

DREF operation final report



International Federation
of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

Albania: Explosions

**DREF operation n° MDRAL001
GLIDE n° AC-2008-000036-ALB
19 December, 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 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 248,294 (USD 236,428 or EUR 155,184) was allocated from the International Federation's Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF) on 19 March, 2008 to support the Albanian National Society in delivering assistance to some 4,084 beneficiaries, and to replenish disaster preparedness stocks. A part of the allocation was used to replenish the emergency stock of the Montenegro Red Cross who provided relief items from its own stock for 200 beneficiaries.

After a series of explosions near the Albanian capital of Tirana the Albanian Red Cross provided the affected population with food and non-food items as well as first-aid and psychosocial support to injured people in hospitals.

The operation lasted from 19 March 2008 to 19 June 2008. The spending of the total DREF allocation was however delayed due to challenges with suppliers in terms of quantity and quality for the replenishment of the National Society's emergency stock. Hence the report is published three months after initially due.

Funds released from the DREF for this operation have been repaid by the Netherlands Red Cross and the Japanese Red Cross with 64,000 Swiss francs and 10,000 Swiss francs respectively.



Photo 1: Albanian children with relief items distributed by the Albanian Red Cross. Photo: Albanian Red Cross

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The situation

A series of massive explosions in an ammunition store near the Albanian capital of Tirana on 15 March 2008 badly affected the population in the three villages of Gërdec, Marquet 1 and Marquet 2. Damage was also reported in the neighbouring communities of Vora, Marikaj and Preze. The explosions continued until 14:00 on 16 March 2008.

According to information from local authorities and an assessment conducted by the Albanian Red Cross the explosion killed 26 persons, injured 296 out of which 82 were serious, and left thousands of traumatized

people behind. In the three most affected villages, with a population of 4,000, around 90 per cent were evacuated and accommodated in 2 collective army residences in Tirana and Durres and with relatives.

A total of 4,000 buildings situated close to the explosion area were damaged out of which 380 were totally destroyed. In addition six schools were damaged. The supply of electricity in the area was cut for three days. The explosions also led to the spread of significant amounts of ammunition, thus exposing the nearby population to potential further risks.

The government declared a state of emergency for the area and emergency commissions were set up at the central and local level.

Red Cross and Red Crescent action

In accordance with the national disaster plan, and in coordination with the governmental emergency structure, the Albanian Red Cross closely followed up on the situation and responded to the most urgent needs of the affected families and individuals. An emergency management group led by the secretary general of the Albanian Red Cross was set up at the headquarters of the National Society. This group was in permanent contact with the deputy minister of the Interior Ministry and with the Directorate of Emergencies.

The main activity during the operation covered by the DREF allocation was the procurement and distribution of food and non-food items. See below for progress towards objectives related to this. In addition the National Society undertook the following actions:

- Non-food items available from the Albanian Red Cross's emergency response stock including blankets, hygiene items, plastic sheeting and kitchen sets were initially distributed to the 30 most affected families.
- In order to coordinate efforts from different stakeholders and thus avoid duplications or gaps, the Albanian Red Cross signed a memorandum of understanding with the municipality of Vora with clearly defined responsibilities.
- Volunteer teams from Red Cross branches in Tirana and Durres were mobilized and sent to hospitals to assist the injured people and their families. The teams provided first aid for the injured and psychosocial support for their families that were in shock. Simultaneously they provided information on missing people, while volunteers with medical background assisted medical staff during voluntary blood donation sessions organized by the Albanian Red Cross in close cooperation with the hospitals.
- An appeal was released for voluntary blood donors through the media for the communities and institutions at national level. The local branches of Gjirokastr, Korce, Berat and Durres conducted a public campaign for blood donations.
- Light food and water was distributed to the members of injured families mostly in hospital premises by volunteers of the Tirana branch.
- The Red Cross branch of Durres distributed clothes and detergents for 139 persons in the collective centre in the city. The clothes were donated by community members in Durres as response to the appeal made by the local branch.
- Leaflets on mines and explosive remnants of war (ERW) were distributed in the affected areas by volunteers of the Tirana branch to raise awareness of the high risk due to the spread of ammunitions.
- The Albanian Red Cross launched a fund-raising campaign.

Cooperation and partners

The Albanian Red Cross's disaster response team worked jointly with the state emergency commissions and conducted an assessment of the needs in the field. Ten groups consisting of experts from the government and the Albanian Red Cross visited the affected area. The result of the preliminary assessment showed that 850 families, approximately 3,200 individuals, were in immediate need of support in the three most affected villages of Gërdec, Marqinet 1 and Marqinet 2. This figure was later increased to 4,084 individuals.

The Albanian Red Cross also worked closely with the hospitals where injured people were given medical assistance and with the army in the collective centres where affected people were temporarily accommodated. The national media was regularly updated on the Albanian Red Cross actions.

