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DREF operation Palestine: extreme winter conditions

 International Federation
of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

DREF operation n° MDRPS008
GLIDE n°CW-2013-000153-PSE
16 December 2013

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: 10 December 2013 to 15 December 2014,

CHF 150,814 CHF was allocated from the IFRC's Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF) on 16th of December 2013 to support the Palestine Red Crescent Society (PRCS) in delivering assistance to some 6,000 beneficiaries, partly by replenishing the used contingency stocks and partly through additional distributions of shelter and non-food items.

This operation is expected to be implemented in two months, and completed by 10 February 2014. In line with the Federation reporting standards, the Final Report (narrative and financial) is due 90 days after the end of the operation (by 10 May 2013).



PRCS response teams distributing relief items in the West Bank (PRCS)

Summary:

The announced heavy rain fall and snow storms hit the West Bank and Gaza on 10 December 2013 and are still affecting the Palestinian population in West Bank and Gaza strip. The heavy rain and snow has generated floods in several parts of Palestine and thousands of people have been evacuated from their houses. The extreme weather conditions has also caused several deaths, including a baby in Gaza who was reported dead, as the family's home was inundated.

PRCS proactively activated its four operation rooms in the West Bank and Gaza on Monday 10 December in preparation for the expected mountaintop snowstorm announced to hit parts of the country Tuesday 11 in the evening and continue for days, hitting hardest on Thursday 12. PRCS emergency teams have since been operating day and night to respond to the emerging needs caused by the snow, heavy rain and flooding; primarily providing non-food relief and temporary shelter items, first aid and assistance to more than 20,000 persons. During the period, PRCS has moreover supported the evacuation of almost 10,000 people suffering from the extreme weather conditions.

The Situation

As the winter storm, extreme heavy rain fall and subsequent flooding has deteriorated throughout Palestine from 10 December, PRCS relief operations have been on-going throughout the West Bank and Gaza in coordination with national and local authorities as well as international and local organizations.

From 10 December to 16 December 2013, PRCS emergency teams have been working day and night to provide first aid and assistance, including the following relief item :- tarpaulins, blankets, mattresses, hygiene kits, kitchen sets, heaters, pillows, tents, water gallons and tents - to more than 20,000 persons in the West Bank and Gaza, including to Bedouins and refugee communities living in vulnerable constructions. Parts of the country was left without in electricity for days, and large parts of Gaza have become a massive lake with two meters of water engulfing homes and stranding thousands of people.

Benefiting from previous DREF support regarding this same type of emergency, PRCS National Disaster Response Teams (NDRT) and Emergency Medical Services (EMS) have been able to provide assistance throughout the areas of West Bank and Gaza affected by the extreme weather conditions, including the areas of Hebron, Bethlehem, Jerusalem, Ramallah, Al-Bireh, Jenin, Nablus, Tubas, Gaza Strip. The PRCS has distributed goods from its existing contingency stocks (from previous DREF support) and is now seeking to replenish these stocks and procure / distribute additional relief items for those affected



In total the emergency response teams have distributed relief items to 5,862 individuals, as part of the assistance to 20,000 people mentioned above. Moreover PRCS evacuated 1,771 families (9,479 individuals) based on specific needs. Furthermore PRCS has assisted sick people, pregnant women and others in the West Bank and Gaza to get to the hospital, as well as provided assistance in several cases of traffic accidents and other incidents caused by the bad weather conditions. With more days of rain and snow expected in December and January, the number of families who will need relief assistance is expected to increase further during the coming weeks and months and further assistance could be sought if the situation develops.

The table below outlines the distribution of tarpaulins, blankets and mattresses – as per 15 December 2013:

Location	Families	Persons	Tarpaulins	Blankets	Mattresses
Central West Bank	46	356	46	252	50
Southern West Bank	22	167	0	80	51
Northern West Bank	55	352	14	332	151
Total Gaza Strip	3,323	19,950	4,030	4,190	1,552
Total	3,446	20,825	4,090	4,854	1,804

In addition to the distribution of tarpaulins, blankets and mattresses, PRCS has distributed 557 hygiene kits, 38 kitchen sets, 453 heaters, 100 pillows, 698 sleeping bags and 320 water gallons to vulnerable people in the West Bank and Gaza, in accordance with the specific needs, from existing stocks.

Moreover vulnerable communities have been provided with information and strategies as to how to cope with the extreme weather conditions and flooding, through the provision of information and messaging from the volunteers. The printed information on flood prevention / mitigation now also needs to be replenished.

Coordination and partnerships

PRCS is a member of the High Council of Civil Defence that was initiated by the Palestinian authorities and has long been supporting the Civil Defence in contingency planning and response.

Since the onset of the emergency there has been ongoing coordination between PRCS, the Palestinian Civil defence, local and national authorities, including governorates and municipalities, UN agencies as well as within the RCRC Movement.

