

## DREF Review of Sudan Floods

### Lessons Learned Workshop

**Date:** 30 November 2012, Khartoum

**Facilitators:** Melanie Ogle and Ilona Hatakka, IFRC Africa zone Disaster Management Unit



**Picture 1:** Lesson learned workshop in IFRC's office in Khartoum.

The day-long lesson learned workshop was part of the review of DREF floods operation (MDRSD014) in Sudan.

The workshop was split in two parts: firstly a timeline-mapping exercise and secondly a small group brainstorming on various aspects of the flood operation. The participants were mostly branch level members, with limited participation from SRCS headquarters and IFRC. The outcome was 'bottom up' recommendations from branch members for SRCS and IFRC, based on the reality in the field. The list of participants in the lesson learned workshop is found in annex 1, and participant feedback on the lessons learned workshop in annex 2.

#### **Timeline exercise**

The first exercise, after the introduction and target setting, split participants into their branches to describe how the operation went from the start of the floods to the date of the workshop. The aim was to remind participants of their role in the operation and to prepare for the next exercise, participatory brainstorming.

The timelines began with preparedness, including mobilizing volunteers and early warning systems, through to assessment, distribution and monitoring. They revealed that assessment and distribution reports were sent by branches on a regular basis, at times on a daily basis when flooding was at its peak. According to SRCS's contingency plan, an emergency room was set up at headquarters, including a devoted emergency telephone line, which helped to ensure that assessment data was collected efficiently.

The timeline highlighted problems with the delivery of goods. One branch reported that all the non food items (NFIs) had already been distributed in September, before the DREF funding could have purchased and distributed the NFIs in question. Another branch said it hasn't received anything from headquarters (however NFIs were received from UNHCR). What maybe needs to be clarified by the national society, as a result of the timeline exercise, is that although the logistics department reported that all goods have been procured, delivered to point of dispatch and the "goods received" note received, the branches reported inconsistencies. The timeline exercise is annex 3 to this report.

Overall, it seems that the branches were not specifically aware of this DREF operation, they were not aware of the scope of the DREF operation, the amounts or quantities of NFIs included or the health and WatSan activities. It seems that branches received varying items, not always consistent with the DREF bulletin, sometimes using prepositioned stock or receiving items for distribution on behalf of other organizations (such as UNICEF and UNHCR), which are not part of this DREF operation. An operation cannot really be implemented efficiently unless the people involved are clear about the scope of the operation and the resources available.

#### Participatory brainstorming exercise

The second task was to challenge participants to give positive and negative feedback on the response and recommendations for future operations. The participants were split into three groups and assigned one of the topics to brainstorm on (what worked well, what were the challenges and recommendations), at the end of 15-20 minutes, groups were mixed up and assigned another topic. This continued until all the topics were exhausted. Groups then provided feedback in plenary and other participants could contribute to topics that they were not involved in.



**Picture 2.** Brainstorming methodology used to collect the feedback from participations.

The outcome of the participatory brainstorming exercise is summarized below. SRCS and IFRC are urged to consider the recommendations emerging from each group, in order to prepare a better response to future flooding disasters.

Theme	Positive	Negative	Recommendations
<b>Coordination</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Coordination effective at state level</li> <li>• Regular coordination meeting</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Some stakeholders don't show up regularly</li> <li>• Some stakeholders don't coordinate across sector</li> <li>• Development NGOs don't have money or don't support disaster work</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sector level coordination required during disasters</li> <li>• Coordination is always mentioned but not budgeted, as an activity needs to budget for</li> <li>• Unified database of information, everyone using the same information, village population, risk hazards,</li> </ul>



