

# DREF operation final report



International Federation  
of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

## Timor-Leste: Flooding and Landslides

DREF operation n° MDRTP002  
GLIDE n° [FL-2007-000107-TMP](#)  
5 August 2008

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 and 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.

**Period covered by this update:**  
1 January 2008 -30 April 2008

### Summary:

CHF 145,212<sup>1</sup> was allocated from the Federation's Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF) on 25 July 2007 to support the national society in delivering assistance to 947 beneficiaries. Up to 94 per cent of the available funds were utilized for the operation.

In July 2007, Timor-Leste experienced severe downpours leading to flooding and landslides. Overall, a total number of 947 beneficiaries (243 families, consisting of 463 men and 484 women) in six districts were badly affected. Through the DREF support, the operation was planned for five months; July through November 2007. However, due to security problems, heavy rains and flooding, insurgency activities and logistics problems such as the purchase of appropriate timber, the operation was extended till March 2008.



The CVTL facilitated the community for rebuilding secure housing in Suai, using additional local materials.

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<sup>1</sup> Full appeal coverage was achieved, though the attached coverage is shown as 94 per cent; the remaining six per cent has been returned to the DREF.

## The situation

This operation relates to a period of heavy rain in July 2007 that resulted in floods and landslides in many parts of the country. The impact was particularly severe in the districts of Suai, Same, Manatutu, Viqueque and Ermera. A total of 243 households were affected with at least one death recorded as well as severe loss of livelihood, shelter and crops such as rice, corn and green crops. In Suai, about 100 deep wells were contaminated by flood water while many houses in Jumalai were destroyed by landslides. Health problems such as diarrhoea, malaria and dengue were reported in Suai with similar problems reported in the districts of Manatutu, Ermera and Same as well.

Timor-Leste faced many challenges during 2007 and 2008. About 100,000 internally displaced persons (IDP) had been in the camps for more than a year and the security situation was very unpredictable for a long period. The country faced drought from February to March 2007 resulting in food scarcity in many parts. This was followed by a new bout of civil unrest which erupted in the three eastern districts that led to the displacement of about 10,000 people as well as the destruction or burning down of houses and various infrastructures. In the meantime, La Niña brought about heavy rains frequently from December 2007 till April 2008 that caused large scale flooding and landslides in many parts of the country, especially in the Liquica district. The south-western districts were badly affected by locust infestations.

In all these areas, the Cruz Vermelha de Timor-Leste (CVTL) and the International Federation supported communities in rehabilitating their shelters and provided piped water to a community in Ermera district. CVTL/ Federation advocated the problem of Laco community (Manatutu district) to the government for necessary support. As a result, the government decided to support this community; therefore, CVTL/Federation reviewed the plan and provided its support to the community in Same district.

The main challenges of the operation were the short supply of legal timber, security problems and state of siege for two months, long wet season and local community barred from accessing forest resources for construction materials. Over all, the progress was slow.

## Red Cross and Red Crescent action

This operation was implemented in close coordination with the National Disaster Management Directorate.

The Federation country office supported CVTL (Timor-Leste Red Cross) in planning the operation, the procurement of construction materials, implementation, monitoring and follow-up. Thus, the operation was implemented with close cooperation between CVTL and the International Federation. Support from the regional office in Bangkok and the shelter department at the Geneva secretariat was also helpful.

This operation has contributed to the International Federation's Global Agenda Goal 1: Reduced deaths, injuries and impact from disasters. The International Federation together with CVTL worked jointly with other agencies to identify the shelter gap. Involvement in this operation has helped raise CVTL's profile, especially on the National Disaster Management Directorate. CVTL and the International Federation have been consulted as important partners in the preparedness of any impending disasters or for emergency response. The timely response to disaster affected population has contributed to reduce the risk of their potential exposure to the debt trap for reconstruction of shelters.

## Progress towards objectives

### Objective:

Support 201 disaster-affected families to rebuild their shelters by the end of November 2007.

### Achievements:

The operation followed a community-led sheltering process. The operation team first discussed the sheltering process in town hall meetings in the affected areas. The communities agreed that CVTL would provide only core shelter materials and residents themselves would continue to develop these shelters as permanent housing, using local resources.