Furthermore PRCS, the Palestinian Civil Defence and the Governorates in cooperation with OCHA has developed an online system to improve coordination during the winter storm - an online interactive mapping system that indicates emergency needs by colour codes. There are five core field assessors who are also the focal points tasked with inputting needs information into the online system:- OCHA, UNRWA, the Civil Defence, Governorates and PRCS.

Red Cross and Red Crescent action

The DREF request primarily targets the replenishment of PRCS stocks (approximately 60%) for what has been distributed so far, and the purchasing and distribution of additional items for the continuation of the emergency throughout the winter (approximately 40%). Thus, as the on-going operation is benefitting from previous stocks, the current DREF support will help ensure the ongoing response to current needs and the preparedness and immediate response in future disasters.

Moreover the DREF support will help equip PRCS emergency teams with necessary equipment (water proof shoes and clothes and vehicle maintenance) to respond to this and future disasters.

Relief distributions (basic non-food items)	
Outcome: Contribute to improving the living conditions of 6,000 of the most vulnerable persons (men, women, boys and girls) affected by the winter storm through provision of selected non-food items in coordination with other actors	
Outputs At least 6,000 persons affected by the winter storm receive basic household items (blankets, mattresses, heaters, kitchen kits, hygiene kits and kitchen sets)	Activities planned: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Purchase 6,000 blankets, 1,000 mattresses, 300 heaters, 200 kitchen kits and 300 hygiene kits. • Replenish the PRCS emergency stocks already distributed • Distribute the additional non-food items based on needs assessments • Equip PRCS teams of volunteers with waterproof shoes / coats etc • Monitor distributions to ensure needs effectively covered and identify any follow up assistance required

Emergency shelter	
Outcome: Contribute to improving the living conditions of 4,000 of the most vulnerable families (men, women, boys and girls) affected by the winter storm through provision of emergency shelter solutions	
Output: 1000 families receive tarpaulins and tents and the necessary to erect emergency shelter	Activities planned: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Distribute shelter items based on needs assessments • Purchase of 20 tents (for vulnerable Bedouin communities whose houses have been destroyed) • Purchase 1,000 tarpaulins for distribution to families whose houses have been partially damaged • Monitor distributions to ensure appropriate use of the shelter items and any follow up support needed

Awareness raising	
Outcome: Contribute to the prevention and reduction of flood risks through public awareness campaigns in the affected areas.	
Output: The entire population of the affected areas and surrounding is sensitized through key prevention messages and printed media	Activities planned: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Distribute existing awareness raising materials • Reprint awareness raising materials for ongoing and future awareness raising activities

PRCS' Headquarters will, in cooperation with the IFRC Representative, monitor the progress and provide the necessary technical expertise to the operation. Visibility of the work of the Red Crescent staff and volunteers will be ensured during the operation through the local media. DREF updates will be published later on.

Contact information

For further information specifically related to this operation please contact:

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How we work

All IFRC assistance seeks to adhere to the Code of Conduct for the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and Non-Governmental Organizations (NGO's) in Disaster Relief and the Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Disaster Response (Sphere) in delivering assistance to the most vulnerable.

The IFRC's vision is to inspire, encourage, facilitate and promote at all times all forms of humanitarian activities by National Societies, with a view to preventing and alleviating human suffering, and thereby contributing to the maintenance and promotion of human dignity and peace in the world.

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

1. Save lives, protect livelihoods, and strengthen recovery from disaster and crises.
 2. Enable healthy and safe living.
 3. Promote social inclusion and a culture of non-violence and peace.
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DREF OPERATION

14/12/2013

Budget Group	DREF Grant Budget CHF
Shelter - Relief	15,810
Shelter - Transitional	
Construction - Housing	
Construction - Facilities	
Construction - Materials	
Clothing & Textiles	79,565
Food	
Seeds & Plants	
Water, Sanitation & Hygiene	13,770
Medical & First Aid	
Teaching Materials	1,250
Ustensils & Tools	27,387
Other Supplies & Services	
Emergency Response Units	
Cash Disbursements	
Total RELIEF ITEMS, CONSTRUCTION AND SUPPLIES	137,782
Land & Buildings	
Vehicles Purchase	
Computer & Telecom Equipment	
Office/Household Furniture & Equipment	
Medical Equipment	
Other Machinery & Equipment	
Total LAND, VEHICLES AND EQUIPMENT	0
Storage, Warehousing	
Distribution & Monitoring	
Transport & Vehicle Costs	1,275
Logistics Services	
Total LOGISTICS, TRANSPORT AND STORAGE	1,275
International Staff	
Regional Staff	
National Staff	
National Society Staff	
Volunteers	2,552
Total PERSONNEL	2,552
Consultants	
Professional Fees	
Total CONSULTANTS & PROFESSIONAL FEES	0
Workshops & Training	
Total WORKSHOP & TRAINING	0
Travel	
Information & Public Relations	
Office Costs	
Communications	
Financial Charges	
Other General Expenses	
Shared Support Services	
Total GENERAL EXPENDITURES	0
Programme and Supplementary Services Recovery	9,205
Total INDIRECT COSTS	9,205
TOTAL BUDGET	150,814