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Operation Update Report

Armenia: Hailstorm

 International Federation
of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

DREF n° MDRAM006 Operation update n° 1	GLIDE n° FL-2020-000171-ARM
Date of issue: 26 January 2021	Timeframe covered by this update: 13 July 2020 to 26 January 2021
Operation start date: 13 July 2020	Operation timeframe: extended from 5 months to 6 months
Funding requirements: CHF 276,372	
N° of people being assisted: 2,836	
Host National Society: Armenian red Cross Society (ARCS)	
Red Cross Red Crescent Movement partners currently actively involved in the operation: IFRC	
Other partner organizations actively involved in the operation: The local and regional authorities of targeted communities are actively involved in the operation.	

Summary of major revisions made to emergency plan of action:

Through this DREF Operation Update no. 1, a one-month extension of the operational timeframe is requested for the following reasons:

- 200 households who initially were planned to be provided with vouchers for clothes approached ARCS with the request to change the modality and instead of vouchers they preferred to receive cash and household items.
- Due to COVID-19 and the conflict situation, 47 out of 958 households could not reach the bank to receive their cash on time.

The one-month extension will allow people to obtain their cash from the bank, which will entail ARCS to perform all planned activities in the extended timeframe of the operation.

A. SITUATION ANALYSIS

Description of the disaster

On 13 July 2020, a heavy hailstorm hit the city of Gyumri, Armenia. Though in the past years Armenia and the targeted region faced hailstorms, this was an unprecedented hazard in its volume and mainly due to the fact that it also affected the urban areas, besides the rural territories.

Within a couple of hours, the hail blocked the sewage systems and the rainwaters flooded the streets, houses, shops and other facilities. According to the information provided by the meteorological services, such a hailstorm happened 170 years ago. In Gyumri, there are neighborhoods where the people still live in temporary shelters (container type houses) since the earthquake in 1988. Their houses are too old and vulnerable to such hazards. The water caused significant damages to their houses, belongings including food stocks, clothing etc. According to the rapid assessment conducted by the



Flooded Gyumri. Source: MES website

ARCS Shirak branch and information provided by the local authorities, there are and footwear, electric appliances, about 1,000 households affected by the hailstorm and about 600 households (about 2,670 persons), who are residing in such containers are affected the most. They have urgent basic needs including food, clothing, household items, bed linen, etc.

The Gyumri municipality have been receiving requests from affected people, which have been discussed at the municipality case by case. There has been a limited budget at the municipality for providing assistance to those who are in extreme needs.

Summary of the current response

Overview of Host National Society

The Armenian Red Cross Society's auxiliary role to the Government of the Republic of Armenia is mandated by the 1993 Presidential decree. The mission of the organization is to reduce vulnerability of the population through mobilization of the power of humanity, to be prepared to cope with situations, which may cause vulnerability among the population, to provide essential support by assisting people made vulnerable by harsh socioeconomic conditions. ARCS implements its mission countrywide through 11 regional, 1 territorial and 52 community branches and with the support of over 3,500 volunteers. ARCS focuses its activities in the spheres of health and social care, disaster preparedness and response, disaster risk reduction, population movement, youth and first aid among other activities.

Please refer to the B. Operational Strategy as well as to the C. Detailed Operational Strategy sections for more information on activities conducted so far by the national Society.

Overview of Red Cross Red Crescent Movement Actions in country

The ARCS maintains coordination with all partners in-country in sharing information. The Armenian Red Cross is working with partner National Societies (PNSs) including Austrian, Danish, German, Icelandic, Italian and Swiss Red Cross Societies, on different programmes, but no direct support is being provided for this emergency by PNSs.

The Swiss Red Cross is supporting projects related to primary health care, and older people. The German Red Cross supports youth empowerment, protection and health. The Danish Red Cross is running projects focused on disaster risk reduction and capacity building. The Austrian Red Cross is working on community resilience, disaster risk reduction and refugee assistance. The Italian Red Cross provides support in health and First Aid. The Icelandic Red Cross provides support in psychosocial support. None of the PNSs are involved in responding to the current emergency.

Overview of non-RCRC actors' actions in country

The Armenian Red Cross Society (ARCS) has contacted the regional and local authorities to identify consequences of the disaster as well as the size and needs of affected communities and population. On the regional level, the ARCS representatives communicated with the Shirak Region administration staff, where an agreement for cooperation and information exchange was reached.

