

DREF operation final report



International Federation
of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

Georgia: Earthquake

DREF operation n° MDRGE002
GLIDE n° EQ-2009-000191-GEO
9 February 2010

The International Federation's 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 Red Crescent response to emergencies. 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.

Summary: CHF 61,016 (USD 58,793 or EUR 40,337) was allocated from the International Federation's Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF) on 14 September 2009 to support the National Society in delivering assistance to some 750 affected people.

On 8 September 2009 an earthquake of magnitude of 6.2 on the Richter scale struck northern Georgia. Some 1,460 families were affected and 1,500 houses were either destroyed or damaged. Many could therefore not return to their houses. The National Society reached 822 people with blankets and mattresses in Sachkhere and Oni districts. The people reached expressed satisfaction with the services and goods distributed by the Red Cross. Also the support helped families to economize their budgets for meeting winter needs.

This operation was implemented over two months, from September to November 2009.

Totally 79 per cent of the operation expenses were directly related to distributions (supplies and transport and storage).

ECHO and the Italian government have contributed EUR 32,000 and EUR 10,000 respectively to the DREF in replenishment of the allocation made for this operation. The major donors to the DREF are the Irish, Italian, Netherlands and Norwegian governments and ECHO. Details of all donors can be found on <http://www.ifrc.org/what/disasters/responding/drs/tools/dref/donors.asp>

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Photo 1: Distribution of relief items by Georgia Red Cross volunteers to the affected population in Sachkhere. Georgia Red Cross Society.

The situation

An earthquake of magnitude of 6.2 on the Richter scale struck northern Georgia on 8 September 2009. Its epicentre was 80 kilometres from the city of Kutaisi in Oni district in the Racha-Lechkhumi region. Tremors were also felt in the capital of Tbilisi, the central town of Gori, and in Zugdidi in the west. Several aftershocks followed and on 12 September another earthquake measuring 4.4 on Richter scale struck Oni.

Some 1,500 houses were damaged or destroyed, and around 1,460 families were affected out of which many could not return to their houses, either because of destruction or because they felt unsafe as they feared new earthquakes. Many people were staying in tents next to their property as they did not want to leave their houses and belongings. Others were staying with relatives, neighbours, friends, or in kindergartens or abandoned state-owned buildings.

There were no fatalities, while six people were reported injured. The most affected location was Oni with 443 houses destroyed and 868 damaged. In Sachkhere 146 houses were destroyed. Several houses were also affected in the villages of Nigavzebi, Utsera, Ghari and Nakieti. No damages were reported in water supply and sewage systems.

The living conditions for many people in the affected areas are grave. A number of people are still residing in shelter facilities which were believed to be temporary after a major earthquake in 1991. The living conditions are in some cases some of the worst ones and the temporary shelter facilities are located at the same property as the damaged houses from 1991. Some of these temporary shelters were damaged by the recent earthquake and people were in general left more vulnerable than before. The need for intervening was further prompted as the winter was approaching bringing lower temperatures. Thus it was expected that conditions for some of the people in unsatisfactory shelter facilities could become worse.

Red Cross and Red Crescent action

The Georgia Red Cross Society took the lead in the response to the earthquake, coordinating its work with the International Federation and the International Committee of the Red Cross. Early the International Federation deployed a disaster management delegate present in Georgia to the affected area to support the National Society's disaster management team. The team consisted of staff and volunteers from the headquarters and Kutaisi branch. The joint team carried out a rapid assessment and visited several affected villages and families in order to identify the most urgent needs.

As a result of the assessment the disaster management team identified tents, mattresses, warm blankets and bed linen as critical needs among the affected people. Immediately after the earthquake struck the National Society delivered 150 tents which were available in its warehouse. The team followed up the assessment by meeting with the state authorities.

Close coordination with key stakeholders was a key priority for the National Society. The society coordinated its efforts with state authorities and sought to fulfil its role as an auxiliary to the Georgian government, being the sole non-state organization included in the National Disaster Response Plan of Georgia.

The National Society met with UNDP to map immediate humanitarian actions after the earthquake. Close relations were maintained with the State Emergency Department under the Ministry of Internal Affairs. Other organizations responding to the needs included UNHCR, UNICEF, Save the Children and WFP. The Georgia Red Cross Society also approached embassies and the corporate sector with a request for additional assistance.

Georgia Earthquake 2009

MDRGE002 at glance

8 September

Earthquake struck northern Georgia. Immediate distribution of 150 tents by the National Society.

