



Gabú Central Market Fire incident, Guinea-Bissau

Appeal: MDRGW005	Total DREF Allocation: CHF 113,239	Crisis Category: Yellow	Hazard: Fire
Glide Number: -	People Affected: 4,300 people	People Targeted: 966 people	People Assisted: 966 people
Event Onset: Sudden	Operation Start Date: 06-02-2025	Operational End Date: 30-06-2025	Total Operating Timeframe: 4 months

Targeted Regions: **Cacheu, Gabu**

Description of the Event

Date of event

23-01-2025

What happened, where and when?

Between 19 and 23 January 2025, two significant fire incidents impacted the communities of Gabú and Djofunco in Guinea-Bissau, resulting in substantial economic losses and increased humanitarian needs.

On 19 January 2025, a short circuit caused a fire at the Gabú Central Market, a primary economic hub in the Gabú Region in eastern Guinea-Bissau. The fire destroyed 11 warehouses and damaged 29 market cabinets, including 8 that were completely burned. The incident directly affected 90 traders and disrupted the livelihoods of 585 dependents. In addition, more than 3,500 individuals who relied on the market for goods and services experienced significant economic disruption. The destruction of the market further exacerbated existing vulnerabilities in a region already facing limited livelihood opportunities.

On 23 January 2025, a second fire occurred in Djofunco Village in the Cacheu Region, destroying a total of 31 homes, including 12 that were completely destroyed and 19 that sustained partial damage. The incident directly affected 224 people and indirectly impacted the entire village population of approximately 800 residents. Affected families lost homes, food stocks, and essential farming tools, increasing economic vulnerability and worsening food insecurity. The village's remote location and challenging terrain further complicated the delivery of humanitarian assistance.



Community visit



Destroyed houses



Destroyed houses



Destroyed houses

Scope and Scale

The fire incidents affected a total of 138 households across two communities, with significant economic, social, and humanitarian consequences.

- Gabú Central Market Fire

On 19 January 2025, a fire, caused by a short circuit, occurred at Gabú Central Market and spread to surrounding communities. Approximately 90 households, including 29 shop owners, were affected. Within less than a day, the fire rapidly consumed a significant

portion of the market infrastructure, destroying 11 warehouses and damaging 29 cabinets, 8 of which were entirely burned. The incident devastated the livelihoods of traders and their dependents, directly affecting 585 individuals and indirectly impacting more than 3,500 people who relied on the market's daily services. The destruction of the market further reduced the coping capacities of households in a region already facing economic challenges, highlighting systemic gaps in fire prevention and response mechanisms.

- **Djofunco Village Fire**

On 23 January 2025, another fire, of unknown origin, swept through Djofunco Village, directly affecting 31 households and indirectly impacting 17 host families. The fire destroyed 31 houses; 12 completely and 19 partially, and directly affected 224 individuals who lost their homes, food reserves, personal belongings, and farming tools. Indirectly, the village's total population of approximately 800, dependent on agriculture, faced increased economic and social vulnerability. Many survivors were displaced, with some sleeping in burned homes and others seeking refuge with neighboring families. The village's remote location and sandy terrain complicated humanitarian aid delivery, exacerbating the crisis and increasing food insecurity.

Overall, 121 of the 138 affected families suffered severe losses, including shelter and essential household items. In Djofunco, the 17 host families shared their limited resources to support displaced neighbors, placing additional strain on community capacities. The combined impact of both fires threatened the health, dignity, and resilience of all affected families, highlighting urgent needs for shelter restoration, economic support, and social assistance.

Both incidents underscore the vulnerability of the region. The Gabú Central Market serves as a critical economic hub for urban and rural populations, providing food, goods, and services. Its destruction disrupted local economies, leaving many traders without stable income and forcing others to rebuild from scratch. Similarly, the Djofunco fire exposed gaps in disaster preparedness and amplified vulnerabilities in remote rural communities. Together, these fires had significant implications for food security, economic stability, and social well-being, affecting not only the directly impacted households but also surrounding communities reliant on these local centers

IFRC Network Actions Related To The Current Event

Secretariat	<p>The International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) played a critical role in supporting the Red Cross Society of Guinea-Bissau (RCGB) during the response to the fires in Gabú Central Market and Djofunco Village. The IFRC provided technical expertise, strategic guidance, and coordination support to strengthen the RCGB's capacity to deliver timely and effective humanitarian assistance, particularly in remote and hard-to-reach areas.</p> <p>Since the onset of the disasters, the IFRC maintained close coordination with the RCGB through regular communication and coordination meetings to monitor the evolving situation and response progress. The IFRC supported the National Society in updating the GO Platform to ensure the availability of accurate, timely data to facilitate effective coordination and decision-making. In addition, the IFRC provided technical support in the development of a Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF) application, enabling the RCGB to mobilize resources to deliver urgent humanitarian assistance to affected populations.</p> <p>The IFRC also supported resource mobilization efforts by engaging with Movement partners, including the Qatar Red Crescent, to strengthen the overall response capacity. While formal funding commitments were still pending at the time of reporting, the IFRC continued to advocate for additional support and facilitated communication between the RCGB and potential funding partners.</p> <p>Throughout the response, the IFRC Country Cluster Delegation, based in Freetown, provided ongoing technical and organizational support, including guidance on organizational development, clarification of roles and responsibilities, and representation of the RCGB in international coordination and resource mobilization forums. The IFRC remained actively engaged in supporting both immediate response interventions and longer-term recovery and resilience-building efforts, contributing to a coordinated, effective, and sustainable response to the disaster.</p>
Participating National Societies	<p>At the time of the fire incidents, no Partner National Society (PNS) had a formal presence in Guinea-Bissau. However, the Qatar Red Crescent expressed interest in supporting the response to the fires in Gabú Central Market and Djofunco Village. The IFRC Country Cluster Delegation shared the situation report with the Qatar Red Crescent team and maintained active coordination to explore potential areas of</p>



support.

The Qatar Red Crescent pledged USD 750,000 to complement the DREF-supported activities. However, these funds were not available by the time of the operational closure. Discussions continued regarding the potential allocation of these resources toward longer-term resilience-building initiatives to support affected communities.

The engagement of potential PNS partners demonstrated opportunities to mobilize additional technical and financial resources to strengthen the overall response. This engagement complemented the ongoing efforts of the RCGB and IFRC in addressing immediate humanitarian needs while also supporting longer-term recovery and resilience priorities.

ICRC Actions Related To The Current Event

At the time of the fire incidents, the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) did not have an operational presence in Guinea-Bissau and, as a result, was not involved in the response to the emergencies.