The National Society, as a DMCT (Disaster Management Country Team) member receives and shares information on the situation with all stakeholders. For the time being, Armenian Red Cross Society is the only organization among INGOs and NGOs that initiates actions for provision of humanitarian assistance to the affected people. According to the available information, there are no other agencies planning assistance to the affected households. The DMCT has a strategy to respond to major disasters like earthquake or **conflict escalation. There are no plans for responding to small-scale disasters**, such as this emergency. The National Society is in permanent contact with above mentioned structures to avoid any types of duplication and ensure that the most vulnerable and affected are reached. At this stage, the local authorities receive requests from the affected households for exploring possibilities for assistance.

Needs analysis

Gyumri is the second largest city of Armenia. It was badly affected during the earthquake in 1988 when almost all infrastructure, houses, factories, hospitals and schools were destroyed. Though many years have passed since that time but the economy – which is mostly industrial in Gyumri – did not recover. Gyumri is considered as one of the poorest regions in Armenia with a very high rate of unemployment. The main income for the people is related to small businesses like trade and service provisions. A number of people are also employed in the governmental institutions like schools, hospitals. Many people are relying on the subsidies and pensions provided by the government. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic in the country, Shirak region also was affected socially and economically, creating another vulnerability for the region. The situation of people living in poor conditions worsened even further.

The water caused significant damages to their houses, belongings including food stocks, clothing and footwear, electric appliances, etc. According to the rapid assessment conducted by the ARCS Shirak branch and information provided by the local authorities, there are about 1,000 households affected by the hailstorm and about 600 households (about 2,670

persons), who are residing in such containers are affected the most. They have urgent basic needs including food, clothing, household items, bed linen, etc.

Therefore, to meet people's basic needs, the ARCS the option to provide unconditional cash to most affected households from the hailstorm was considered. The ARCS gained experience in providing unconditional cash to people affected by hails and mudflows during previous DREF operations. Agreements are in place with financial institutions. Local markets are fully functional.

Targeting

Based on the needs in the affected region, the Armenian Red Cross Society - supported by the IFRC - provided unconditional cash and in-kind goods to approximately 2,670 most affected people. The main selection criterion is households living in a neighborhood of temporary shelters whose houses were severely affected by the hailstorm. Community members were involved in the preparation of the lists of households to be prioritized.

ARCS coordinated with the regional and local level authorities to finalize the lists of people and agree on the selection process and most appropriate distribution methods, timing and place. Communication with affected families in order to keep them informed on the criteria and selection process also was done. A feedback and complaint mechanism established, through which people were able to raise concerns, ask questions and provide suggestions for improvement.

Risk Analysis

The main risk was related to the process of the cash distribution to beneficiaries. In order to avoid long queues in the bank and related discomfort it was decided to organize the distribution with fixed dates and names of beneficiaries who were informed beforehand when and where to go for getting the entitled assistance.

B. OPERATIONAL STRATEGY

Proposed strategy

Detailed assessment of disaster area helps to identify the most affected households, develop the targeting strategy and registration system to deliver assistance, distribute cash by bank transfer, monitor and evaluate the activities. Implementation of community mobilization was done in close cooperation with regional and local authorities throughout the programme cycle (such as in compiling lists of people the Red Cross will work with, encashment and distribution planning, information dissemination and post distribution monitoring).

Based on the information received from local authorities and from the ARCS assessment, the people affected by hail have a gap in covering their basic needs. ARCS is providing:

- A one-off distribution of unconditional cash to approx. 958 affected households (approximately 2,836 persons). The base for the amount is AMD 23,200 (CHF 44.3) per person to cover the immediate needs on food and hygiene items.
- The household items like bed linens, mattresses, pillows, blankets procured centrally by ARCS and provided for further distribution to 2,670 people alongside with cash distributions.


Implemented activities:


The National Society has implemented the following activities so far:

- ARCS Secretary General met with the Mayor of Gyumri. The project was presented and the coordination issues were discussed.
- The press release describing the ARCS activities in response to the hailstorm in Gyumri was published. The entire project was broadly covered in media, press release was published prior to initiating the project activities. The information on the entitlements, distribution days and other relevant information were communicated with people in the communities and local authorities.
- A local coordinator and 10 volunteers were recruited, briefed and trained for implementing the Project related activities. Besides the aforementioned people, ARCS DM staff and head of ARCS Shirak branch are involved in the implementation.
- Meetings with city administration was held to discuss the organisational issues, the registration of people to be assisted and pre-distribution monitoring processes. Local authorities actively participated in all the stages of the project.
- The complaints and suggestions mechanism has been agreed on and set up. A box for written suggestions and complaints was placed in the ARCS Shirak branch. The box has been reviewed on a weekly basis and responses were provided. The contact phone number and e-mail address as alternative was provided.
- The first part of the list of people to be assisted was provided by the municipality. ARCS started the monitoring of the lists provided.

