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Emergency Plan of Action (EPoA) Slovenia: Extreme winter conditions



DREF Operation	Operation n° MDRSI001 Glide n° CW-2014-000018-SVN
Date of issue: 12 February 2014	Date of disaster 1 February 2014
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Operation start date: 11 February 2014	Expected timeframe: until 11 May 2014
Overall operation budget: CHF 191,864	
Number of people affected: 50,000	Number of people to be assisted: 4,500
Host National Society(ies) presence (n° of volunteers, staff, branches): Slovenian Red Cross, 600 volunteers, 11 HQ staff members, 14 Local Branch staff	
Red Cross Red Crescent Movement partners actively involved in the operation Austrian and Croatian RC (provided 17 generators)	
Other partner organizations actively involved in the operation:	
The operation is led by the Administration for Civil Protection and Disaster Response of Slovenia with full involvement of all forces within the National Protection and Rescue System; electricity providers workers, international fire brigades from Austria, Military of Slovenia.	

A. Situation analysis

Description of the disaster

Due to highly unfavourable weather conditions, heavy snow and sleet (freezing rain) started hitting Slovenia on Friday, 31 January 2014, and continued during the weekend of 1-2 February 2014. Many regions have been affected but mostly the Notranjska region in the south-western part of the country.

State of emergency (red alarm) was proclaimed for the whole country on 2 February 2014. However, the scope of sleet devastation is beyond any anticipated estimations.

Extreme weather conditions have caused extensive power cuts with more than 80,000 client sites affected, leaving around 250,000 people without electric power. Therefore, on 2 February 2014 the Republic of Slovenia requested assistance through the European Union's Civil Protection Mechanism with a request for 100 power generators (100-300 kVA) in order to provide electricity to the affected population.

Till this day, a week after the disaster stroke, there are still 30,000 people without electric power. Therefore all efforts of the Slovenian Civil Protection, as well as of the Slovenian Red Cross, are made to deploy the greatest possible number of generators. According to the latest report received from the National Notification Centre, 392 power generators are needed, out of which approximately 200 units (2kW- 10kW) are needed for households. In some areas, according to the reports of the electric provider companies, the restoration of electrical wiring will take weeks, or perhaps even months. In Postojna area all electric power will be ensured through generators for the following three months, before all reparation works are done and normal wiring is back in place. Therefore, the Slovenian Red Cross started with its own internal funds the procurement and delivery of generators intended for households.

The Administration for Civil Protection and Disaster Relief of the Republic of Slovenia is in charge of relief operation with more than 30,000 professionals and also volunteers recruited within National Protection and Rescue System. At 6 February there were 7,054 people active in the field, including 600 Red Cross volunteers and staff.

The Slovenian Red Cross has been actively involved in the response activities since 2 February 2014 on all three operational levels of the National Society's structure: HQ, Local Branches and Local Organizations.

One of the biggest concerns in the following days is also a high risk of floods, which might occur in the future due to snow and ice melting and rains.

Summary of the current response

Overview of Host National Society

On the basis of the Law on the Slovenian Red Cross (*Article 9*) Disaster Preparedness and Response is carried out based on public authorization. The Slovenian Red Cross (SRC) is an integral part of National Protection System and is therefore in close cooperation with the Administration for Civil Protection and Disaster Relief at the Ministry of Defense. The Red Cross is mainly responsible for the implementation of health-related measures for the affected population in case of natural or other disasters; but also for the admission, accommodation and supplying of the affected population; for coordination and shipment of humanitarian aid and for training volunteers.

SRC has vast experiences in assisting people in need, implementing relief distributions and organizing basic disaster response. SRC has 80 First Aid teams across the country and 4 mobile units with the capacity to accommodate 100 people.

The Red Cross staff; namely the Secretary General on national level and the Local Branch secretaries on local level, are members of the Civil Protection Headquarters, whose activities and roles are jointly defined on a daily basis.

Out of the 56 Local Branches of Slovenian Red Cross 14 are heavily affected by the present sleet disaster; namely: Ajdovščina, Cerknica, Idrija, Postojna, Kočevje, Kranj, Škofja Loka, Ljubljana, Maribor, Mozirje, Nova Gorica, Slovenj Gradec, Velenje and Zagorje.