14 September

Launch of DREF operation

13 September to 4 October

Planning, coordination, assessment procurement, transport, stockpiling.

5 and 6 October

Distribution in Oni and Sachkhere. Totally 822 people reached and 30 volunteers involved.

11 to 13 November

Survey, 64 people interviewed.

Achievements against objectives

Relief distributions (non-food items)
Objective: Provide mattresses and blankets to 150 most affected households amounting to 750 people
Activities planned: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assess the affected area to identify the most affected households Develop beneficiary targeting strategy and registration system to deliver intended assistance Procure relief supplies from local suppliers according to Federation standards Distribute relief supplies and control supply movements from point of dispatch to end user Monitor and evaluate the relief activities and provide reporting on relief distribution

Following the DREF allocation the National Society started preparations for procuring and distributing mattresses and blankets in Sachkhere and Oni. The Georgia Red Cross, through its disaster management team and Sachkhere and Kutaisi branch staff and volunteers¹, actively cooperated with the International Federation. Other key actors were the State Emergency Management Department, local government representatives and community members. The good cooperation between the mentioned actors resulted in a well-planned and coordinated execution of activities.

An agreement was reached with the State Emergency Department that in order to transport relief items to Sachkhere and Oni, the department provided two long trailers and one truck including fuel and drivers. Local government provided lists of affected people, warehousing facilities, points for distribution, transport to distribution points and assistance in distributing relief items.

The National Society's disaster management team carried out a detailed needs assessment in the affected areas by visiting affected people. Through the visits it verified the distribution lists provided by the local government. Based on the assessment the main criteria for recipient selection was the degree of damages to houses with category one encompassing people with totally destroyed houses; category two, people with houses in need of reconstruction; and category three, people with cracks in their houses. As not all people in category one were defined as most vulnerable, implying that some had the opportunity to stay with relatives, neighbours or friends, or had other housing facilities available, people in category one were sub-categorized according to perceived vulnerability, the latter comprising multi-children families, orphans and older people.

The National Society identified suppliers through a tendering process according to Federation standards. After the procurement of relief items transportation was arranged by the help of state authorities.

	Oni	Sachkhere	Total
Villages reached	28	15	43
Families reached	180	198	378
Blankets	482	340	822
Mattresses	482	340	822

Initially the operation was meant to cover Oni district only. However, following additional assessment the distributions were extended to Sachkhere district as well based on urgent needs. Totally 882 people were reached with blankets and mattresses. This was almost 20 per cent more than initially planned.²

Table 1: Distribution data for Oni and Sachkhere.

The relief items were distributed in Sachkhere and Oni on 5 and 6 October respectively. Out of the 882 people reached, 482 people lived in or nearby Oni, while the remaining 340 were residing in Sachkhere and its surroundings.

¹As there is no local branch in Oni, a volunteer community team was established and supported by Kutaisi branch.

²As lower prices than initially expected were obtained (blankets and mattresses).



Photo 2: Distribution of relief items in Sachkhere. Georgia Red Cross Society.

Distributions mainly took place in public buildings and were carried out by Red Cross staff and volunteers with the support of municipal authorities. The authorities provided buses for taking people to the distribution points. Moreover, this was done according to predetermined schedules as to avoid queues during distribution. The distribution process was attended by the National Society's Secretary General and core staff, Federation representatives and the media. The Red Cross branch in Sachkhere mobilized volunteers and was involved in the entire distribution process. Totally 30 volunteers took part in preparing and implementing the operation, including 10 volunteers in Oni and 20 in Sachkhere. The volunteers taking part in the Oni distributions came from Kutaisi branch.

In addition to mobilizing volunteers in the local branches, the operation prompted the mobilization of local community members. Thus Red Cross volunteers and community members worked side by side in distributing relief items and meeting the needs among the most vulnerable.

Impact:

The affected population which received relief items was using these as to cope with their needs following the earthquake. Furthermore the distributed items helped the targeted families to economize their family budgets for meeting acute needs to cope with the oncoming winter. The Red Cross distributions also gave the affected population psychological comfort as people knew that they were not left alone to cope with the consequences of the disaster as well as in coping with the winter which was approaching.

