DREF operations update
South Africa: Limpopo floods

Overview of major revisions made to emergency plan of action
CHF 165,035 was allocated from the IFRC’s Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF) on 21 March 2014 to support SARCS Limpopo Province in delivering assistance to 705 families (3,525 beneficiaries) in the Lephalale Municipality district. At the time the original EPoA was made, the affected population was being housed in temporary shelter in community halls, creches and schools. A week after the approval of the DREF the situation evolved so that the affected people were able to return to their permanent dwellings as the floodwaters subsided. As a result of this, the National Society, with support from IFRC, adjusted their operation to meet the needs of the people affected. The plans were revised to focus on the distribution of dry rations instead of wet rations (cooked meals) due to families moving back to their permanent dwellings. Dry rations include tinned fish, rice, samp, meal, sugar beans, iodate salt, cooking oil, peanut butter and tea. The budget was adjusted accordingly to substitute the dry rations where cooked meals were originally planned. The proposed revision will not hamper the expected timeframe of the 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, European Commission Humanitarian Aid and Civil Protection (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.

The IFRC, on behalf of South Africa Red Cross Society, would like to extend its thanks to all for their generous contributions.

Details of all donors can be found on [http://www.ifrc.org/docs/appeals/Active/MDR00001.pdf](http://www.ifrc.org/docs/appeals/Active/MDR00001.pdf)

Summary
From 1 March to 18 March 2014 the north-eastern parts of the country experienced heavy and extended rainfall which led to extensive flooding and landslides. As a result, over 7,000 people were affected, with 3,525 being displaced. The government of South Africa confirmed 32 deaths had been reported with others still missing due to flash flooding. The most affected provinces included Limpopo, Mpumalanga, North West and Gauteng.

Limpopo Province was worst affected with the municipalities of Lephalale, Mogalakwena, Modimolle, Bela-Bela, Thabazimbi, and Mookgopong in Waterberg District hardest hit. The cost of damage to infrastructure (main roads, houses, farmland and tourist centres) were estimated in millions of US dollars. Most community members had
Evacuated or been evacuated to evacuation centres set up by Government in community halls, crèches, schools. Emergency Response Teams from government, private sector, military, NGOs and Red Cross worked together to evacuate flood affected communities.

As of the 1st of March 2014, large numbers of volunteers were moving in the affected areas to assist with the intense relief operation being carried out tirelessly by SARCS Limpopo Province. IFRC supported SARCS intervention by deploying a Regional Disaster Response Team (RDRT) member to Limpopo on 3 April 2014. Technical assistance was provided by the IFRC in support of finance, as well as the procurement and planning process. The IFRC secured two vehicles from Zimbabwe for hire. The operation was expected to be implemented for two months and completed by 22 May 2014.

Although humanitarian aid was quickly reaching many of the affected communities, concerns remained for some of the remote areas that were much harder to reach. Nevertheless, it became clear after one week into the operation that many communities were already moving into the recovery phase and the primary focus in humanitarian aid therefore shifted to providing dry rations, blankets, hygiene packs and baby packs.

Coordination and partnerships
Since the disaster struck, SARCS operational coordination has been active with the National Disaster Management Centre (NDMC), Provincial Disaster Management Centre (PDMC), Disaster Management Centre (DMC) and local NGOs taking part in supporting the affected community. American Red Cross has given support through providing technical assistance. The IFRC’s disaster management regional coordinator and finance officer were deployed to the country to assist SARCS in the set-up of the operation prior to the deployment of the RDRT member.

IFRC has continued to support and coordinate with SARCS through the initial stage of the response. The coordination structure in place includes the Programs Coordinator for Southern African Region (IFRC), the National Disaster Manager (SARCS), and the Provincial Manager (Limpopo). A letter of agreement was signed between the parties. The IFRC zone office has been in contact with the NDMC, PDMC and DMC to introduce the interventions and build relations for SARCS with the government. Coordination meetings are held daily with PDMC to share information and discuss operational developments. The local authorities also supported the NS with resources such as storage, vehicles and personnel. For the activities implemented so far their support has been vital.

Operational implementation
Overview
The objectives for the first month, set at the start of the operation, have all been achieved, with the exception of the distribution of relief items at Thabo Mbeki and Klipaan farms, which will be completed on 25 and 26 April 2014.

The implementation of the DREF experienced a few challenges in procurement of relief items from the local markets. Some items were not available during the process of procuring, which caused delays in implementation. Challenges were encountered in the procurement of mosquito nets during the first weeks of operation as the nets were not available in the local markets. However, the mosquito nets were procured in another province and were distributed to the affected communities. During distribution of mosquito nets, a mosquito net hang-up demonstration was done by volunteers.

The national society had to source items from outside the Limpopo Province, due to suppliers demanding upfront payment. Prior to distribution, the local authorities were briefed on the distribution plan for the three villages. Other activities completed prior to distribution were procurement, beneficiary verification, and briefing of volunteers who would take part in the distribution. The distribution is targeting 705 beneficiaries in the three affected areas of Vaal Water, Thabo Mbeki and Klipaan farms. The objective of procuring non-food items (NFIs) and food items (FIs) was achieved as 705 food parcels, 705 hygiene kits, and 1,525 blankets were procured successfully. The national society also received a donation of 100 mattresses and 98 food parcels from Eskom Power station, as well as 2,000 blankets from Metropolitan.

On 12 April 2014, the distribution was planned to be done in Thabo Mbeki village. However, the activity was disturbed by frustrated community members who were hoping to benefit from the distribution. They claimed that the assessment was not completed appropriately and stated that everyone in the village should benefit from the relief items, as everyone was affected by the floods. Due to the commotion, the SARCS response team had to
postpone the distribution until further notice. Distribution can only be completed when the local authorities find a solution to deal with community conflicts that erupt in such situations. The community conflict is caused by the fact that most communities in Thabo Mbeki find themselves in poor living conditions and the distribution of disaster relief items is seen as socio-economic relief, rather than disaster relief.