Other Actors Actions Related To The Current Event

Government has requested international assistance	Yes
National authorities	<p>Government authorities responded promptly to the fire incidents, conducting initial assessments and implementing measures to ensure public safety. However, no direct material or financial assistance was provided to affected individuals or communities. Consequently, affected families and traders remained largely dependent on the Red Cross Society of Guinea-Bissau (RCGB) and other humanitarian actors for assistance, with no additional reported government-led interventions.</p> <p>The limited level of government support highlighted the need to strengthen national disaster response mechanisms and social protection systems to enhance the effectiveness of future emergency responses. In this context, partner coordination and continued resource mobilization efforts were essential to addressing immediate humanitarian needs while supporting longer-term recovery and resilience-building for affected communities.</p>
UN or other actors	<p>Following the fire incidents, various United Nations organizations and international partners conducted high-level visits to the affected areas to assess the situation and express concern and solidarity. While these visits demonstrated support, no tangible assistance was provided to address the immediate needs of the affected population.</p> <p>The Red Cross Society of Guinea-Bissau (RCGB) continued to advocate for coordinated efforts among UN actors and other partners, emphasizing the need for a comprehensive and timely response to effectively address the crisis and provide relief to those impacted.</p>



Needs (Gaps) Identified



Shelter Housing And Settlements

The recent fires in Djofunco Village and Gabú displaced many families and traders, severely hindering their recovery. In Djofunco Village, 31 homes were destroyed, leaving families homeless. Seventeen of these families sought refuge with host families in overcrowded and unsanitary conditions, urgently requiring assistance to rebuild their homes and access basic necessities such as mattresses, cooking utensils, and clothing. Provision of temporary shelters was critical to reduce health risks and alleviate pressure on host families.

In Gabú, the fires destroyed 11 warehouses and damaged 29 stores, with 8 completely burned, affecting 90 traders. Among them, 29 traders required immediate assistance to rebuild their stalls and restore their livelihoods. In total, 60 families (31 from Djofunco and 29 whose stores were destroyed) faced urgent shelter needs. The fires also impacted the broader community, as the Gabú Central Market, a key economic hub, remained closed. Reconstruction of the market was crucial to restore access to goods and re-establish economic stability in the region.

Immediate action was required to provide temporary shelter, essential household items, and support for rebuilding homes and market infrastructure. Coordinated efforts were necessary to help affected communities recover and regain stability.



Livelihoods And Basic Needs

The recent fires at Gabú Central Market and Djofunco Village caused major disruptions to livelihoods, leaving traders, farmers, and households in urgent need of support to restore their economic activities. The following livelihood needs were identified as critical for the recovery of affected individuals and communities:

- **Livelihood Restoration**

The fire at Gabú Central Market directly affected 90 traders and their families, as well as the broader community that relied on the market for daily sustenance. Immediate support was needed to help traders restore their businesses, including financial assistance, restocking of goods, and business support to resume economic activities. Some traders, who lost both their goods and infrastructure such as storage and stalls, required assistance to rebuild their businesses.

In Djofunco Village, many households depended on agriculture and petty trading as their primary livelihoods. The fire destroyed 31 homes, leaving many individuals, including women-headed households, without means of income. These already vulnerable households faced an added crisis, as their ability to generate income was severely impacted. Farmers, in particular, lost essential assets such as seeds, crops, and farming tools, further hindering their ability to rebuild their livelihoods.

- **Food Assistance**

The disaster left many households with limited access to food. Host families, who provided temporary shelter to displaced individuals, struggled to support them due to their own limited food reserves. Emergency food aid was urgently needed to assist affected households during the recovery period, as many had lost their income and could not afford to purchase food.

- **Support for Host Families**

The displacement of affected households placed significant pressure on host families, who were already living in poor conditions with limited resources. These families provided food, shelter, and basic necessities to displaced individuals but struggled to meet these needs. With an average household size of 5 to 7 members, they found it difficult to accommodate additional individuals. Furthermore, many host families relied on agriculture and small businesses, both of which were impacted by the fires, leaving them indirectly affected by the crisis. Support was needed to prevent further strain on their already fragile livelihoods.

Without intervention, both directly affected households and host families faced increased food insecurity and financial hardship. Cash assistance was urgently required to support the livelihoods of affected households and their hosts, ensuring that both groups could meet their basic needs and begin rebuilding their lives.

The fires left many families and traders without the means to support themselves, compounded by the loss of basic necessities. Immediate cash assistance and livelihood support were essential to restore economic activities, prevent food insecurity, and enable affected communities to rebuild sustainably.





Health

In the wake of the disaster, many families and traders were displaced, with some seeking shelter in neighboring homes or temporary accommodations. The destruction of homes and businesses significantly increased vulnerabilities, particularly regarding health and sanitation. Without adequate shelter and resources, affected communities faced a higher risk of health issues. The lack of proper sanitation facilities exacerbated the risk of water- and vector-borne diseases, including malaria and acute watery diarrhea, while the risk of cholera spread posed an additional concern.

The Red Cross Society of Guinea-Bissau (RCGB) deployed 20 volunteers on the ground to provide initial rescue, first aid, and psychosocial support. However, ongoing efforts were required to address broader health concerns. The NS remained committed to promoting good health and hygiene practices and improving sanitation in the affected areas.

Beyond physical health risks, many traders and their dependents experienced significant emotional and psychological trauma due to the loss of livelihoods, homes, and personal belongings. The disaster resulted in widespread stress, anxiety, and grief, highlighting an urgent need for psychosocial support to help individuals cope. While the NS initiated mental health support, continued interventions were necessary to address the long-term psychological needs of affected communities.

Given the vulnerabilities resulting from the disaster, there was an immediate need for both health and psychosocial support to safeguard the well-being of the affected population. Coordinated efforts were required to address both physical and mental health needs, prevent further complications, and provide comprehensive care. The support of humanitarian partners was essential to meet these needs and support the recovery of affected communities.



Risk Reduction, Climate Adaptation And Recovery

The fire incidents, their frequency, and the ongoing risks to markets and households highlighted the need for urgent action. These events underscored the importance of comprehensive disaster preparedness and response mechanisms to reduce vulnerability and strengthen resilience across Guinea-Bissau. Long-term recovery strategies were recommended to focus on disaster risk reduction to safeguard communities against future emergencies.

Additionally, some long-term actions required institutional engagement and planning beyond the capacity of the Red Cross Society of Guinea-Bissau (RCGB) alone. The fires revealed urgent gaps in fire prevention, disaster preparedness, and emergency response. Immediate humanitarian intervention was essential to support affected families, restore livelihoods, and enhance resilience to future disasters.

Although not fully addressed under the scope of this DREF, there was a recognized need for the safe reconstruction of critical market infrastructure and the implementation of fire prevention measures in the most at-risk contexts, drawing lessons from past incidents.



Community Engagement And Accountability

The response to the fire incidents in Gabú and Djofunco highlighted a critical need for Community Engagement and Accountability (CEA). Active participation of affected communities was essential for both the immediate response and long-term recovery. The lack of community involvement had the potential to undermine the effectiveness and sustainability of recovery efforts, underscoring the need for a structured approach to build trust, promote community-led decision-making, and empower individuals to take ownership of the recovery process.

Given the reliance on solar panels and batteries for electricity in both locations, there was an urgent need for fire prevention education and training on safe electrical practices. The fire incidents emphasized the importance of raising awareness around the proper handling and maintenance of batteries and solar systems. Community members, particularly those responsible for solar installations, needed to be equipped with knowledge to reduce the risk of future fires.