The most devastated region remains Notranjska (south-west Slovenia); namely the Local Branch at the municipality of Postojna, where out of 21,675 people, only 5,000 people have (limited) access to electricity, and the people stranded in the city are in urgent need of heating devices.

Since Sunday morning there have been 600 RC employees and volunteers working actively in the relief operation at the above mentioned sites, supporting the efforts of forces led by Civil Protection in order to reach all affected people and carry out a needs assessment; as well as distributing basic relief items: food parcels, blankets and wall dryers. However, some parts of the affected areas can only be reached by heavy-duty military vehicles (Jezerko); safe access to remote villages still remains a challenge.

Red Cross volunteers are also providing psychosocial support to the affected people at 14 Local Branches, while the national psychosocial support team is deployed in Postojna area.



SRC FA team member delivering relief items and generator to household in remote parts of LB Nova Gorica
Photo: Slovenian RC



Distribution of 150 food parcels to LB Cerknica
Photo: Slovenian RC

The Slovenian National Society immediately started the distribution of relief items and provided the affected people via the Local Branches with bottled water (53,760 litres), food parcels (300), blankets (100), candles (2,500) and generators (8) from its emergency stock. SRC also requested assistance as in-kind donation (generators) from neighboring National Societies. The Croatian RC responded with 2 generators; the Austrian RC delivered 15 generators of community purposes (not for individual households).

Therefore the Slovenian Red Cross started the procurement of generators (60) through SRC Solidarity Fund and on 6 February distributed them to 11 affected Local Branches that are still struggling with power cuts.

SRC estimates that 1,000 families were assisted with basic relief items.

Overview of non-RCRC actors in country

The extent of the sleet disaster demands the involvement of all forces within the National Protection and Rescue System with more than 30,000 professionals and volunteers, assisted by the military where necessary. Through the EU CP Mechanism, several European countries (e.g. Germany, Austria, Czech Republic) responded by sending generators, as well as deploying their experts and firefighters (Austrian Federal Agency for Technical Relief).

Needs analysis, beneficiary selection, risk assessment and scenario planning

It is hard to assess all consequences and needs of the affected population, since the operation is still in the phase of response (ensuring access, cleaning roads, removing trees, etc.). The situation is changing literally hour after hour, while in some places electricity is restored and then cut off again due to a fallen tree or similar events (40 per cent of the Slovenian forests is destroyed).

According to the needs analysis Slovenian Red Cross estimates that the affected people need heating devices, wall dryers and food parcels. (Each parcel contains cooking oil, vinegar, sugar, canned meat, canned goulash soup, canned beans, paté, sardines, instant maize porridge, vitamin drink.)

SRC will continue to ensure other non-food basic relief items (blankets, batteries) to the affected population in addition to the 3,000 food parcels, 2 food parcels for each of the assisted 1,500 households, taking into account the social status of the families / individuals and taking special care of large families and families / individuals, who are socially deprived.

According to the weather forecast for a high risk of flooding, the already severe conditions may get even worse resulting in more people in need.

Due to the large scope of the natural disaster and the long shifts of the volunteers, who are still working on ensuring access to people in remote villages and are faced with constant danger (falling trees, frozen roads, deep snow) the possibility of volunteers getting injured in rescue and relief activity is higher.

SRC First Aid teams are not sufficiently equipped for interventions in such extreme weather conditions; therefore we anticipated some costs in the DREF budget for gloves, winter boots, warm socks and thermal underwear for volunteers active in remote areas, where the harsh winter conditions continue.

B. Operational strategy and plan

Overall objective

To support the resilience of the people affected by extreme winter conditions through distribution of basic relief items (food parcels, hand batteries, blankets) and with sheltering support (heaters).

Proposed strategy

To accomplish the overall objective, the Red Cross staff and volunteers will focus on the provision and distribution of heaters, blankets, and food parcels.

Heating devices and other relief items will be distributed down from the national level to the affected Local Branches and through a network of volunteers and local Red Cross staff to the beneficiaries (households). Priority is given to those households, where due to the lack or shortage of electric power, heating and cooking are still a problem.