In Vaal Water the response team had to request the area councillors not to be present during distribution, as the community links Red Cross to political parties, which may cause negative connotations. Some community members claimed that certain politicians wanted to use the distribution of relief items to gain votes in the general elections next month. The request from SARCS to exclude politicians from distributions was welcomed by both the community and the councillors. The distribution was completed successfully and NFIs and FIs were distributed to 450 households in Vaal Water as planned.

The distribution will continue from 25 to 26 April 2014 at Thabo Mbeki and Klipaan farms. The District Disaster Manager and his team have resolved the issue in Thabo Mbeki to enable the national society to continue with the operation. SARCS involved the community in the new distribution plan once the initial conflict and concerns were addressed by the local authorities, which will enable a smoother distribution process. The challenge at Klipaan is a lack of access to the community as the farms are still flooded. Another issue is that distribution cannot take place during the week as most beneficiaries in this area are farm workers.

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<tr>
<th>Planned interventions:</th>
<th>Implementation (%)</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Relief distributions (food and basic non-food items)</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Outcome 1:</strong> Reduce the vulnerability of 705 HH (3,525 beneficiaries) in the Lephalale district through food relief for two months and the provision of basic household items</td>
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<td><strong>Output:</strong></td>
<td><strong>Activities implemented (80%)</strong></td>
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<td>• 705 flood affected households to be provided with dry food rations for two months, and basic household items that meet the sphere standard</td>
<td>• Trained 25 volunteers in relief distribution techniques</td>
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<td>• Developed beneficiary targeting strategy and registration system to deliver intended assistance.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Distributed a one-off supply for two months of dry rations</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Distributed and controlled movement of relief supplies from point of dispatch to beneficiaries</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Monitored and evaluated the relief items and completed reporting on activities conducted</td>
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<td>• Developed and implemented an exit strategy</td>
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**Progress:** 450 beneficiaries have been assisted at Vaal Water. The items distributed include hygiene kits, blankets and food parcels. The remaining relief items will be distributed on 24 and 25 April at Thabo Mbeki villages and farms respectively. The procurement of 1,525 blankets, 705 hygiene kits and 705 food parcels was completed successfully, despite unavailability of stock in local markets. Volunteers were trained in warehousing and stock control prior to distribution, which ensured efficient logistics around the relief distribution. Volunteers worked effectively in controlling the stock from the warehouse to the distribution points, and were able to complete the inventory of stocks distributed from the warehouse.

**Challenges**
- Suppliers requesting prior payment before they can deliver relief stock.
- Political interest in the operations hampered distribution in Thabo Mbeki.

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<td><strong>Logistics and Supply Chain</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Outcome 2:</strong> The relief operation is supported and delivers a range of relief items in line with the operational priorities in a cost effective and timely manner</td>
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<td><strong>Output:</strong></td>
<td><strong>Activities implemented (80%)</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>• The operation has coordinated mobilization of relief items and efficient and timely dispatch of goods at Limpopo Province's main warehouse</td>
<td>• Procured 1,525 blankets and distributed these to 705 households with the donation of 2,000 blankets received from Metropolitan.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Procurement of 705 food parcels that were distributed to</td>
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| 705 beneficiaries.  
| - Procurement of hygiene kits that were distributed to 705 beneficiaries.  
| - Procured and distributed 1,410 mosquito nets and demonstrated their use to the farm workers at Klipaan farms. |

**Progress.** 705 hygiene kits, 705 food parcels, and 1,525 blankets have been procured within the country with the assistance of the IFRC Regional Logistics Delegate. All items arrived in good condition and were stored in safe storages provided by local authorities before distribution. The items were packaged per household and stored in line with SPHERE standards. The volunteers worked closely together with the Logistics Delegate in manning the storages.

**Challenges**
- Unavailability of stock in Limpopo province
- Lack of vehicles within the NS that were able to transport relief items from point of collection to the delivery point caused a slight delay in the operation
- There was no contract in place between the NS and suppliers, which caused the suppliers to request payment before delivery
Contact information
For further information specifically related to this operation please contact:

- **IFRC Regional Representation**: Alexander Matheou Regional Representative for Southern Africa; Gaborone; phone: +267 3712700, mob: +267 71395340, fax: +267 3950090; email: alexander.matheou@ifrc.org

- **IFRC Africa Zone**: Daniel Bolaños, Disaster Management Coordinator for Africa; Nairobi; phone: +254 (0)731 067 489; email: daniel.bolanos@ifrc.org

- **IFRC Geneva**: Christine South, Operations Quality Assurance Senior Officer; phone: +41.22.730.45 29; email: christine.south@ifrc.org

- **IFRC Zone Logistics Unit (ZLU)**: Rishi Ramrakha, Head of zone logistics unit; Tel: +254 733 888 022/ Fax +254 20 271 2777; email: rishi.ramrakha@ifrc.org

For Resource Mobilization and Pledges:

- **IFRC Africa Zone**: Martine Zoethoutmaar, Resource Mobilization Coordinator; phone: +251 11 518 6073; email: martine.zoethoutmaar@ifrc.org

Please send all pledges for funding to zonerm.africa@ifrc.org

For Performance and Accountability (planning, monitoring, evaluation and reporting):

- **IFRC Africa Zone**: Robert Ondrusek, PMER/QA Delegate for Africa; Nairobi; phone: +254 731 067277; email: robert.ondrusek@ifrc.org

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 (NGOs) 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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Saving lives, changing minds.

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.