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## DREF operation update

### Palestine, MENA Region Winter Storm

 International Federation  
of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

**DREF operation n° MDRPS008**  
**GLIDE n° CW-2013-000153-PSE**  
**Update n° 01 – 5 April 2014**

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 10 February 2014.

**Summary:**

CHF150,817 CHF was allocated from the IFRC's Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF) on 16<sup>th</sup> of December 2013 to support the Palestine Red Crescent Society (PRCS) in delivering assistance to some 6,000 beneficiaries, and to replenish the used contingency stocks.

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 provide relief items to the most vulnerable families in the West Bank (PRCS)**

The announced extreme heavy rain fall and snow storms hit the West Bank and Gaza on 10 December 2013 and are still striking throughout Palestine. The heavy rain and snow has generated floods in several parts of Palestine and 20 families have been evacuated from their houses with the support of PRCS. One baby in Gaza was reported dead, as the family's home was inundated.

PRCS proactively activated its four operation rooms in the West Bank and Gaza Monday 10 December in preparation for the arrival of the expected heavy rain fall and PRCS emergency teams have operated continuously to respond to the emerging needs.

The European Commission Humanitarian Aid and Civil Protection (DG ECHO) Funds and the Netherlands Government have contributed towards the replenishing the DREF allocation made for this 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, DG 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.

IFRC, on behalf of the National Society, would like to extend thanks to all for their generous contributions.

## The situation

A very heavy winter storm including heavy snow hit the State of Palestine between 9<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> of December 2013, leaving thousands of people in need of external support. The event was exceptional in its nature, with very strong winds and rains, snow storms and temperature very low for Palestine. The rain and snow that fell in 7 days was almost half the quantity for a whole rainy season, and the snow storms covered the land above 400 metres with up to 60-80 cm of snow. In many places the rivers overflowed, the roads were cut and normal access to services disrupted. In Gaza Strip most of the places were completely flooded.

The most affected areas were the most vulnerable ones: Bedouin communities and the communities living close to the separation wall. More than 7,562 families (49,971 persons) located in the districts of Gaza, Hebron, Jenin, Salfit, Ramallah, Tubas, Jordan Valley, Nablus, Bani Naim, Yalta and the Jerusalem area beyond the separation wall temporarily fled their houses due to floods and major damage to the infrastructure; in most cases they returned to their homes a few days after the rains stopped. The timely response by PRCS to the affected people contributed to mitigate the impact of the exceptionally heavy rains and snow.



**PRCS disaster response teams provide relief items to the most vulnerable families in the West Bank (PRCS)**

The impact of these (by now apparently recurrent) meteorological events is in some cases increased by the limitations put onto Palestinians: poor capacity to properly plan the land use and urban development, restrictions to the planning of effective sewage and river basins management, limitations in access to a long list of villages (in many cases, only one access has been left open). The combination of these restrictions with the recurrence of these extreme events clearly indicates the appropriateness of PRCS's approach, based on an increasing investment on Community Based Disaster Risk Reduction, mitigation micro-projects, better preparedness and better coordination.

From 10 December 2013 to 24 December 2013, PRCS has far provided first aid and assistance and relief items, including tents, tarpaulins, blankets, mattresses, hygiene kits, kitchen sets, and heaters and sleeping pads, to 7,562 families in the West Bank and Gaza. In addition, PRCS has evacuated 1,771 families from their houses.

Furthermore PRCS Emergency Medical Services has assisted 2,006 persons in the West Bank and Gaza to get to the hospital, including mothers who needed to give birth, as well as provided assistance in several cases of traffic accidents and other incidents caused by the bad weather conditions.

## 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.

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 all OCHA, has developed an online system to improve coordination during the winter storm. It is an online interactive mapping system that indicates emergency needs by colour codes. There are 5 core field assessors who

are also the focal points tasked with inputting needs information into the online system, these are: OCHA, UNRWA, the Civil Defence, Governorates and PRCS.

## Red Cross and Red Crescent action

### Progress towards outcomes

PRCS emergency operation centres were activated in Hebron, Gaza, Nablus and Ramallah from before the beginning of the storms, in order to coordinate the response activity of the PRCS as well as to coordinate with other national actors like the Civil Defence and the governorates.

More than 600 NDRT members were deployed during the emergency to assess the needs and distribute the non-food relief items to the effected people.

<b>Relief distributions (food and basic non-food items)</b>
<b>Outcome: Contribute to improving the living conditions of 7,562 of the most vulnerable persons/families (men, women, boys and girls) affected by the winter storm through provision of selected non-food items</b>
<b>Outputs 7,562 persons/families affected by the winter storm receive basic household items (blankets, mattresses, heaters, kitchen kits, hygiene kits, sets of water proof clothing and shoes)</b>
<b>Activities Achieved :</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Purchase of 7,000 blankets, 1,000 mattresses, 530 heaters, 200 kitchen kits, 200 hygiene kits, has been completed and we are waiting the receiving of goods.</li> <li>• Replenish the PRCS emergency stocks</li> <li>• Distribute non-food items</li> </ul>

<b>Emergency shelter</b>
<b>Outcome: Contribute to improving the living conditions of the most vulnerable families affected by the winter storm through provision of emergency shelter solutions</b>
<b>Output: 250 families receive tents and shelter construction materials (tarpaulins &amp; tools) and the necessary support in erecting emergency shelter</b>
<b>Activities Achieved:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Purchase of 20 tents for replenishment and for Bedouin communities</li> <li>• Purchase 400 plastic sheets (tarpaulins) for distribution to families whose houses have been partially damaged</li> <li>• Distribute shelter items</li> </ul>

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

The DREF request targets both the replenishment of PRCS stocks for what has been distributed so far, and the immediate purchase and distribution of additional items for the continuation of the emergency. Thus, as the on-going operation is benefitting from previous stocks, the DREF support help ensure preparedness and immediate response in future response.

## Contact information

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## DREF history:

This DREF was initially allocated on 16 December 2013 Month Year for 150,814 CHF for two months to assist 6,000 beneficiaries



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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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