Participatory planning was also identified as necessary to develop community-driven strategies for disaster risk reduction. This included establishing evacuation routes, identifying fire-prone areas, and promoting fire safety measures. Community members were encouraged to participate in planning these actions to ensure that interventions reflected the realities and priorities of those directly affected by the fires.

Furthermore, a robust complaints and feedback mechanism was urgently required. Community members needed a platform to voice concerns and provide input throughout the response and recovery phases. Without such a mechanism, there was a risk that response efforts could fail to adapt to the evolving needs of the community, potentially delaying necessary adjustments. This feedback loop was crucial to ensure that recovery efforts remained responsive, effective, and accountable to the affected population.



Operational Strategy

Overall objective of the operation

The overall goal of this operation was to deliver immediate assistance to the 966 individuals (approximately 138 households) affected by the fire incidents in Gabú Central Market and Djofunco Village. The operation prioritized addressing critical needs through cash assistance, allowing affected households flexibility to access basic needs and essential services, including shelter, livelihoods, health, and WASH, while they worked to restore their living conditions in the subsequent weeks.

Operation strategy rationale

The operation lasted for four months and focused primarily on cash assistance, immediate services, and prevention messages for the affected families. The intervention strategy was implemented as follows:

1. Shelter – Target: 420 people (60 households)

The shelter intervention provided conditional cash assistance to 60 households whose homes and shops were destroyed. These beneficiaries had been identified during the assessment, including 31 houses in Djofunco Village and 29 traders whose shops or cabinets were destroyed in Gabú Central Market. Each household received XOF 215,000 (CHF 312) to support the reconstruction of homes or businesses fully destroyed by fire. This assistance enabled families to purchase building materials and begin rebuilding essential infrastructure.

2. Multipurpose Cash Transfers (MPCT) – Target: 966 people (138 households)

Cash assistance of XOF 154,000 was provided to all 138 affected households to cover basic needs and food access while they recovered from the fire's impact on their lives. The cash value was distributed as a one-off transfer through the active Financial Service Provider (FSP) and aimed to support the well-being, dignity, and flexibility of affected households, helping them avoid negative coping mechanisms in a challenging context. The cash package comprised:

- XOF 120,000 (CHF 175), the recommended value from WFP and partners for one month of food and non-food items for a family of seven, covering access to essential household materials and food needs.
- XOF 34,000 (CHF 48) to cover food needs for the second month, based on NS market price observations for a household of seven, including rice, dry beans, cooking oil, salt, sugar, and onions. This supplement supported families' nutritional well-being, considering the disruption of livelihoods.

The cash intervention was implemented with technical support from IFRC. The NS monitored local markets to track prices and ensure cash transfers met household needs. A two-day training session was conducted for NS cash focal points, Disaster Management focal points, and other key staff to enhance proficiency in Cash and Voucher Assistance in emergency contexts. Pre-distribution market assessments ensured feasibility, and post-distribution monitoring evaluated effectiveness and guided any necessary adjustments. Awareness sessions were conducted for beneficiaries before and after cash disbursement to ensure proper use of funds.

3. Awareness Messages on Fire Prevention, Hygiene, and Health Risks

Volunteers and NDRT members conducted awareness campaigns targeting the affected locations, markets, and beneficiary households, reaching 966 people across 138 households and surrounding villages. Key messages focused on:

- Health and hygiene prevention
- Risks associated with fire incidents and preventive measures

These messages addressed critical health risks heightened by the disaster and emphasized fire prevention and management, coordinated with civil protection authorities.

4. Community Engagement and Protection

Community engagement was central to achieving operational outputs. The NS implemented community-led processes and rigorous monitoring using the Community Engagement and Accountability (CEA) approach to increase acceptance and ownership of messages by local representatives, village authorities, and affected communities. Key actions included:

- Establishing a robust community feedback mechanism through community-based committees and trained volunteers for direct complaint management via visits and focus groups. This ensured grievances and concerns were collected and resolved.
- Delivering messages tailored to the local audience and languages.
- Including local representatives in planning and decision-making, overseeing beneficiary selection and fund utilization, ensuring transparency and community ownership.
- Integrating community feedback and actively involving stakeholders throughout the operation.

A comprehensive gender and diversity analysis was conducted across all sectors, including WASH and shelter, to understand impacts on various groups and tailor the response accordingly. All sectors adhered to IFRC's minimum standards for protection, gender, and inclusion in emergencies.



Targeting Strategy

Explain the selection criteria for the targeted population

The 121 households directly affected by the fire incidents and targeted under this operation were identified through assessments as having lost their homes, requiring shelter and livelihood support, or experiencing increased pressure related to food security and access to basic relief items. Beneficiary selection was conducted in accordance with these assessment findings to ensure assistance reached the most vulnerable households.

The 17 host families supported through multipurpose cash transfers (MPCT) and awareness activities were identified based on National Society assessments and lessons learned from previous emergency operations. The inclusion of host families in multi-purpose cash assistance was informed by observations that these households were providing displaced families with safe, stable, and dignified temporary accommodation. This support enabled displaced individuals to meet essential needs while seeking more durable housing solutions.

This approach contributed to a more comprehensive and community-centered humanitarian response. It helped reduce potential strains on social cohesion and mitigated the risk of increased vulnerability among directly affected households that might otherwise have been required to share limited resources beyond their capacity.

Total Assisted Population

Assisted Women	492	Rural	-
Assisted Girls (under 18)	-	Urban	-
Assisted Men	474	People with disabilities (estimated)	-
Assisted Boys (under 18)	-		
Total Assisted Population	966		
Total Targeted Population	966		

Risk and Security Considerations (including "management")

Does your National Society have anti-fraud and corruption policy?	Yes
Does your National Society have prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse policy?	Yes
Does your National Society have child protection/child safeguarding policy?	Yes
Does your National Society have whistleblower protection policy?	No
Does your National Society have anti-sexual harassment policy?	No



Please analyse and indicate potential risks for this operation, its root causes and mitigation actions.

Risk	Mitigation action
<p>The limited capacity of NS to implement DREF may affect effective implementation and possible integrity issues</p>	<p>To address the risk of limited NS capacity affecting DREF implementation and potential integrity issues, the NS received targeted training and support to enhance operational capabilities. Regular monitoring and technical assistance ensured smooth execution and addressed integrity concerns. Frequent visits and technical support from the IFRC Delegation further strengthened capacity and ensured compliance with best practices throughout the operation.</p>
<p>The unstable nature of the economy of the country has the potential to cause inflation and frequent changes in prices that would affect planned activities.</p>	<p>To address the risk posed by the unstable national economy and potential inflation affecting planned activities, branches conducted regular market monitoring. This provided real-time updates to ensure that assistance remained adequate and identified if further engagement with traders and market stakeholders was needed.</p>
<p>Inadequate communication with the target population. Not communicating beneficiary selection criteria and the date of transfer to beneficiaries can lead to high levels of community frustration and undermine the operations.</p>	<p>To address the risk of inadequate communication with the target population, the NS ensured clear and timely dissemination of beneficiary selection criteria and transfer dates to affected communities. Regular updates through multiple channels helped reduce confusion and frustration. Engagement with community leaders and local stakeholders supported the effective spread of key information and ensured that the community remained informed throughout the operation.</p>

Please indicate any security and safety concerns for this operation:

Affected community members were potentially exposed to various security risks, including sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV), looting, theft of assets, and armed robbery, which could have impacted the operation. Red Cross teams were also at risk from these crimes, in addition to potential hostility from community members if they perceived the support provided as insufficient.