The operation helped the National Society to increase its capacities in terms of disaster response. Sachkhere branch staff and volunteers, who gained valuable experience after the August conflict in 2008, continued to build these skills. Moreover the operation helped the branch in strengthening its ability for coordinating its activities with governmental bodies and local authorities as well as with local non-governmental and international organizations. As there was no Red Cross branch in Oni, the operation actually helped the Georgia Red Cross Society in increasing its visibility in an area in which it did not normally operate. As such it gave the National Society an opportunity to mobilize community members and inform people about the Red Cross and its activities, values and principles.

Challenges:

In general the National Society faces high expectations at different levels including at state, municipal and individual level. Apparently the National Society cannot cover all people's needs as was also the case after the earthquake struck Sachkhere and Oni. In the affected areas this, however, also refers to the existing longer-term needs and grave conditions in which some people live, which cannot be addressed by an emergency operation alone, but which requires longer-term and more strategic efforts.

Visibility
Objective: Promotion of Georgia Red Cross Society activities and strengthening of the National Society's image
<p>Activities planned:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maximise the visibility of the National Society through relief distributions, visits to the affected people, monitoring and evaluation by volunteers of Red Cross branches. • Procure and utilize Red Cross t-shirts, caps, ID-cards for volunteers and staff of the Georgia Red Cross Society. • Conduct a satisfaction survey to verify the appropriateness of the operation and get feedback from targeted people to improve future operations

The operation had an evident positive impact on the visibility of the National Society. It strongly reinforced its

profile and the communities' perception of the society's work. To this end promotion materials with Red Cross emblems were used. National Society staff and volunteers wore Red Cross flags, vests and identification cards during the field work. The Red Cross response was widely covered by local media.

More specifically the profile of the National Society's disaster management department was raised. The society's disaster management coordinator actively participated in UNDP-chaired coordination meetings in which response activities and coordination was discussed and decided upon. Moreover the National Society cooperated with UNHCR in the affected area and pursued coordination with UNICEF, WFP and Save the Children. The National Society also attended meetings with ECHO.

In following up on the operation and to find out whether the services and goods sufficiently met the needs of affected people, a joint National Society and Federation survey was conducted from 11 to 13 November. From the society the disaster management coordinator played a vital role along with branch secretaries and volunteers from Sachkhere and Kutaisi branches. Federation support was provided both from the Georgia country office as well as the Europe zone office. Preparations took place through close cooperation between the National Society and the Federation reporting officer in Georgia, resulting in a plan of action. Moreover the survey questionnaire was translated into Georgian as to facilitate participation and understanding. Training on survey objectives and interviewing techniques was conducted for 12 volunteers from Sachkhere and Kutaisi branches. The latter contributed to enhancing skills among volunteers.

Totally, 64 people who received goods and services from the Georgia Red Cross Society were interviewed in Oni and Sachkhere including surrounding villages. The data gathered showed that people reached were satisfied with the Red Cross's response. The National Society's assistance was seen as timely, relevant to the needs and of good quality. Information dissemination appears to have been particularly successful as most people knew about the location and time for distribution. This is likely to be the result of active involvement of local volunteers as well as municipal staff. The survey confirmed an increase in the visibility of the National Society. Almost all respondents knew that the Red Cross provided the services and goods. Moreover, the survey added value to the operation as people reached were pleased that the Red Cross showed continued interest in their problems and was preoccupied by finding out whether the assistance helped them to cope.

Challenges:

The branch of Sachkhere has no trained disaster response team, while there is no local branch in Oni at all. This, to some extent, affected the speed of the response. Insufficient resources also contributed to this, particularly the lack of immediate financial means and limited relief items in stock. Still the National Society managed to distribute 150 tents shortly after the earthquake struck.

Conclusion

The Georgia Red Cross Society has since the middle of 2008 and its response to the serious humanitarian situation caused by the August conflict between Georgia and Russia, gained extensive experience and built much needed disaster management capacity. These efforts continued throughout the earthquake operation and also enabled the National Society to successfully achieve its objectives, which were to provide relief to the affected population and to promote its activities as well as strengthen its image.

Nevertheless, the Georgia Red Cross Society sees itself as a learning and flexible organization, and thus strives to address and learn from operational endeavours such as the earthquake operation. Therefore the National Society recognizes that lessons are to be learnt from this operation as well. In particular the society recognizes that:

- Additional efforts should be made to build the disaster response capacities of staff and volunteers at branch level with special focus on effective cooperation with community-based local disaster committees. The existence of trained community-based disaster response Red Cross staff and volunteers will shorten the society's response time and ensure that needs are better assessed and understood, and subsequently, better met.
- The National Society should aim to involve affected populations more in planning and monitoring interventions and in generating lists of recipients. The survey conducted after the operation showed that most people interviewed said that they were not involved in any of the phases of the operation. The society recognizes that increased participation by affected populations is likely to raise the latter's experience in implementing projects and capacities, not only in responding to emergencies but also in applying this knowledge in realizing their own communities' ideas, finding ways and solutions to problems and becoming more active as community members. Furthermore, participation

by people reached is one of the means which contributes to transparency and increases people's trust in the National Society.