Identifying suitable construction sites was the immediate need for relocation of the affected families in the two districts of Suai and Ermera. The community members themselves recommended some new areas for relocation. Those areas required CVTL and the International Federation to engage in some negotiation with

the land and property department of the government. Finally, the land and property department agreed to provide land titles to the local community in these two districts. Thus, the land issues were sorted out at the outset of the operation.

The community then formed teams of eight to ten people to carry out the shelter construction. CVTL recruited a team of three technicians to facilitate the operation while the district branches identified volunteers to be involved in this process. The International Federation provided support from the beginning of the operation.

CVTL and the International Federation encouraged to the government to repair river embankments and excavate river beds to change the river course away from the village at the Lacro community in Manatutu. The community was affected by floods last year and was therefore selected for this operation. After CVTL and the International Federation discussed the issue with the government, the government allocated USD 30,000 (CHF 34,650) to support the community for this purpose. Following the decision that the reconstruction of shelters in that area was not necessary, the plan was adjusted for rebuilding 181 shelters in other areas. The distribution of shelters is as follows:

Sub-district	District	Number of shelters
Tilomar	Suai	7
Zumalai	Suai	129
Fateburlihu	Same	16
Lawala	Ermera	29
<b>Total</b>		<b>181</b>

CVTL and the International Federation provided roofing materials, timber posts, anchoring bars, nails, tools and necessary technical skills while the local residents themselves built complete shelters. The shelter designs were in line with the local practices with the local village councils actively involved in the sheltering process.

As the Lawala community in Ermera had to carry water from a distant source, a new piped water scheme was constructed. The project provided construction materials and technical support with the local community contributing labour and local materials voluntarily.

#### **Constraints or challenges:**

The major challenges faced by the project were as follows:

- **Timber procurement:**

Procurement of legal timber for this operation was extremely difficult. After weeks of follow-up with the government, the timber supplier obtained government approval for the supply of about 30 cubic metres. CVTL was informed that the government would authorize the rest of the timber after the company submitted its distribution list in the community. In the meantime, as the supplier was preparing for delivery, he faced some problems caused by a local youth group, leading to the suspension of the supply for some time. Finally, the company supplied about 30 cubic metres of timber against a need of 220 cubic metres.

The government issued a public notice making logging in Timor-Leste illegal. Therefore, obtaining authorization for additional timber was not possible. The department of forestry advised all concerned to buy timber from other countries. As the price of timber soared, none of the companies were interested to take supply orders. Furthermore, it was difficult to obtain the necessary documents from the suppliers. Thus, timber became the major constraint for the completion of the operation. As a contingency measure, the International Federation regional logistics unit in Kuala Lumpur was requested to explore the purchase of legal timber for the operation. Finally, a registered local company agreed to supply legal timber imported from outside the country. As a consequence, the construction of these shelters was delayed by almost five months.

- **Security situation**

The unstable political and security situation in-country had significant impact on the operation. Local suppliers did not stockpile construction materials because of the security threat. This resulted in supplies taking at least a month to arrive in the local market from other countries.

On 11 February 2008, the unsuccessful assassination attempt on the prime minister and the president resulted in the fatal shooting of the fugitive rebel leader. Following this, the country was in the state of siege for two months. Military operations were carried out in the western district of Ermera, where one project sites is located, restricting the movement of people from outside the district during that time.

- **Wet season**

As a result of La Niña and the change in sea level temperatures, the country faced a long wet season which brought about heavy and frequent rains in late 2007 and early 2008. This adversely affected the delivery of materials and the construction of shelters.

## Conclusion

In terms of emergency response, implementation of this operation was not very smooth; however, the results of the operation are very close to the original plan. About 85 per cent of the shelters are fully completed, the others need further follow up which will be carried out through existing disaster management programmes in the districts.

### Lessons learned:

- The initial inter-agency coordination meeting led by the government that discussed the disaster situation, emergency response needs, and the involvement of different agencies in different sectors was helpful in identifying the needs and planning accordingly for a coordinated response.
- In order to overcome the problem of timber supply, it is important to plan for importing legal timber from outside the country. It takes at least two months for timber to arrive in Timor-Leste from outside the country. As such, it is recommended that procurement takes place in advance in coordination with the regional logistics unit in Kuala Lumpur.
- Considering the new role of the International Federation in the shelter sector, it is important to define the minimum standards of shelters and the community-led sheltering process.
- As the community has been occupied with agriculture for a long time, it was difficult to engage them in the construction process. In this light, the timeframe of such shelter projects should be at least one year.

