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# Disaster relief emergency fund (DREF) Benin: Fire

 International Federation  
of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

**DREF operation n° MDRBJ011  
GLIDE n° FR-2013-000007-BEN  
19 January 2013**

The International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent (IFRC) Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF) is a source of un-earmarked money created by the Federation in 1985 to ensure that immediate financial support is available for Red Cross and Red Crescent emergency response. 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.

**CHF 139,315 has been allocated from the IFRC's Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF) to support Benin Red Cross National Society in delivering immediate assistance to some 2,759 beneficiaries. Unearmarked funds to repay DREF are encouraged.**

**Summary:** Current dry and hot weather conditions in Benin are considerably increasing the risk for fires. Dusty hot winds from Sahara desert contributes to worsen the situation, spreading easily any fire outbreak to cause widespread destruction.

On the 6<sup>th</sup> of January, a fire outbreak in the village of Alloya resulted in the destruction of hundreds of houses displacing almost 3,000 persons, with the families currently being in a very vulnerable situation without any shelter.



**Burned down house in Alloya. Photo: Benin RC**

Benin Red Cross (Benin RC) has mobilized 25 staff and volunteers who are currently providing first aid services in the affected communities and assessing the situation and needs of affected families in the communities. Additionally, the Benin RC volunteers has organized for cleaning up in the village after the fire disaster, and are providing hygiene awareness raising to the affected community.

With this DREF Operation, Benin RC will provide emergency assistance to the families that are still displaced. The emergency assistance will include temporary shelter, basic household items to displaced families and first aid services in the affected communities. Furthermore, emergency latrines and showers will be provided along with continued hygiene promotion awareness raising.

Since this hot and dry season particularly heightens the risk for outbreaks of fires, this DREF will include a preparedness component through increasing the capacity of the national society to respond to disasters involving fire, and raising awareness of affected community about the risk of fires and how to minimize the risks.

This operation is expected to be implemented over three months, and will therefore be completed by 18 April 2013. A final report will be made available three months after the end of the operation by 18 July 2013.

[<click here for the DREF budget; here for contact details; here for a map of the affected area>](#)

## The situation

Like some coastal West Africa countries, Benin is currently experiencing the Harmattan wind, (December to March) which is a dry dusty wind blowing across the Sahara desert. These weather conditions usually cause frequent bush fires since vegetation is dry and easily flammable, leading to the burning of villages, huge farmlands, grazing and forest areas.

On the 6<sup>th</sup> of January 2013, the south-western village of Alloya, located in the arrondissement of Chee-Ahomadegbe (Lalo Municipality in Couffo Department), suffered from a forceful fire disaster. A fire broke out in one of the houses, and due to the Harmattan wind the fire spread rapidly to the neighbouring houses. All the efforts made by the community to contain the fire were unsuccessful, and the fire could continue spreading from house to house causing a lot of damage. Hundreds of houses were burned in this disaster that caused the death of one person and injured several. 2,759 persons (around 460 families) became homeless and lost all of their belongings in this fire, and is currently still without shelter.

The majority of the houses were built by local materials such as straw and metal sheets, with only a few brick houses, which also contributed to the rapid spread of the fire.

During the fire, apart from burnt down houses, there were also destruction of the traditional showers - important sanitary facilities for the community. Adding to this, the lack of available latrines in the village, this creates a situation where the community faces a deteriorated sanitation and hygiene situation that increase the health risks for the community.

The current weather conditions contribute to an increased risk of continued outbreaks of similar fires throughout the country.

Benin RC has mobilized volunteers from the local branch, who are currently providing first aid services in the communities and collecting information.

The government in cooperation with Benin RC has provided initial assistance to some of the families, including food, tents and NFIs, however there are still gaps to be filled in order to assist the displaced and vulnerable families.

## Coordination and partnerships

Benin RC together with the local authorities went to the community to perform an initial assessment of the scale of the situation and the damage, and provide moral support to those affected.