To mitigate such risks during the operation, all volunteers and staff strictly adhered to the security measures established by both the Movement and the Government. Security management was guided by the RCRC's Fundamental Principles and humanitarian values. The following actions were implemented:

- Maintaining visibility through the wearing of Red Cross jackets and regular communication regarding movements.
- Ensuring community engagement to provide clear explanations of the Red Cross's role, the support being provided, and the beneficiary selection criteria, incorporating lessons learned from previous operations.
- Conducting regular briefings to remind volunteers of personal security and safety. All concerned staff and 20 volunteers completed the Stay Safe 2.0 Global Edition – Level 2 training, ensuring they were familiar with the framework for safer access.
- Conducting security assessments and monitoring of risks, led by the operation coordinator with support from the IFRC.

These measures helped reduce risks for both affected communities and Red Cross teams, ensuring the operation was conducted safely and effectively.

<p>Has the child safeguarding risk analysis assessment been completed?</p>	<p>No</p>
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Implementation



Shelter Housing And Settlements

Budget: CHF 22,112



Targeted Persons: 420

Assisted Persons: 630

Targeted Male: 309

Targeted Female: 321

Indicators

Title	Target	Actual
Number of households (HHs) confirm receiving the cash for construction	60	60
Percentage of HHs reported having used the cash for reconstruction of their home	90	94
Number of Community committee meetings held to discuss and support shelter construction	4	4
Number of PDM conducted	1	1

Narrative description of achievements

- **Assessment and Monitoring of Market and Prices:** Comprehensive assessments and monitoring of local markets were conducted to determine the availability and cost of construction materials. This activity ensured that cash support for reconstruction was adequate and aligned with prevailing market conditions, enabling households to procure the necessary materials for rebuilding their homes and market stalls. By gathering real-time market information, the NS was able to plan the intervention effectively and make adjustments as needed, enhancing the relevance and efficiency of the response.
- **Registration and Verification of Beneficiaries:** The NS successfully carried out the registration and verification of 60 households, including 31 in Djofunco Village and 29 traders in Gabú. This process ensured that only households directly impacted by the fires and in need of reconstruction support were included, preventing duplication and exclusion errors. The transparent registration process fostered trust between the NS and affected communities, providing clarity on selection criteria and promoting accountability in the allocation of assistance.
- **Market Analysis and Monitoring of Construction Material Prices:** Ongoing market analysis and monitoring of construction material prices were conducted to track price fluctuations and availability. This activity allowed the NS to adjust cash transfer values as necessary, ensuring beneficiaries could purchase sufficient and quality materials for reconstruction. By maintaining accurate market data, the NS also supported the sustainability of cash interventions and minimized the risk of households being unable to rebuild due to shortages or inflated costs.
- **Training of Volunteers in Cash and Community Engagement:** A targeted training session was provided to volunteers to enhance their capacity in cash transfer operations and community engagement. Volunteers were trained on ethical practices, cash distribution procedures, beneficiary sensitization, and monitoring responsibilities. This preparation enabled volunteers to conduct distributions effectively, engage with beneficiaries respectfully, and respond to community concerns, thereby improving the overall quality and accountability of the operation.
- **Cash Transfer to 60 Households for Reconstruction:** The unconditional cash transfer was successfully delivered to all 60 households, allowing them to purchase essential building materials to rebuild homes and market stalls destroyed by the fires. This financial support directly enabled households to restore safe and dignified living conditions, reduce reliance on host families, and resume income-generating activities. Beneficiaries reported that the cash support reduced immediate stress, allowed them to prioritize their needs, and facilitated tangible progress in reconstruction.
- **Monitoring by Volunteers in Communities:** Volunteers actively monitored the use of cash in the communities, ensuring that the funds were utilized appropriately for reconstruction purposes. This follow-up enhanced accountability, provided real-time feedback for program adjustments, and strengthened trust between beneficiaries and the NS. The monitoring also served as a preventive measure to avoid misuse of funds and ensured that reconstruction objectives were met.
- **Community Sensitization through Discussions and Stakeholder Meetings:** Engagement with communities was conducted through group discussions and meetings with local stakeholders to explain the purpose of the assistance, clarify selection criteria, and provide guidance on cash use. These interactions increased community understanding, reduced potential misunderstandings or conflicts, and



promoted ownership of the recovery process. By actively involving local authorities and representatives, the NS ensured transparency, inclusivity, and community participation in the operation.

- **Post-Distribution Monitoring (PDM):** A one-day post-distribution monitoring exercise was conducted to assess the effectiveness, relevance, and beneficiary satisfaction of the reconstruction cash transfers. The PDM revealed that households successfully used the funds to procure building materials and begin reconstruction, confirming the positive impact of the intervention. Insights from the PDM also informed future programming, ensuring that subsequent cash-based support would be more targeted, efficient, and responsive to beneficiary needs.
- **Technical Support from IFRC:** Throughout the shelter and cash reconstruction activities, the NS received technical guidance from IFRC, covering training, operational planning, monitoring, and PDM implementation. This support strengthened NS capacity, ensured adherence to best practices, and enhanced the quality, transparency, and accountability of the operation.

Lessons Learnt

- **Early and consistent community engagement** proved essential to ensure transparency, build trust, and facilitate smooth beneficiary verification and cash distribution. Involving local authorities and community representatives helped reduce potential conflicts and improve ownership of the reconstruction process.
- **Cash-based assistance for reconstruction** is highly effective in enabling households to prioritize needs, restore homes, and rebuild livelihoods, provided that market conditions are carefully monitored. The operation highlighted the importance of regular market analysis and post-distribution monitoring to ensure cash amounts remain adequate and interventions achieve intended outcomes.
- **Capacity-building of NS staff and volunteers** was critical to the success of the operation. Training in cash distribution, community engagement, and monitoring strengthened operational efficiency, improved accountability, and ensured the quality of service delivery.
- **Integrating technical support from IFRC** throughout the operation improved operational standards, ensured adherence to best practices, and provided real-time guidance to overcome logistical or operational challenges.
- **The operation underscored the value of flexibility and adaptive management** in emergency responses. Being able to adjust cash transfer values, timing, and engagement strategies in response to evolving needs was crucial to achieving positive outcomes for affected households.

Challenges

- **The shelter and reconstruction component** faced several challenges during implementation. The remote location and difficult terrain of Djofunco Village complicated the transport of building materials and restricted the timely deployment of volunteers, slowing the reconstruction process. In Gabú, the densely populated market area and the widespread destruction of shops and cabinets required careful identification and verification of eligible traders, which extended the planning phase.
- **Another challenge** was the fluctuating market prices of construction materials, influenced by the unstable national economy, which risked reducing the purchasing power of cash transfers. Continuous monitoring was required to ensure that the cash provided remained sufficient to meet reconstruction needs. The limited capacity of the National Society also posed operational challenges, particularly in coordinating cash distributions, monitoring utilization, and managing multiple community engagement activities simultaneously.
- **Communication with beneficiaries** needed constant attention. Without clear guidance on the use of cash, eligibility criteria, and timelines, there was a risk of misunderstanding or frustration among households. Lastly, logistical and resource constraints, such as limited availability of construction materials and minimal external support, slowed the pace of reconstruction and required adaptive management by the NS and IFRC.



