accessibility to the targeted communities.

Assessment

Outcome: An assessment is carried out by YRCS, supported by the Federation and partners, to further define the possible scope and scale of the food insecurity interventions to be carried out by YRCS supported by a possible Federation appeal

Assessment	
Outputs <ul style="list-style-type: none">• A participatory assessment has been conducted to assess the food security situation and the possible role for YRCS supported by the wider Federation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Consolidate assessment team with NS and IFRC participants in closed consultation with the existing PNSs in Yemen• Train YRCS volunteers and staff on food security and livelihood assessment techniques• Conduct field visits applying food security assessment tools and methodologies Data analysis and compilation of findings to inform the planning process for an appropriate intervention and possible appeal

Progress:

- The assessment team, composed of four members from the Federation were deployed from the periode extending from 9 to 15 June 2012, worked together with colleagues from Yemen RC.
- The team examined the food insecurity needs and met with different stakeholders from Movement partners, UN agencies and donors' representatives in Yemen.
- Visits to local community at Sana'a Governorate were undertaken to assess and identify livelihood means and coping mechanism.
- Special focus on the warehouse and logistical capacity of Yemen RC with a visit to Yemen RC main warehouse in Sana'a and physical inspection to the materials was conducted.
- A Mission report was prepared with findings and recommendations for possible emergency appeal to address food insecurity in Yemen targeting three governorates for initial intervention.

Challenges:

- Due to the security limitation the team was able to visit only one community in Sana'a governorate and couldn't make it to the other two targeted governorates.
- The food insecurity emergency appeal development got delayed due to the reasons highlighted earlier
- Any further delay on the DREF implementation will have a direct negative impact on the emergency appeal development.

Contact information

For further information specifically related to this operation please contact:

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For Performance and Accountability

(planning, monitoring, evaluation and reporting enquiries)

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DREF history:

- This DREF was initially allocated on 8th June 2012 for CHF 276,447 three months to assist 16,000 beneficiaries.
 - 01 DREF operation updates issued.
 - The DREF operation was extended until the end of October.
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[Click here](#)

1. Click [here](#) to return to the title page
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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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