The government, including the municipality of Lalo mobilized some relief assistance which was distributed with help by Benin RC volunteers to some of the families between 7<sup>th</sup> to 13 January. The relief assistance provided to the displaced families were food and NFIs, including rice, oil, tents, mats, blankets, mosquito nets, bales of used clothing.

Summary on assistance from 6<sup>th</sup> Jan to date and identified gaps

N	Items	Needs	Covered	Gap
1	Tent	460	150 tents	<b>620 tarpaulins (2 per family for 310 families remaining) and fixing materials</b>
2	Blankets	1380	100	<b>1280 (2 per family)</b>
3	Mosquito nets	1150	1150	-
4	Bucket	460	0	<b>460</b>
5	Jerry cans	317	0	<b>460</b>
6	Sleeping mats	1380	165	<b>1215 (2 per family)</b>
7	Soap	8280	0	<b>8280 (6 soaps/family/month)</b>
8	Kitchen set	460	0	<b>460</b>

## Red Cross and Red Crescent action

Benin RC has mobilized 25 members (executives, first aid workers and volunteers), providing assistance to affected people. The activities being undertaken includes First Aid services and a rapid situation and needs assessment.

Benin Red Cross Society has been providing initial relief assistance mobilized by the government to some of the most vulnerable families, however due to that there are still affected families without any shelter or support, Benin RC is currently mobilizing resources to support covering these gaps (see table above).

The volunteers have assisted the families to install the tents already provided, and have arranged for cleaning up after the fire in the village. Furthermore, the volunteers are raising awareness on hygiene and sanitation issues in the village due to the current concerns relating to this.

Benin RC is keeping movement partners informed about the situation and their actions taken.

The IFRC is providing support in planning the operation and the set up structures, and will provide close monitoring during the implementation. Additionally, the IFRC will support in logistical arrangements and oversee local procurement to ensure that the procedures are fair and following principles of transparency, and are in line with national procurement guidelines.

One Regional Disaster Response Team (RDRT) staff with shelter expertise will be deployed for two months to provide training of volunteers and support the implementation of the operation. Furthermore, the IFRC on regional and zone level will be involved in reviewing/evaluating the DREF operation.

### The needs

The fire caused extensive damage in the village of Alloya and displaced 2,759 persons (460 families) of which 310 families still find themselves without shelter. The families have lost all of their belongings, and are currently in a very vulnerable situation exposed to the hot and dry climate (the Harmattan winds). Additionally, the families have lost their means to provide for themselves. Among the displaced families are 516 children under five years.

Due to that the traditional shower facilities in the village were destroyed in the fire, and lack of latrines, there is an increased health risk for the affected population.

Additionally, due to a considerably heightened risk for fire outbreaks relating to the hot and dry season, people are at risk for being injured and losing their homes and belongings to fires.

#### The selected beneficiaries:

The beneficiaries of this operation are 2,759 displaced persons from Alloya village in Chee-Ahomadegbe arrondissement, who have had their houses burnt down by the fire and lost all of their belongings. Among the families are 516 children under five years.

310 families still without any shelter will be targeted with temporary shelter assistance.

460 families will be targeted with basic household items, to fill the gaps in assistance that still exist. Additionally, these families will be targeted with emergency health, water, sanitation and hygiene activities.

Furthermore, seven (7) communities in the affected area at risk for being injured or displaced by fires will be targeted by fire preventive and mitigation messages.

A beneficiary needs assessment will be carried out in the initial stage of the intervention which will provide more in depth information on the beneficiaries and situation. This assessment will permit detailed information of the beneficiaries including gender, age and vulnerability specific data.

## The proposed operation

The proposed DREF operation includes following components:

- 1) Emergency shelter provided to 310 affected families currently without any shelter.
- 2) Basic household items provided to 460 affected and vulnerable families.
- 3) Emergency health, including first aid and referral services to injured and otherwise affected individuals
- 4) Water, sanitation and hygiene activities will be provided to the affected community, including constructing emergency latrines, emergency showers and distribution of soaps. Hygiene awareness raising will be continued to decrease health risks.
- 5) Increased preparedness through capacity building of the national society for fire emergency response, and preventive and mitigation messages provided to seven (7) high risk communities in the affected area, aiming at reducing the risks for fires.