Multi Purpose Cash

Budget: CHF 39,632
Targeted Persons: 855
Assisted Persons: 966
Targeted Male: 474
Targeted Female: 492

Indicators

Title	Target	Actual
# of assessment conducted	1	1
# of staff and volunteers trained in cash voucher assistance	34	35



# of household receiving unconditional cash assistance	138	138
# of PDM conducted	1	1

Narrative description of achievements

- **Registration and Verification of Beneficiaries:** The Guinea Bissau Red Cross conducted the registration and verification of 138 households, which included 121 families directly affected by the fire incidents and 17 host households providing temporary shelter. This activity ensured that assistance reached the most vulnerable and eligible beneficiaries, based on clear criteria identified during the initial assessment. Community engagement during registration also built trust between the NS and affected populations, providing households with clarity on the selection process and promoting transparency. The careful verification process prevented duplication and exclusion errors, thereby enhancing the accountability and integrity of the operation.
- **Information Session for Volunteers:** A dedicated information session was conducted for 20 volunteers who would be engaged in cash distribution. During this session, volunteers received detailed instructions on operational procedures, ethical conduct, and beneficiary interaction, ensuring they were fully prepared for safe and efficient cash delivery. The session strengthened volunteers' understanding of their roles, improved coordination during field operations, and reduced the likelihood of operational errors or miscommunication with beneficiaries. This preparation was crucial in ensuring that cash distribution activities were implemented smoothly and professionally.
- **Sensitization of Targeted Families on Mobile Money Transactions:** Following the information session, the 20 volunteers deployed to sensitize all 138 beneficiary households on mobile money procedures, including withdrawal methods, transaction timelines, and security measures. This activity empowered beneficiaries with the knowledge to access their cash safely, reducing confusion and preventing errors during disbursement. Households, many of whom were unfamiliar with digital payments, gained confidence in managing the funds independently, which contributed to a dignified and smooth delivery of assistance. The sensitization also reinforced the NS's presence in the community and strengthened trust between beneficiaries and volunteers.
- **Unconditional Cash Transfer to 138 Households:** The unconditional cash transfer was successfully delivered to all 138 households, providing XOF 154,000 per household to cover essential needs over two months. This cash assistance enabled households to restore basic living conditions, including the purchase of food, household items, and materials for rebuilding homes and market stalls. Families reported that the cash support immediately reduced economic stress, allowed them to meet priority needs with dignity, and facilitated short-term livelihood recovery. Additionally, the intervention stimulated local markets by injecting purchasing power into the community, supporting economic recovery in the affected areas.
- **Two-Day Foundational CVA Training for NS Staff and Volunteers:** A two-day Cash and Voucher Assistance (CVA) foundational training was conducted for NS staff and volunteers, focusing on the principles, procedures, and monitoring of cash operations in emergency contexts. The training enhanced operational capacity, ensuring staff and volunteers were equipped with the knowledge to implement cash transfers safely, efficiently, and in compliance with best practices. Practical sessions included market assessment, beneficiary engagement, and post-distribution monitoring, strengthening the NS's ability to manage future cash-based responses. This activity improved staff confidence, accountability, and preparedness, directly contributing to the quality and effectiveness of the MPC intervention.
- **Post-Distribution Monitoring (PDM):** A one-day post-distribution monitoring exercise was conducted immediately after cash disbursement to assess cash utilization, beneficiary satisfaction, and operational effectiveness. Monitoring revealed that households used the funds to meet essential needs, including food, rebuilding materials, and household items, reflecting the relevance and appropriateness of the cash assistance. PDM results also provided insights for improving future cash interventions, ensuring that the NS could adapt strategies based on beneficiary feedback and market conditions. The monitoring confirmed high satisfaction levels, enhanced transparency, and reinforced the impact of cash transfers in restoring livelihoods and resilience among fire-affected households.

Lessons Learnt

- **Importance of early and robust community engagement:** Engaging local authorities, village committees, and affected households from the start improves trust, transparency, and ownership of interventions.
- **Effectiveness of cash-based assistance:** Cash transfers allowed households to prioritize needs, ensuring timely support and flexibility; market and post-distribution monitoring are crucial for relevance and adequacy.
- **Capacity-building strengthens response:** Training NS staff and volunteers in cash transfer operations, monitoring, and community engagement enhances operational efficiency, accountability, and quality of assistance.
- **Integrated multi-sector approach is essential:** Combining shelter, livelihoods, health, and protection interventions ensures comprehensive recovery, addressing both immediate needs and medium-term resilience.
- **Coordination and leveraging past experience:** Continuous advocacy and collaboration with partners improve resource mobilization and preparedness for future emergencies.
- **Preparedness, adaptability, and community-centered approaches:** Flexibility in operations and responsiveness to community needs are key to delivering effective, accountable humanitarian assistance in fire-related disasters.



Challenges

- Remote location and difficult terrain: Access to Djofunco Village was challenging, complicating the delivery of humanitarian assistance and transport of shelter and livelihood materials.
- Widespread damage in Gabú Central Market: Identifying and reaching all affected traders was time-consuming due to the densely populated market area and extensive destruction.
- Communication with affected communities: Without timely and structured information sharing, there was a risk of misunderstandings or frustration regarding beneficiary selection, cash distribution timing, and scope of assistance.



Budget: CHF 8,334

Targeted Persons: 847

Assisted Persons: 847

Targeted Male: 415

Targeted Female: 432

Indicators

Title	Target	Actual
# of volunteers trained in first aid, PSS, CEA and safeguarding	20	20
# of PSS sessions conducted	8	8
# of affected HHs provided with PSS	121	121
# of people in affected community reached through health promotion	847	847