Several sister National Societies contributed to the operation or offered their support:

- The Montenegro Red Cross provided relief items from its emergency stock for 200 beneficiaries. A part of the DREF allocation was spent to replenish these items.
- The German Red Cross, through the German Embassy in Tirana, allocated medical items.

- The Turkish Red Crescent and the Spanish Red Cross provided donations in kind.
- The Austrian Red Cross offered blood, medicine and ambulance staff if required.
- The Red Cross Societies of Bulgaria and Macedonia offered their help as well.

Progress towards objectives

Relief distributions (food and basic non-food items)

Objective: To provide immediate assistance in the form of basic food and non-food items to 3,200 beneficiaries in the three most affected villages for a period of three months.

Activities planned:

- Compile the final lists of beneficiaries together with the local management commission and the local authorities
- Procure and deliver relief supplies to the beneficiaries
- Monitor and evaluate the relief activities and report on the relief distributions

Progress and impact:

During the operation beneficiaries were selected and provided with food and non-food items. Beneficiaries were selected according to the following criteria: families who lost family member(s); families whose houses were totally damaged; and families whose houses were partially damaged.

Food items were purchased according to pre-signed contracts with local suppliers selected by the Albanian Red Cross. An additional contract was signed with the suppliers to procure the quantity of each item foreseen in the budget for the relief operation.

As for non-food items the National Society did not have pre-signed contracts. Thus non-food items were distributed directly from the National Society's disaster preparedness stock. In order to replenish the items distributed during the operation the Albanian Red Cross organized a tender procedure. The procedure included announcements in two newspapers and forwarding the necessary documents to seven companies to make a bid. Four companies offered a bid and following an analysis of the bids one main supplier was chosen. In total 2,680 blankets were bought and the amount of DREF funds for replenishing these non-food items was 35,000 euros.

The type and total amount of food and non-food items procured and distributed during the operation included:

Food items in kg	Amount	Non-food items	Amount
Wheat flour	51,000	Blankets	3,200 pcs
Vegetable oil (<i>liters</i>)	12,750	Hygiene parcels	1,700 pcs
Rice	7 650	Non-food items*	Amount
White beans	12,700	Blankets	500 pcs
Sugar	7,650	Kitchen sets	100 pcs
Soap	6,168	Plastic sheets	200 m ²

Table 1: Amount of food and non-food items procured and distributed during the operation.

* From Montenegro Red Cross emergency stock

The items were distributed to beneficiaries in the villages of Gëredc, Marquinet 1 and 2 and the number of families and beneficiaries covered were as follows:

Location	Families	Benef.
Gërdec village	92	462
Marqinet 1 village	200	1,206
Marqinet 2 village incl.:	558	2,416
• Lagja Pikeze	84	354
• Lagja Ustali	120	485
• Lagja Qëndër	114	473
• Lagja Druri Bukur	121	580
• Lagja Picar	119	524
Total	850	4,084

Table 2: Locations, total number of families and total number of beneficiaries receiving food and non-food items

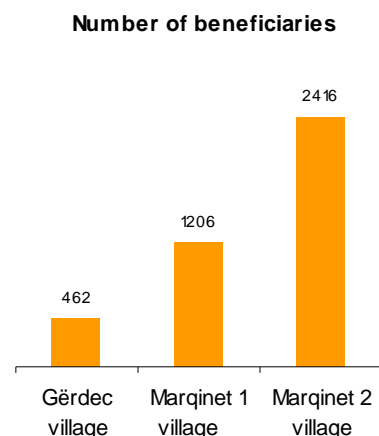


Figure 1: Number of beneficiaries in villages receiving food and non-food items

The distribution of items was organized and monitored by secretariat staff including disaster preparedness, logistics and programme personnel, staff from the Tirana branch and 20 volunteers. Furthermore, the distribution was done in collaboration with local authorities which also assisted in developing lists of beneficiaries. To ensure visibility the media was invited and was present during some of the days when items were distributed.

As table 2 shows, during its distribution of food and non-food items to affected people the Albanian Red Cross managed to reach almost 4,100 beneficiaries.

Relief items from the Montenegro Red Cross

To support the Albanian Red Cross and the affected population, the Montenegro Red Cross in cooperation with the International Federation's regional representation for Central Europe and Southern Caucasus, established contact with the Albanian Red Cross. An agreement was reached to support the Albanian Red Cross's emergency efforts with emergency stock items covering 200 beneficiaries. The items included 500 blankets, 100 kitchen sets and 200m² plastic sheets. The Montenegro Red Cross also donated a number of jackets, T-shirts and vests. A part of the DREF allocation was spent to replenish these items.

Challenges

The operation demonstrated that the identification of evacuated people for distribution of food and non-food items was difficult because of people moving around. This was considered as not only important for the distribution process, but also when it comes to security considering the spread of ammunition and thus the ability to reach out with warnings to potential victims. The Albanian Red Cross did, however, manage to mobilize its disaster preparedness network and mine risk educated volunteers and successfully distributed food and non-food items as well as carried out awareness activities.