How we work	
<p><i>All International Federation assistance seeks to adhere to the <a href="#">Code of Conduct for the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) in Disaster Relief</a> and is committed to the <a href="#">Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Disaster Response (Sphere)</a> in delivering assistance to the most vulnerable.</i></p>	
<p>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".</p>	<p><b>Global Agenda Goals:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reduce the numbers of deaths, injuries and impact from disasters.</li> <li>• Reduce the number of deaths, illnesses and impact from diseases and public health emergencies.</li> <li>• Increase local community, civil society and Red Cross Red Crescent capacity to address the most urgent situations of vulnerability.</li> <li>• Reduce intolerance, discrimination and social exclusion and promote respect for diversity and human dignity.</li> </ul>
Contact information	
<p><b>For further information specifically related to this operation please contact:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cruz Vermelha de Timor-Leste (Timor-Leste Red Cross): Isabel Amaral Guterres (secretary general); email: <a href="mailto:sec-gen@cvtl.tp">sec-gen@cvtl.tp</a>; phone: +670.724.8963; Fax: +670.332.1688</li> <li>• Federation country office in Timor-Leste: Kamal Niraula (acting head of country office);</li> </ul>	

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Selected Parameters	
Reporting Timeframe	2007/7-2008/8
Budget Timeframe	2007/7-2008/5
Appeal	MDRTP002
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	145,212					145,212
B. Opening Balance	0					0
<b>Income</b>						
<u>Other Income</u>						
Voluntary Income	135,854					135,854
C5. Other Income	135,854					135,854
C. Total Income = SUM(C1..C5)	135,854					135,854
D. Total Funding = B + C	135,854					135,854
Appeal Coverage	94%					94%

**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	135,854					135,854
E. Expenditure	-135,854					-135,854
F. Closing Balance = (B + C + E)	0					0

Selected Parameters	
Reporting Timeframe	2007/7-2008/8
Budget Timeframe	2007/7-2008/5
Appeal	MDRTP002
Budget	APPEAL

All figures are in Swiss Francs (CHF)

### III. Budget Analysis / Breakdown of Expenditure

Account Groups	Budget	Expenditure					TOTAL	Variance A - B
		Goal 1: Disaster Management	Goal 2: Health and Care	Goal 3: Capacity Building	Goal 4: Principles and Values	Coordination		
<b>A</b>							<b>B</b>	
<b>BUDGET (C)</b>		<b>145,212</b>					<b>145,212</b>	
<b>Supplies</b>								
Shelter - Relief	105,788	40,438					40,438	65,350
Construction Materials		58,350					58,350	-58,350
<b>Total Supplies</b>	<b>105,788</b>	<b>98,788</b>					<b>98,788</b>	<b>7,000</b>
<b>Transport &amp; Storage</b>								
Distribution & Monitoring	6,939							6,939
Transport & Vehicle Costs		6,938					6,938	-6,938
<b>Total Transport &amp; Storage</b>	<b>6,939</b>	<b>6,938</b>					<b>6,938</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Personnel</b>								
International Staff		32					32	-32
Regionally Deployed Staff		23					23	-23
National Society Staff	11,330	11,175					11,175	155
<b>Total Personnel</b>	<b>11,330</b>	<b>11,230</b>					<b>11,230</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>Workshops &amp; Training</b>								
Workshops & Training	2,000	159					159	1,841
<b>Total Workshops &amp; Training</b>	<b>2,000</b>	<b>159</b>					<b>159</b>	<b>1,841</b>
<b>General Expenditure</b>								
Travel		123					123	-123
Information & Public Relation		104					104	-104
Office Costs	9,716	688					688	9,028
Communications		816					816	-816
Financial Charges		15					15	-15
Other General Expenses		8,162					8,162	-8,162
<b>Total General Expenditure</b>	<b>9,716</b>	<b>9,909</b>					<b>9,909</b>	<b>-193</b>
<b>Programme Support</b>								
Program Support	9,439	8,831					8,831	608
<b>Total Programme Support</b>	<b>9,439</b>	<b>8,831</b>					<b>8,831</b>	<b>608</b>
<b>TOTAL EXPENDITURE (D)</b>	<b>145,212</b>	<b>135,854</b>					<b>135,854</b>	<b>9,358</b>
<b>VARIANCE (C - D)</b>		<b>9,358</b>					<b>9,358</b>	