- The National Society realizes that during relief distributions recipients can and should get more information about the response operation being implemented and about the Red Cross activities in general. It is essential to inform people about the Red Cross's principles and values, and programme activities. Multiple benefits can be gained in promoting the National Society through emergency operations such as increased membership and volunteer base, participation, support and credibility.

How we work

All International Federation 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 is committed to the [Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Disaster Response \(Sphere\)](#) in delivering assistance to the most vulnerable.

The International Federation's activities are aligned with its Global Agenda, which sets out four broad goals to meet the Federation's mission to "improve the lives of vulnerable people by mobilizing the power of humanity".

Global Agenda Goals:

- Reduce the numbers of deaths, injuries and impact from disasters.
- Reduce the number of deaths, illnesses and impact from diseases and public health emergencies.
- Increase local community, civil society and Red Cross Red Crescent capacity to address the most urgent situations of vulnerability.
- Reduce intolerance, discrimination and social exclusion and promote respect for diversity and human dignity.

Contact information

For further information specifically related to this operation please contact:

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[<final financial report below; click here to return to the title page>](#)

International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

MDRGE002 - Georgia earthquake

Final Financial Report

Selected Parameters	
Reporting Timeframe	2009/9-2009/11
Budget Timeframe	2009/9-2009/11
Appeal	MDRGE002
Budget	APPEAL

All figures are in Swiss Francs (CHF)

I. Consolidated Response to Appeal

	Goal 1: Disaster Management	Goal 2: Health and Care	Goal 3: Capacity Building	Goal 4: Principles and Values	Coordination	TOTAL
A. Budget	61,016					61,016
B. Opening Balance	0					0
Income						
<u>Other Income</u>						
<i>Voluntary Income</i>	<i>61,016</i>					<i>61,016</i>
C5. Other Income	61,016					61,016
C. Total Income = SUM(C1..C5)	61,016					61,016
D. Total Funding = B + C	61,016					61,016
Appeal Coverage	100%					100%

II. Balance of Funds

	Goal 1: Disaster Management	Goal 2: Health and Care	Goal 3: Capacity Building	Goal 4: Principles and Values	Coordination	TOTAL
B. Opening Balance	0					0
C. Income	61,016					61,016
E. Expenditure	-61,016					-61,016
F. Closing Balance = (B + C + E)	0					0

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III. Budget Analysis / Breakdown of Expenditure

Account Groups	Budget	Expenditure					TOTAL	Variance
		Goal 1: Disaster Management	Goal 2: Health and Care	Goal 3: Capacity Building	Goal 4: Principles and Values	Coordination		
A							B	A - B
BUDGET (C)		61,016					61,016	
Supplies								
Clothing & textiles	41,250	43,316				43,316	-2,066	
Total Supplies	41,250	43,316				43,316	-2,066	
Transport & Storage								
Storage	3,500						3,500	
Distribution & Monitoring		336				336	-336	
Transport & Vehicle Costs	3,500	4,608				4,608	-1,108	
Total Transport & Storage	7,000	4,944				4,944	2,056	
Personnel								
International Staff		101				101	-101	
Regionally Deployed Staff	1,500						1,500	
National Staff	2,500	1,983				1,983	517	
National Society Staff	1,000	3,031				3,031	-2,031	
Total Personnel	5,000	5,115				5,115	-115	
General Expenditure								
Travel	1,000	1,039				1,039	-39	
Information & Public Relation	500	1,591				1,591	-1,091	
Office Costs	1,200	464				464	736	
Communications	800	384				384	416	
Financial Charges	300	129				129	171	
Other General Expenses		69				69	-69	
Total General Expenditure	3,800	3,675				3,675	125	
Programme Support								
Program Support	3,966	3,966				3,966	0	
Total Programme Support	3,966	3,966				3,966	0	
TOTAL EXPENDITURE (D)	61,016	61,016				61,016	-0	
VARIANCE (C - D)		-0				-0		