Narrative description of achievements

- Training of Volunteers in PSS, First Aid, CEA, and Safeguarding: The National Society (NS) successfully conducted a comprehensive training session for 20 volunteers, focusing on psychosocial support (PSS), first aid, community engagement and accountability (CEA), and safeguarding principles. This training equipped volunteers with the essential skills and knowledge to provide safe, effective, and ethical support to affected communities. By enhancing volunteers' capacity in these critical areas, the NS ensured that subsequent interventions were delivered professionally, responsibly, and in alignment with humanitarian standards, strengthening the overall quality and credibility of the response.
- Provision of Psychosocial Support to Affected Families: Following the training, the 20 trained volunteers deployed to provide psychosocial support to households affected by the fires. This activity targeted families experiencing stress, anxiety, and trauma due to the loss of homes, livelihoods, and personal belongings. Volunteers engaged with community members through individual and group sessions, helping beneficiaries cope with emotional challenges, rebuild confidence, and regain a sense of stability. The PSS intervention contributed significantly to the mental well-being of affected populations, reducing psychological distress and supporting community resilience in the aftermath of the disaster.
- One-Day Refresher Training for Volunteers: A one-day refresher training was organized for the volunteers involved in the psychosocial and health interventions. This session reinforced core concepts, updated volunteers on best practices, and addressed challenges encountered during field deployment. The refresher improved the effectiveness and consistency of volunteer support, ensuring that all interventions were delivered according to NS protocols and aligned with beneficiary needs.
- Hygiene and Sanitation Campaigns: Over the course of the operation, 20 volunteers conducted six hygiene and sanitation campaigns, targeting affected communities and key water sources. These campaigns focused on cleaning up debris from the fires, promoting safe waste disposal, and reducing environmental health risks. By engaging households directly, the campaigns increased awareness of hygiene practices, prevented the spread of disease, and contributed to safer living conditions in both Djofunco Village and Gabú. The activity also strengthened the communities' capacity to maintain clean environments during the recovery period.
- Health Prevention Awareness Campaigns: The same 20 volunteers carried out targeted health prevention awareness campaigns, emphasizing the prevention of water-borne diseases and malaria. Using interactive sessions, household visits, and community meetings, volunteers educated affected populations on safe water handling, mosquito control, and basic health practices. This activity enhanced community knowledge and adoption of preventive measures, helping to reduce the risk of disease outbreaks and protect the physical health of vulnerable households during the critical recovery phase.



Lessons Learnt

- Early and ongoing community engagement is essential to ensure participation, trust, and acceptance of psychosocial, health, and hygiene activities. Explaining the purpose of interventions and involving local leaders enhanced community buy-in and cooperation.
- Comprehensive volunteer training in PSS, first aid, safeguarding, and CEA significantly improves the quality, safety, and effectiveness of humanitarian interventions. Volunteers equipped with knowledge and practical skills can provide responsive, culturally appropriate, and ethical support, which strengthens overall operational impact.
- Integrating psychosocial support with health and hygiene activities proved effective, as it addressed both emotional and physical well-being simultaneously, promoting holistic recovery for affected households.
- Regular refresher sessions and technical support ensure volunteers maintain skills, adapt to field challenges, and deliver services consistently. This approach enhances volunteer confidence and operational quality, especially in multi-sector responses.
- Proactive risk mitigation, such as using protective equipment and maintaining safe work practices, is essential to protect both volunteers and communities during post-disaster interventions, particularly when debris removal and direct household engagement are required.

Challenges

- The implementation of Health, PSS, and WASH activities faced several operational challenges. Limited access to some affected households, particularly in remote or difficult-to-reach areas of Djofunco Village, made it challenging for volunteers to reach all beneficiaries consistently. This occasionally delayed the delivery of psychosocial support and hygiene awareness activities.
- Another challenge was community awareness and acceptance. Some beneficiaries initially lacked understanding of hygiene, sanitation, and psychosocial support interventions, which required additional time and effort by volunteers to build trust, explain the objectives, and encourage participation.
- The limited capacity of volunteers and staff to manage multiple activities simultaneously, psychosocial support, hygiene promotion, and health awareness sometimes stretched resources and required careful planning to avoid fatigue and maintain quality of service.
- Additionally, resource constraints, including insufficient hygiene materials, cleaning tools, and communication aids, slightly hindered the efficiency of sanitation campaigns and health awareness efforts. Finally, the risk of health hazards during debris removal and engagement with affected households posed safety concerns for both volunteers and beneficiaries, requiring strict adherence to safety and protection measures.



Community Engagement And Accountability

Budget: CHF 2,925
Targeted Persons: 854
Assisted Persons: 847
Targeted Male: 415
Targeted Female: 432

Indicators

Title	Target	Actual
Number of feedback mechanism set-up in affected communities	1	1
Percentage of households sensitized on fire prevention practice	70	91
Number of volunteers trained on CEA-RCCE 2	20	20

Narrative description of achievements

- Training of Volunteers in RCCE Messaging on Fire Prevention and Health Risks: The National Society (NS) successfully conducted a targeted training for volunteers in Risk Communication and Community Engagement (RCCE), focusing on fire prevention and health risk awareness. This training equipped volunteers with the knowledge and skills to effectively communicate risk-reduction messages, engage with community members, and promote safe practices. By enhancing the capacity of volunteers, the NS ensured that messages were delivered consistently, accurately, and in a culturally appropriate manner, strengthening community understanding and preparedness.
- Engagement with Community Stakeholders and Target Populations: Volunteers and NS staff held multiple meetings with affected community stakeholders and households to discuss health prevention measures against waterborne diseases, good hygiene practices,



and fire safety. These interactions fostered community ownership and participation, allowing households and local leaders to understand the importance of preventive measures and actively contribute to reducing future risks. By involving communities in discussions, the NS built trust, clarified objectives, and strengthened the relevance of interventions.

- **Community Conversations on Fire Prevention:** Structured community conversations were conducted to raise awareness on fire safety and preventive measures. Participants discussed fire hazards, safety precautions, and appropriate reactions during fire incidents, emphasizing collective responsibility to reduce risks. These discussions enhanced community knowledge, encouraged proactive behavior, and laid the foundation for safer practices, helping households adopt strategies to prevent future disasters.
- **Door-to-Door Fire Prevention Awareness:** Volunteers carried out door-to-door awareness visits in affected communities, ensuring that all households received practical information on fire risks, preventive actions, and safety measures. These personalized engagements increased household understanding of fire hazards, reinforced messages from community meetings, and encouraged behavioral change to minimize fire-related risks at the household and community levels.
- **Establishment of a Complaints and Feedback Mechanism:** An effective complaints and feedback mechanism was established to ensure community input informed the design, implementation, and adjustment of activities. Community preferences regarding communication channels and feedback methods were collected during initial meetings with local leaders and households. The mechanism enabled timely reporting of concerns, suggestions, or grievances, which were addressed by the NS operational team to improve intervention quality, accountability, and transparency.
- **Engagement of Community and Household Heads:** Volunteers actively engaged community and household heads to clearly explain the role of the Red Cross, the scope of support provided, and the beneficiary selection criteria. This proactive communication ensured that the community understood NS interventions, minimized potential misunderstandings, and reinforced the credibility and acceptance of the operation.
- **Feedback Collection and Analysis:** All feedback, including inputs from post-distribution monitoring (PDM) surveys, was systematically collected and analyzed to inform operational adjustments and improve program effectiveness. Volunteers acted as the main conduit for collecting face-to-face feedback in these predominantly remote communities, ensuring that concerns and suggestions were communicated promptly to the operational focal point. This iterative feedback loop strengthened accountability, responsiveness, and relevance of the interventions.

Lessons Learnt

- • Early engagement with community leaders and household heads proved crucial to building trust, clarifying objectives, and promoting participation. This approach strengthened community ownership of risk reduction measures and enhanced the credibility of the NS.
- Door-to-door awareness complemented community meetings and group discussions, ensuring that messages reached even the most vulnerable or isolated households. Combining multiple communication channels increased coverage, reinforced key messages, and improved behavioral adoption.
- Training volunteers in RCCE and fire prevention messaging was essential for consistent, accurate, and culturally appropriate communication. Well-prepared volunteers were able to deliver messages effectively, manage questions, and encourage adoption of preventive behaviors.
- Integration of a community feedback mechanism allowed beneficiaries to express concerns and provide suggestions, enhancing accountability and improving program relevance. Actively analyzing and acting on feedback ensured continuous learning and adaptation of activities.
- The experience highlighted the importance of flexibility and adaptability in community engagement, especially in contexts with limited communication infrastructure. Face-to-face communication and iterative feedback loops were critical in ensuring effective message delivery and operational responsiveness.