- The agreement has been signed with ArmBusinessBank (activated the pre-agreement), and with bedlinen suppliers.
- A request for VAT exemption was successfully filed and was approved by the Government.
- The cash distribution plan has been prepared.
- 200 households who initially were planned to be provided with vouchers for clothes approached ARCS with request to change the modality and instead of vouchers they preferred to receive cash and household items. This was negotiated with IFRC and it was approved to change the modality.

C. DETAILED OPERATIONAL PLAN

 <p>Shelter People reached: 2,670 Male¹: 1,068 Female: 1,602</p>		
Outcome 1: 400 Households are provided with in-kind assistance to address their basic needs		
Output 1.1: Output 1.1: Basic household items assistance is provided to the affected families.		
Indicators:	Target	Actual
400 households provided with in-kind assistance (bedlinen, mattresses, pillows, etc) to address their basic needs	400	Approx. 859
1,800 of people reached with household items (new indicator)	1,800 ²	2,670
Progress towards outcomes		
<p>People affected by hailstorm and floods required various forms of support, from emergency food items to basic household items. Gyumri is the second largest city of Armenia and was badly affected during the earthquake in 1988 when almost all infrastructure, houses, factories, hospitals, and schools were destroyed, since then the economy – which is mostly industrial in Gyumri – did not recover. Gyumri is considered as one of the poorest regions in Armenia with a very high rate of unemployment.</p> <p>Based on the information received from local authorities and from the ARCS assessment, the people affected by hail had a gap in covering their basic needs. In addition to cash, 2,670 people received essential household items like bed linen, mattresses, pillows, blankets.</p> <p>200 households who initially were planned to be provided with vouchers for clothes approached ARCS with request to change the modality and instead of vouchers, they preferred to receive cash and household items. This was negotiated with IFRC and it was approved to change the modality.</p> <p>The assistance was very relevant. Close communication with local authorities made the process transparent and effective.</p>		

 <p>Livelihoods and basic needs People reached: 2,836 Male: 1,134 Female: 1,702</p>		
Outcome 1: Communities, especially in disaster and crisis affected areas, restore and strengthen their livelihoods		
Output 1.1: 400 Households are provided with unconditional/multipurpose cash grants, and 200 households are provided with vouchers for purchasing clothes and shoes to address their basic needs		
Indicators:	Target	Actual
400 households (1,800 people) are provided with multipurpose cash grants	400 HHs (1,800 people)	958 HHs Approx. (2,836 people)

¹ Sex disaggregation is an estimation for both sectors.

² Target reflects the original target set at the beginning of the operation.

200 households (870 people) are provided with for purchasing clothes and shoes	200 HHS (870 people)	0, see text below
Progress towards outcomes		
<p>958 affected households (approximately 2,836 persons) received cash. 200 households who initially were planned to be provided with vouchers for clothes approached ARCS with request to change the modality and instead of vouchers they preferred to receive cash and household items. This was negotiated with IFRC and it was approved to change the modality.</p> <p>Due to COVID-19 and the conflict situation, 47 out of 958 households could not make to reach the bank to receive their cash in time. However, the money has been transferred from ARCS main bank account to the bank account opened specifically for the DREF operation. Based on that, ARCS is requesting one-month extension so that remaining members of households could go and receive their cash from the bank as planned.</p> <p>65 per cent of beneficiaries are women, but because we rely on the list of people representing household and registered directly to receive cash, it is hard to consider it as an exact gender ratio.</p> <p>The assistance was very relevant. The cash was used mainly for procuring food and clothes. The methodology of providing the cash through the bank was quite appreciated as it was a very transparent and appropriate way. Meanwhile it is important to mention that the capacities of the branches to serve a certain number of people was taken into account as an outcome from previous DREF operation. It was mentioned that the time allocated for the assessment and beneficiary registration is limited and the process requires more time. The ARCS staff and volunteers worked very hard and covered all tasks planned initially.</p>		

Strengthen National Society		
Outcome S1.1: National Society capacity building and organizational development objectives are facilitated to ensure that National Societies have the necessary legal, ethical and financial foundations, systems and structures, competences and capacities to plan and perform		
Output S1.1.4: National Societies have effective and motivated volunteers who are protected		
Indicators:	Target	Actual
# of volunteers trained	10	10
Progress towards outcomes		
<i>Please see description of activities on page 3.</i>		