		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Commitments made during meetings are not always fulfilled</li> </ul>	<p>vulnerability etc. to ensure accurate shared information by all organizations – this should be organized by HAC, but this is not happening, not as strong at the state level as it should be – collect information, but do not disseminate information</p>
<b>Complaints Procedure</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Complaints are rare and are sorted out at the time</li> <li>• Selection criteria and community sensitization helps communities to understand the process</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No formal system of receiving complaints</li> <li>• Complaints come from community members who don't receive anything or community leaders who have not been involved</li> <li>• Late distributions are a cause of complaint</li> <li>• Distribution items are not the things that are needed – assessment issues</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improve quality of distributed items</li> <li>• Put in place a formalized complaints mechanism</li> <li>• Improve response timing</li> <li>• Take into account traditions and culture of the local communities</li> </ul>
<b>Water and Sanitation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Aqua tab distribution accompanied by health message</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Water pumps are submerged and affected</li> <li>• Water is not functioning as normal</li> <li>• Long distances to the nearest water source, price of water increases and as a result people drink the flood water</li> <li>• High costs of running ERU (White Nile state); the branch cannot afford to run from their resources</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Water stations should be constructed in higher areas (perhaps using platforms) to ensure that they don't get contaminated</li> <li>• Temporary water storage facilities should be distributed including water bladders</li> <li>• Spare parts required for hand pumps as part of preparedness and teams trained to maintain water points</li> </ul>
<b>Assessment</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Every branch has a team of train staff and volunteers in assessment</li> <li>• Timely assessment, which includes questionnaire forms, meeting community leaders, coordination with stakeholders in the area, interviews and observation.</li> <li>• Procedures and templates</li> <li>• Identifying beneficiaries, total damage, partial damage</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Late assessments due to inaccessible areas, and then late response</li> <li>• Insufficient stock at the branch level</li> <li>• Weak capacity and inadequate finances at the branch level</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Require better communications and transport/logistics for assessment</li> <li>• Strategic stock at Branch level for 5,000 families (less than 2,000 state needs to cover the needs)</li> <li>• Continuous training and more volunteer emergency teams</li> </ul>
<b>Early warning systems</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strengthens quick response</li> <li>• Sends information in a brief time</li> <li>• Meteorological information</li> <li>• Network of volunteers who pass information on all communications</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If early warning messages aren't taken seriously it can have serious consequences</li> <li>• Early warning systems are not always accurate</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Training and equipment to strengthen early warning systems – risk maps, identifying risk areas and communities, using indigenous knowledge</li> <li>• Strengthening partnerships with institutes that have early warning system</li> </ul>



	means available		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Exchange experiences on climate change</li> <li>• Have to coordinate with neighboring countries</li> </ul>
<b>Health</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If the health plan is implemented properly, it improves health</li> <li>• Health promotion leads to increased awareness</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No funds for health education</li> <li>• Some concepts go against traditions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Training in health education required</li> <li>• Preparedness for health (this is the role of the Government, and SRCS is only a supporting organization)</li> </ul>
<b>Logistics</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Availability of trucks at the commercial level (branches don't have their own trucks, but they are available for rent)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Long distances and vast states</li> <li>• Bad roads, no asphalt</li> <li>• Lack of warehousing and stocks</li> <li>• In some areas no network – radios or mobiles</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Warehouse with stocks in key locations</li> <li>• Communication required</li> </ul>
<b>Communications</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Network of active volunteers</li> <li>• Have traditional ways to communicate</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Network cover doesn't cover all areas</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Emergency phones and numbers</li> <li>• Provide radios where there isn't phone coverage</li> <li>• Numbers shared for each level</li> <li>• Cars need radio</li> <li>• For preparedness communication methods need to be maintained</li> </ul>
<b>Beneficiary Selection</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sometimes selected by SRCS, sometimes by the community leaders, and sometimes stipulated by the donor</li> <li>• Transparencies with the donor and the communities themselves</li> <li>• Community involvement</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Different beneficiary selection can be confusing and not accepted by communities – causes inconsistency</li> <li>• High expectations of beneficiaries</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Criteria should be determined by SRCS and not influenced by others</li> <li>• Maintain a flexible approach</li> <li>• Need to follow the SRCS code of conduct and SRCS law</li> </ul>
<b>Capacity</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Training is important for staff and volunteers</li> <li>• Communication skills for mobilizing communities and conflict manage</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of information tools to cope with new things – internet, u tube, twitter and social media</li> <li>• Reaching communities requires communication and transport capacities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Peace building and conflict resolution skills required for work in some communities</li> <li>• Access to new tools</li> <li>• Chronic problem of transport, trucks, cars – for assessment, distribution etc. Lack of funding for fuel and maintenance outside of the disaster time.</li> <li>• Capacity building at the branch level in order to retain staff</li> </ul>
<b>Distribution</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Trained volunteer teams</li> <li>• Stocks of NFIs are available</li> <li>• Criteria for distribution</li> <li>• Coordination and cooperation of community leaders</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Not enough NFIs</li> <li>• High cost of transport</li> <li>• Roles of stakeholders are sometimes unclear</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strategic stock of NFIs required</li> <li>• Transport required</li> <li>• Volunteer capacity and continuous capacity</li> </ul>
<b>Speed</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Quick transfer of information – internet and telephone</li> <li>• Assessment teams quickly identify the needs and the scope of the disaster</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of stock for distribution</li> <li>• Local level response in some locations can be limited</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provisions of stock of NFIs and warehouses in strategic</li> <li>• Provision of transport</li> </ul>