In its support to the Albanian Red Cross, the Montenegro Red Cross faced some hindrances in customs and procedures for export. This caused an almost ten-day delay in the delivery of the relief items and highlights the need to continue the work to establish more rapid and efficient custom procedures in time of emergencies or disasters.

Conclusion

For the Albanian Red Cross the explosions demonstrated the importance to plan for both man-made and natural disasters. Thus this has to be taken into consideration and planned for through contingency plans. Furthermore the explosions contributed to the identification of sources that can potentially pose a risk and create an emergency situation. Hence this will contribute to a more conscious approach when it comes to identifying potential risks.

Following up on the point above, ammunition storage has now been identified as a potential risk and as such, warning mechanisms should be developed for people living in areas near to such places.

The emergency and the following operation also demonstrated the need for collaboration with other actors and that this has to be an integrated part of any emergency and disaster planning process. During the operation cooperation with specialized military forces in assessing the situation proved decisive due to the high risk of ammunition which was spread as a result of the explosion. This also highlights the need for including such aspects in any plan and response.

Concerning disaster preparedness training, the emergency highlighted the need to conduct trainings on a regular basis because of a continuous change in the National Society's volunteer base and the need for refreshing the level of knowledge within the disaster preparedness programme.

During its emergency response the Albanian Red Cross also received support from and cooperated with sister National Societies in Central Europe. Cooperation worked very well and demonstrated the importance of common disaster response mechanisms, cooperation and network building. These processes should continue and be further enhanced. Cooperation during the emergency was facilitated by a database including a virtual warehouse which connects all National Societies to better cooperate and assist each other in case of emergency. The database provides information on the disaster management capacity within the region, contact details for each National Society, disaster management departments and staff, regional disaster response team members and their skills, the logistics capacity within the societies, emergency stocks and the quantity which could be provided to sister societies when needed. Also the strong network of the National Societies' disaster management coordinators strengthens the commitment of these societies to help each other.

The Albanian Red Cross's response to the explosion was done in accordance with the Albanian Red Cross disaster plan. The operation was accomplished successfully and benefited 850 families with almost 4,100 family members.

There is a remaining balance of 2,171 Swiss francs due to currency fluctuations which will be reimbursed to DREF.

How we work	
<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>Global Agenda Goals:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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	
<p>For further information specifically related to this operation please contact:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In the Albania Red Cross: Zamir Muça , Secretary General, phone: +355 42227508; email: zmuca@kksh.org.al • In the Regional Representation for Central Europe and Southern Caucasus: Elias Ghanem, Regional Representative, phone: +36 1 888 45 00, fax: +36 1 336 1516, email: elias.ghanem@ifrc.org • In the Europe Zone Office, Budapest: Slobodanka Curic, Disaster Management Coordinator, phone: +36 1 8884 510; fax: +36 1 336 1516; email: slobodanka.curic@ifrc.org • In Geneva: Pablo Medina, Operations Coordinator, phone: +41 22 730 4381, fax: +41 22 733 0395, email: pablo.medina@ifrc.org 	

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International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

MDRAL001 - Albania Technical Disaster/Explosion

Final Financial Report

Selected Parameters	
Reporting Timeframe	2008/03-2008/11
Budget Timeframe	2008/03-2008/07
Appeal	MDRAL001
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	248,294					248,294
B. Opening Balance	0					0
Income						
<u>Other Income</u>						
<i>Voluntary Income</i>	248,294					248,294
C5. Other Income	248,294					248,294
C. Total Income = SUM(C1..C5)	248,294					248,294
D. Total Funding = B + C	248,294					248,294
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	248,294					248,294
E. Expenditure	-246,123					-246,123
F. Closing Balance = (B + C + E)	2,171					2,171

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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)		248,294					248,294	
Supplies								
Shelter - Relief	6,800							6,800
Clothing & textiles	60,800	73,228				73,228		-12,428
Food	125,222	118,622				118,622		6,600
Other Supplies & Services	16,773							16,773
Total Supplies	209,595	191,850				191,850		17,745
Transport & Storage								
Storage	11,680	1,138				1,138		10,542
Distribution & Monitoring		328				328		-328
Transport & Vehicle Costs		7,128				7,128		-7,128
Total Transport & Storage	11,680	8,594				8,594		3,086
Personnel								
National Staff	3,800	834				834		2,966
National Society Staff	3,200	4,814				4,814		-1,614
Total Personnel	7,000	5,648				5,648		1,352
General Expenditure								
Information & Public Relation		213				213		-213
Office Costs	3,880							3,880
Communications		3,485				3,485		-3,485
Financial Charges		20,334				20,334		-20,334
Total General Expenditure	3,880	24,032				24,032		-20,152
Programme Support								
Program Support	16,139	15,998				15,998		141
Total Programme Support	16,139	15,998				15,998		141
TOTAL EXPENDITURE (D)	248,294	246,123				246,123		2,172
VARIANCE (C - D)		2,172				2,172		