Challenges

- • Limited accessibility to some households due to the remote and scattered nature of affected communities made it difficult for volunteers to reach all beneficiaries consistently. This occasionally delayed message dissemination and feedback collection.
- Low initial awareness and understanding of fire prevention and health risks among community members. Volunteers had to invest additional time and effort to ensure that messages were understood, internalized, and applied in daily practices.
- Communication constraints also posed challenges, as most communities could only be reached through face-to-face interactions, requiring a higher number of volunteers and repeated visits to ensure coverage. Coordinating these efforts while maintaining consistent messaging and monitoring feedback demanded careful planning and logistical support.
- Establishing an effective complaints and feedback mechanism (CFM) required iterative adjustments. Community preferences varied, and volunteers had to carefully balance accessibility, confidentiality, and timely resolution of concerns while ensuring that the operational team could act on feedback effectively.



Secretariat Services

Budget: CHF 20,341

Targeted Persons: 3

Assisted Persons: 3

Targeted Male: -



Indicators

Title	Target	Actual
# of lesson learnt supported	1	1
# of IFRC support mission conducted	3	3

Narrative description of achievements

- **Deployment of IFRC Cluster Staff for Initial Response:** The IFRC Cluster Delegation deployed staff for a four-week period to support the initial phase of the response, providing technical guidance, coordination, and operational oversight. Their presence facilitated effective liaison with the National Society (NS), government authorities, and other partners, ensuring that the response activities were well-coordinated and aligned with humanitarian standards. This deployment enhanced operational efficiency, improved decision-making, and strengthened collaboration among all stakeholders during the critical early stages of the operation.
- **Monitoring Visits and Technical Support to the NS:** IFRC staff conducted regular monitoring visits to support the NS in the implementation of the operation. These visits provided technical assistance across multiple sectors, including cash, shelter, health, and community engagement, ensuring that activities were conducted according to best practices. The ongoing support helped identify and address operational gaps promptly, enhancing the quality, relevance, and timeliness of interventions.
- **PMER, Operations, and Finance Monitoring:** The IFRC provided dedicated support in Planning, Monitoring, Evaluation, and Reporting (PMER), operations, and finance monitoring. This assistance ensured that activities were accurately tracked, expenditures were transparent, and reporting obligations were met. The continuous guidance contributed to accountability, compliance with DREF requirements, and evidence-based decision-making, strengthening the overall credibility of the operation.
- **Operation Kick-Off and Cash Focal Point Support:** IFRC support also included active participation in the operation kick-off, which was identified as a key factor in improving operational quality. A cash focal point from the delegation engaged directly with branch teams to ensure they were well-prepared for cash interventions, including distribution procedures, monitoring, and reporting. This targeted support enhanced the capacity of NS staff and volunteers, ensuring cash transfers were implemented efficiently, safely, and in line with established standards.
- **Security Briefings for IFRC Staff:** Regular security briefings were provided to IFRC staff to ensure situational awareness, personal safety, and adherence to organizational security protocols. These briefings supported safe field operations and reinforced a culture of risk awareness among the deployed staff.
- **Community Engagement and Feedback Systems:** IFRC support extended to ensuring the establishment of community engagement methods throughout the operation. This included setting up complaints and feedback mechanisms, perception tracking, and proactive community consultation, allowing communities to express concerns, provide input, and influence decision-making. Feedback collected was analyzed and acted upon, enhancing accountability, transparency, and the responsiveness of the operation.
- **DREF Lessons Learned Workshop:** At the conclusion of the operation, a DREF lessons learned workshop was conducted with NS and IFRC staff. This workshop facilitated reflection on operational successes, challenges, and best practices, providing critical insights to inform future emergency responses and improve institutional preparedness. The workshop strengthened organizational learning and contributed to long-term capacity development for both NS and IFRC teams.

Lessons Learnt

- Several key lessons emerged from the IFRC support and coordination. First, early deployment of technical staff during the initial phase of the response is critical for effective coordination, operational planning, and timely intervention. The presence of experienced staff facilitates alignment with humanitarian standards and strengthens field operations.
- Second, regular monitoring, technical support, and PMER guidance significantly enhance the NS's capacity to implement multi-sector interventions effectively. Close support allows for real-time identification of challenges and immediate corrective actions, improving operational quality and accountability.
- Third, dedicated support for cash interventions, including a cash focal point, ensures that volunteers and branch staff are adequately prepared, reducing errors and enhancing transparency during distributions.
- Fourth, establishing and maintaining community engagement and feedback mechanisms is essential for operational responsiveness. Actively integrating community input ensures interventions remain relevant, culturally appropriate, and widely accepted.
- Fifth, conducting lessons learned workshops immediately after operations strengthens institutional memory, facilitates knowledge sharing, and informs future preparedness and response strategies.

Challenges

- One key challenge was logistical and operational coordination between the NS, IFRC field teams, and other partners, particularly during the early phase of the operation when multiple activities were launched simultaneously. Ensuring that information, technical



guidance, and monitoring reached all field teams in a timely manner required intensive communication and follow-up.

- Ensuring effective community engagement in remote areas, where access constraints and limited communication infrastructure made it difficult to reach all households consistently. Collecting feedback, addressing community concerns, and adapting activities based on perceptions required additional time and field resources.
- Aligning operational procedures across multiple sectors, such as cash, shelter, health, and community engagement, posed challenges in standardizing approaches while adapting to the specific context of Gabú and Djofunco Village. Maintaining consistent security protocols for both IFRC and NS staff in dispersed locations also required continuous monitoring and reinforcement.
- Resource and capacity limitations at the NS level occasionally slowed down technical implementation and reporting, necessitating intensive IFRC support to ensure compliance with DREF standards and operational quality.