International Disaster Response		
Output S2.1.4: Supply chain and fleet services meet recognized quality and accountability standards		
Progress towards outcomes		
<i>Please see description of activities on page 3.</i>		

Influence others as leading strategic partner		
Outcome S3.2: The programmatic reach of the National Societies and the IFRC is expanded.		
Output S3.1.1: IFRC and NS are visible, trusted and effective advocates on humanitarian issues		
Output S3.1.2: IFRC produces high-quality research and evaluation that informs advocacy, resource mobilization and programming.		
Output S3.2.1: Resource generation and related accountability models are developed and improved		
Indicators:	Target	Actual
# of press releases published (to be reported at the end of the operation)	N/A	1
Progress towards outcomes		
<i>Please see description of activities on page 3.</i>		

Effective, credible and accountable IFRC

Output S4.1.3: Financial resources are safeguarded; quality financial and administrative support is provided contributing to efficient operations and ensuring effective use of assets; timely quality financial reporting to stakeholders

Progress towards outcomes

Please see description of activities on page 3.

D. Financial Report

The interim financial report is [annexed](#) to this report.

Reference documents



Click here for:

- [Emergency Plan of Action \(EPoA\)](#)

For further information, specifically related to this operation please contact:

In the Armenian Red Cross Society

- Dr. Anna Yeghiazaryan, Secretary General; redcross@redcross.am; +374 60 625050
- Lusine Kocharyan, Head of Disaster Management Department, arcs-dm@redcross.am; +374 60 625058

In the IFRC Country Cluster Support Team for South Caucasus

- Olga Dzhumaeva, Head of CCST, olga.dzhumaeva@ifrc.org

In the IFRC Regional Office for Europe

- Seval Guzelkilinc, Head of Disaster and Crisis, seval.guzelkilinc@ifrc.org

In IFRC Geneva

- Programme and Operations focal point: Antoine Belair, Senior Officer, Ops Coordination, antoine.belair@ifrc.org
- DREF focal point: Karla Morizzo, Senior Officer, DREF – Disaster and Crisis Department; email: karla.morizzo@ifrc.org

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 Humanitarian 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.

The IFRC's work is guided by Strategy 2020 which puts forward three strategic aims:



Save lives,
protect livelihoods,
and strengthen recovery
from disaster and crises.



Enable **healthy**
and **safe** living.



Promote **social inclusion**
and a culture of
non-violence and **peace**.

DREF Operation

INTERIM FINANCIAL REPORT

Selected Parameters			
Reporting Timeframe	2020/7-11	Operation	MDRAM006
Budget Timeframe	2020/7-11	Budget	APPROVED

Prepared on 26/Jan/2021

All figures are in Swiss Francs (CHF)

MDRAM006 - Armenia: Hailstorm

Operating Timeframe: 24 Jul 2020 to 31 Dec 2020

I. Summary

Opening Balance	0
Funds & Other Income	276,372
DREF Allocations	276,372
Expenditure	-276,598
Closing Balance	-226

II. Expenditure by area of focus / strategies for implementation

Description	Budget	Expenditure	Variance
AOF1 - Disaster risk reduction			0
AOF2 - Shelter			0
AOF3 - Livelihoods and basic needs	276,373	276,598	-225
AOF4 - Health			0
AOF5 - Water, sanitation and hygiene			0
AOF6 - Protection, Gender & Inclusion			0
AOF7 - Migration			0
Area of focus Total	276,373	276,598	-225
SF11 - Strengthen National Societies			0
SF12 - Effective international disaster management			0
SF13 - Influence others as leading strategic partners			0
SF14 - Ensure a strong IFRC			0
Strategy for implementation Total			0
Grand Total	276,373	276,598	-225

DREF Operation

INTERIM FINANCIAL REPORT

Selected Parameters			
Reporting Timeframe	2020/7-11	Operation	MDRAM006
Budget Timeframe	2020/7-11	Budget	APPROVED

Prepared on 26/Jan/2021

All figures are in Swiss Francs (CHF)

MDRAM006 - Armenia: Hailstorm

Operating Timeframe: 24 Jul 2020 to 31 Dec 2020

III. Expenditure by budget category & group

Description	Budget	Expenditure	Variance
General Expenditure		212	-212
Financial Charges		212	-212
Contributions & Transfers	259,505	259,505	0
Cash Transfers National Societies	259,505	259,505	0
Indirect Costs	16,868	16,882	-14
Programme & Services Support Recover	16,868	16,882	-14
Grand Total	276,373	276,598	-225