### Annex 1 Participants in the Sudan DREF for floods lessons learned workshop

Name	State	Position
Ibrahim Faraj	Kissala	Disaster management – manager
Hasan Khamis	Khartoum	Youth and training management
Isam faraj Alah	Sinnar	Manager- Youth and training management
Hisham taj Eldeen	SRCS HQ	Manager food security
Isa Abduelsalam	IFRC Sudan	Program field ops coordinator
Ayman Juma Elnur Mohammed	Sinnar	DM
Musa Ismael Alkhalefa	Kissala	Youth and programs unit
Muneer sir alkhatemah Elnour	Kissala	Head of youth and programs
Abu Ther Alghafari Ali	White Nile	WatSan coodinator
Alshafeealnoum bashara	Sinnar	Field Ops coordinator
Wakak Alhadi	White Nile	WatSan
Yusef Ali	Khartoum	Manager: Emergency finance and admin
Ahmed Abedelruhman	Khartoum	Manager youth and training
Asjad Abdulsalam Ali	IFRC Sudan	Field Program Coordinator
Ilona Hatakka	IFRC zone	Disaster Management Information Delegate
Melanie Ogle	IFRC zone	Disaster Management Delegate



## Annex 2. Lessons Learned Workshop – participant evaluation forms

### DREF for Sudan Flood Operations – 29 November 2012

Overall, how useful was the workshop for you?

1 – poor      2 – average      3- good      4 – useful      5 – excellent

Comments:

Excellent for me, new knowledge - 5 I am so happy to join this workshop and I think it is useful workshop for me and my branch No comment I think it is useful , we find out new things in sessions for the future - 4 The recommendations must be distributed to participants – 4
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#### ***Timeliness?***

Overall, six participants found the workshop too short, while five found it was enough time. No one found the workshop too long.

#### ***How do you rate the facilitators?***

Seven participants rated the facilitators as excellent (5), and five rated them useful (4). No one rated the facilitators lower.

#### ***How well was the workshop prepared?***

Three participants rated the workshop good (3) in terms of preparation, another three rated it useful (4) and six participants rated it excellent (5)

#### ***How useful was the review of floods response at the branch level?***

Participants were asked to work in branches to produce a timeline of events. One participant found it average, one participant found it good; six participants found it a useful exercise and four participants found it excellent.

#### ***How useful was the participatory brainstorming team work session?***

Overall, three participants found it average, four participants found it useful and five participants found it excellent.

#### ***How was the food?***

Overall, one participant found the food to be average, seven participants found it good, while two participants found it useful and excellent respectively.