The total number of targeted beneficiaries is 4,500. The average size of a household (family) in Slovenia is three people. The items will be distributed as follows, according to the latest needs assessment by the Local Branches' staff and volunteers, in agreement with the SRC DM Manager.

(1) 4,500 beneficiaries in 1,500 households will receive food parcels, 2 parcels for each household, during the period when cooking would be difficult due to power cuts.

(2) Additionally, the neediest 1,200 beneficiaries in 400 households will also receive non-food items as detailed below:

- 150 households (450 beneficiaries) will receive gas heaters¹
- 250 households (750 beneficiaries) will receive petroleum heaters²
- 400 households (1,200 beneficiaries) will receive blankets, hand batteries and wall dryers.

¹ Fuel will be provided by other donors to operate the heaters.

² Fuel will be provided by other donors to operate the heaters.

Operational support services

Human resources

600 Slovenian Red Cross volunteers and 25 staff members on the national and local levels are involved in the emergency operation. No international staff deployment is foreseen within the DREF implementation time frame.

Logistics and supply chain

The 'Regulations on Purchase and Sale' (adopted in 2011) govern the procedures for the procurement of goods and services in the Slovenian RC. The regulations are in line with in-country legal requirements and include three different procedures that vary according to the documentation required, while the choice of procedure depends on the value and type of order.

SRC logistics capacities are not sufficient in terms of human resources and materials; therefore the DREF budget includes costs of additional manpower and the rental of trucks.

Information technologies (IT)

The Slovenian RC will maintain the communication with staff and volunteers through mobile phones. Hence a certain amount to cover the costs of telephony is foreseen in the DREF budget.

Communications

The visibility of Slovenian Red Cross activities in the field will be reinforced with regular daily press releases to all national media regarding National Society relief distribution activities. All new developments are also regularly updated on the SRC web page www.rks.si

Regular operation updates will be sent to the IFRC Europe Zone Office.

Security

As already mentioned, security concerns are high due to harsh weather conditions (cold, wind), unsecure roads/access to beneficiaries (frozen roads, melting ice, falling trees) and long hours of active involvement of volunteers in some Local Branches. In some Local Branches the rotation of volunteers was not possible due to transportation problems and non-accessibility from other regions.

Planning, monitoring, evaluation, & reporting (PMER)

The Slovenian RC will monitor the implementation of relief distribution activities and participate at the final evaluation of the operation on the state level. Before a standard operation evaluation, led by Administration for CP and Disaster Relief, SRC will organize an evaluation meeting with LB and DM Commission in order to identify the strengths and weaknesses and improve SRC performance in the future.

DREF OPERATION

11-02-14

Slovenia Extreme Winter Conditions

Budget Group	DREF Grant Budget CHF
Shelter - Relief	
Shelter - Transitional	
Construction - Housing	
Construction - Facilities	
Construction - Materials	
Clothing & Textiles	15,913
Food	44,550
Seeds & Plants	
Water, Sanitation & Hygiene	
Medical & First Aid	
Teaching Materials	
Utensils & Tools	9,180
Other Supplies & Services	87,451
Cash Disbursements	
Total RELIEF ITEMS, CONSTRUCTION AND SUPPLIES	157,094
Land & Buildings	
Vehicles	
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	1,920
Logistics Services	
Total LOGISTICS, TRANSPORT AND STORAGE	1,920
International Staff	
National Staff	
National Society Staff	3,416
Volunteers	12,900
Total PERSONNEL	16,316
Consultants	
Professional Fees	
Total CONSULTANTS & PROFESSIONAL FEES	0
Workshops & Training	
Total WORKSHOP & TRAINING	0
Travel	3,000
Information & Public Relations	
Office Costs	600
Communications	1,224
Financial Charges	
Other General Expenses	
Shared Office and Services Costs	
Total GENERAL EXPENDITURES	4,824
Partner National Societies	
Other Partners (NGOs, UN, other)	
Total TRANSFER TO PARTNERS	0
Programme and Supplementary Services Recovery	11,710
Total INDIRECT COSTS	11,710
TOTAL BUDGET	191,864



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