National Society Strengthening

Budget: CHF 19,895
Targeted Persons: 1
Assisted Persons: 20
Targeted Male: -
Targeted Female: -

Indicators

Title	Target	Actual
Number of volunteers provided with briefing	20	20
Number of volunteers deployed	20	20
Number of volunteers insured	20	20
Number of computers procured	2	2
Number of staff provided with salary support	5	5

Narrative description of achievements

- **Volunteer Briefings and Security Updates:** The Guinea Bissau Red Cross conducted comprehensive briefings for all volunteers involved in the operation, outlining their roles, responsibilities, and potential risks associated with field deployment. Volunteers received regular security updates through phone calls and physical meetings, ensuring they remained informed about evolving risks in the communities. This approach enhanced volunteer situational awareness, preparedness, and confidence, contributing to a safer and more effective response.
- **Insurance and Rights Awareness for Volunteers:** All volunteers engaged in the operation were provided with insurance coverage, safeguarding them against potential accidents or health incidents during field activities. In addition, volunteers were informed of their rights and responsibilities, ensuring they were aware of organizational policies, ethical standards, and mechanisms for support if needed. This measure reinforced volunteer protection, wellbeing, and accountability.
- **Volunteer Safety, Wellbeing, and Training:** The NS prioritized the safety and wellbeing of its volunteers by providing personal protective equipment (PPE) and high-visibility clothing for all field activities. Volunteers were also given comprehensive training to prepare them for operational challenges, health risks, and community interactions, ensuring safe and professional conduct throughout the response. These actions enhanced volunteer confidence, reduced potential hazards, and improved operational efficiency.
- **Provision of Operational Resources:** To strengthen operational capacity and support data management, the NS procured two computers for branch managers, enabling effective tracking of activities, reporting, and coordination. Additionally, salary support was provided for five staff members two at branch level and three at headquarters to ensure adequate human resources for planning, supervision, and monitoring of the response. These measures ensured continuity of operations, timely decision-making, and accurate documentation of activities, which contributed to the overall quality and accountability of the intervention.



Lessons Learnt

- Comprehensive briefings and regular security updates are critical for volunteer preparedness and risk mitigation, particularly in complex or dispersed operational environments. Volunteers who are well-informed and aware of potential hazards are better able to perform tasks safely and effectively.
- Insurance coverage, clear communication of rights and responsibilities, and provision of PPE are essential components of volunteer protection. These measures improve volunteer confidence, retention, and overall operational efficiency.
- Investing in operational resources, including computers and salary support for staff, strengthens the NS's capacity to manage multi-sectoral interventions. Adequate resources ensure timely reporting, data management, and coordination, which enhances transparency and accountability.
- Careful planning for volunteer workload and wellbeing is crucial to prevent fatigue and ensure high-quality service delivery. Ongoing support and monitoring contribute to maintaining morale and sustaining operational effectiveness during emergency responses.
- Integrating training, operational support, and safety measures into the planning phase ensures that volunteers and staff can deliver assistance effectively while minimizing personal risk. This approach highlights the importance of combining human resource investment with safety protocols to optimize humanitarian outcomes.

Challenges

- Maintaining consistent communication and security updates across volunteers operating in remote or dispersed areas. In some cases, limited mobile network coverage delayed the transmission of security information and operational updates.
- Another challenge was the logistical coordination of PPE distribution and visibility materials. Ensuring that all 20 volunteers and staff had appropriate protective equipment required careful planning, particularly when deploying teams simultaneously across Djofunco and Gabú.
- Resource constraints also posed challenges. While two computers were procured to support data management, the high demand for accurate reporting and monitoring across multiple sectors stretched existing staff capacity, requiring additional supervision and coordination. Ensuring that all staff and volunteers were adequately supported, insured, and trained amid the operational pressures also demanded careful scheduling and management.
- Safeguarding volunteers' wellbeing in high-stress environments, such as working with traumatized communities and responding to immediate post-fire needs, required continuous monitoring and proactive measures to prevent burnout and maintain morale.



Financial Report

Please explain variances (if any)

- Protection, Gender and Inclusion (PGI): The budget allocation for PGI was USD 0; however, actual expenditure totaled USD 1,098, resulting in a negative variance of USD 1,098. This variance reflects unplanned PGI-related interventions, including orientation sessions conducted for staff and volunteers. The associated costs were covered through the reallocation of unspent funds from the Disaster Risk Reduction budget line.
- Risk Reduction, Climate Adaptation and Recovery: The budget allocation was USD 6,911.11, with no expenditure recorded, resulting in a positive variance of USD 6,911.11. This occurred because the planned activities were implemented through the Community Engagement and Accountability (CEA) component, with related costs charged under the CEA budget line.
- Community Engagement and Accountability (CEA): The budget allocation for CEA was USD 2,746.30, while actual expenditure reached USD 6,537, resulting in a negative variance of USD 3,791. The over-expenditure resulted from the integration and delivery of Risk Reduction, Climate Adaptation, and Recovery activities through the CEA component, which increased overall CEA-related costs beyond the initial allocation.
- Closing Balance: A remaining balance of CHF 47 will be returned to the DREF fund.



Contact Information

For further information, specifically related to this operation please contact:

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[Click here for reference](#)



DREF Operation

Selected Parameters			
Reporting Timeframe	2025/2-2025/12	Operation	MDRGW005
Budget Timeframe	2025/2-2025/6	Budget	APPROVED

FINAL FINANCIAL REPORT

Prepared on 30/Jan/2026

All figures are in Swiss Francs (CHF)

MDRGW005 - Guinea-Bissau - Fire

Operating Timeframe: 06 Feb 2025 to 30 Jun 2025

I. Summary

Opening Balance	0
Funds & Other Income	113,239
DREF Response Pillar	113,239
Expenditure	-113,192
Closing Balance	47

II. Expenditure by planned operations / enabling approaches

Description	Budget	Expenditure	Variance
PO01 - Shelter and Basic Household Items	20,763	22,058	-1,295
PO02 - Livelihoods			0
PO03 - Multi-purpose Cash	37,214	37,173	41
PO04 - Health	7,825	8,521	-696
PO05 - Water, Sanitation & Hygiene			0
PO06 - Protection, Gender and Inclusion		1,098	-1,098
PO07 - Education			0
PO08 - Migration		71	-71
PO09 - Risk Reduction, Climate Adaptation and Recovery	6,911		6,911
PO10 - Community Engagement and Accountability	2,746	6,537	-3,791
PO11 - Environmental Sustainability			0
Planned Operations Total	75,459	75,458	1
EA01 - Coordination and Partnerships			0
EA02 - Secretariat Services	17,613	17,581	32
EA03 - National Society Strengthening	20,167	20,154	13
Enabling Approaches Total	37,780	37,735	46
Grand Total	113,239	113,192	46

DREF Operation

Selected Parameters			
Reporting Timeframe	2025/2-2025/12	Operation	MDRGW005
Budget Timeframe	2025/2-2025/6	Budget	APPROVED

FINAL FINANCIAL REPORT

Prepared on 30/Jan/2026
All figures are in Swiss Francs (CHF)

MDRGW005 - Guinea-Bissau - Fire

Operating Timeframe: 06 Feb 2025 to 30 Jun 2025

III. Expenditure by budget category & group

Description	Budget	Expenditure	Variance
Relief items, Construction, Supplies		7,962	-7,962
Other Supplies & Services		4,146	-4,146
Cash Disbursement		3,816	-3,816
Logistics, Transport & Storage	17,215	447	16,768
Distribution & Monitoring	17,215		17,215
Transport & Vehicles Costs		447	-447
Personnel		960	-960
National Staff		411	-411
National Society Staff		549	-549
General Expenditure		8,181	-8,181
Travel		6,297	-6,297
Communications		1,850	-1,850
Financial Charges		34	-34
Contributions & Transfers	89,113	88,716	397
National Society Expenditure	89,113	88,716	397
Indirect Costs	6,911	6,927	-15
Programme & Services Support Recover	6,911	6,927	-15
Grand Total	113,239	113,192	46