#### ***Feedback for the next workshop?***

Bigger amount for DREF Thanks
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It is a good workshop and I hope for the next workshop to focus on training in SOPs, PHAST and SPHERE

Need workshop in the field of emergency response

More training required – early warning, assessment, distribution, peace building and conflict resolution



### **Annex 3 Timelines of branches**

#### **Kassala State**

Rains were expected June – July 2012

In preparation, 75 volunteers were trained and the branch formed emergency teams

As part of the preparations, the most vulnerable areas were identified

In early August, the first notification of floods was received. Assessment undertaken by emergency assessment teams (EAT) and the needs reported to the headquarters. In response, headquarters dispatched a technical (WatSan/Shelter) person to assist in the assessments

Headquarters sent NFIs in September/October: including plastic sheets, blankets, kitchen sets and mosquito nets

In October, the branch carried a spraying campaign for vector control, involving some 150 volunteers

The branch said that they provide weekly and monthly monitoring reports to the headquarters, including the needs, the challenges and details of distributions.

Overall Kassala Branch participants felt that this was their best floods response to date.

#### **Sinnar Branch**

Emergency plan for floods was prepared in April. As part of preparations, the branch revised stock levels, set up an emergency response room, which still continues to operate. The branch coordinated with the Emergency Unit at the state-level, as auxiliary to the State.

In June, 400 volunteers were trained in high risk areas

In June and July, early response teams were identified and the database of volunteers updated

Early warning systems including traditional warning systems were monitored, with community members notifying the branch of increased rainfall.

In July a needs assessment was undertaken by 16 volunteers and the findings reported to State and headquarters

During the flooding, reports were produced on a daily basis with consolidated monthly reports.

In August, distributions were made in three locations. NFIs distributed include jerry cans, blankets, kitchen sets, plastic sheets and sleeping mats.

In September emergency clinic services providing first aid were operating in two locations. These services are still running, and by accounts a large number of patients are being treated.

The financial transfer was made to the branch in October, however while the amount wasn't state the branch participants said that the funding was not enough for all the activities and that they had to re-organize and prioritize activities to come within budget.

#### **White Nile Branch**

The most vulnerable areas are low lying land and hills; this variable terrain leads to flash flooding and seasonable streams.

In June, refresher training was given to volunteers using the branches own resources

Emergency response teams trained and an emergency room activated and field visits arranged using their own resources.

The Branch reviewed their inventory of existing stock, including a WatSan ERU from 2007 and shovels and pick axes from state-funded DRR activities and plastic sheets left over from a returnee operation.

The Branch regularly attended meetings at the state emergency room

By September, when flash flooding occurred, the branch was sending regular updates to the headquarters using either email or phone. Information was coming from volunteers via mobile phone.

Challenges were encountered including challenging terrain and new localities including a reception area for returnees from South Sudan. The branch now covers these administrative units, which has lead to tension



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between different tribes. Another challenge was access for assessments, which has led to inflation in the numbers affected than the actual numbers. SRCS has a new structure in this branch.

This branch reported that they received NFIs (including plastic sheets, blankets, plastic mats and jerry cans) from UNHCR and that this response was late and, moreover, reported receiving nothing from headquarters.

### **Khartoum Branch**

In total, 18 areas identified as 'at risk' of flooding. Early warning system using megaphones. House to house assessments were undertaken by 20 volunteers, 2 of whom are community leaders. The results of the assessment were shared with headquarters on 22 August. The assessments identified 2,000 families in need. Of those identified, 500 families received plastic sheet, blankets, jerry cans and tents, mosquito nets and sleeping mats. Clothing was contributed from ICRC. Branch staff highlighted that the assessment does not capture vulnerability issues.

Upon distribution, they found that families had up to 8 family members. Information captured at the distribution stage: family name, plot and signature.

Items were received by the 27 August and all the distributions have been done. No further items have been received by Khartoum branch.

Post distribution monitoring carried out.

### **General issue**

Branches identified that flooding is a reoccurring problem, which occurs every year. The Government advised affected populations to move but they cannot afford to build new houses or relocate so they stay in at risk areas. The main livelihood activities in Sinnar state is agriculture, which cannot be easily moved. Kassala state shares the same issue.