In order to carry out the operation 30 volunteers will be mobilized and provided with a rapid orientation in registration and relief distribution. Furthermore, the volunteers will be trained in fire response, mitigation and prevention as a way of preparing the national society for effective fire disaster response and how to convey preventive messages to the high risk communities, during this time of heightened alert for fire outbreaks.

### Emergency shelter and NFIs

**Outcome: The immediate needs of shelter and basic household items of the affected 460 families are met**

#### Outputs (expected results):

Temporary shelter provided to 310 families still displaced from the fire

Basic household items are provided to 460 most affected households

#### Activities planned:

- RDRT deployment (shelter and relief focus) to support NS in implementation of activities
- Mobilize and train 30 Red Cross volunteers on registration and distribution strategies of the Red Cross;
- Carry out needs assessment to ensure the availability of reliable data for delivering assistance.
- Develop beneficiary targeting strategy and registration system to deliver intended assistance.
- Procure and distribute 620 tarpaulins and construction material, fixing and tools for 310 families. (2 tarpaulins per household)
- Provide a shelter kit training to 20 volunteers
- Provide technical assistance to the beneficiaries during the construction of the temporary shelters
- Procure 1280 blankets, 1215 mats, 460 kitchen sets, 460 jerry cans, 460 buckets and distribute to 460 most affected households. Distribution per family 2 blankets, 2 mats, 1 kitchen set, 1 jerry can, 1 bucket) Some relief items mobilized by the government have been distributed already, and this distribution will cover the gap (as indicated in the table under coordination and partnership.)
- Control supply movements from point of dispatch to end user.
- Monitor and evaluate the relief activities and provide reporting on relief distributions.

### Emergency health

**Outcome: The adverse effects of the disaster on health of affected population are reduced**

#### Outputs (expected results)

- First aid has been provide to affected people and referrals made to health centre

#### Activities planned:

- Red Cross volunteers continue to provide first aid services to injured persons and referrals made to appropriate Health Facilities.
- Procurement of 4 first aid kits
- Monitor the situation and prepare a report

## Water, sanitation, and hygiene promotion

**Outcome: The risk of waterborne and water related diseases has been reduced**

**Outputs (expected results):** Target population is provided with adequate sanitation support

**activities planned:**

- Construction of 10 block of 3 emergency latrines and 10 blocks of 3 showers
- Procurement and distribution of 8,280 soaps to 460 families
- Hygiene awareness raising provided to affected families.
- Monitoring and reporting on activities

## NS Preparedness

**Outcome: Benin RC better prepared to respond to fire disasters and have contributed to reduce the risks for fire outbreaks in high risk communities in the affected community, during high risk season.**

**Outputs (expected results):**

The Benin RC preparedness and capacity to respond to and mitigate the effects of emergencies related to fires has increased.

7 High risk communities in the affected area have increased knowledge and are better prepared to mitigate and prevent risks for fires.

**Activities planned:**

- Orient/ Train 30 volunteers on fire mitigation and prevention
- Initiate social mobilization activities through the development of IEC materials and fire mitigation and prevention messages in 7 high risk communities in the affected area
- Conduct 24 sensitization sessions in 7 high risk communities in the affected district on fire mitigation and prevention
- Monitor implementation and prepare a report

## Logistics

**Outcome: Timely and effective logistics support provided to the emergency operations**

**Outputs (expected results):**

To provide effective logistical support that enables rapid assistance to targeted beneficiaries.

**activities planned:**

- Transport relief supplies to final distribution site
- Coordinating mobilization of goods and reception of incoming shipments
- Local procurement of shelter items, NFIs, first aid kits (as specified under emergency shelter NFIs/ water, sanitation and hygiene, and emergency health outcomes), in line with national procurement guidelines.
- Coordinating within IFRC logistical structures in the region and zone and Benin RC programme managers, for timely and cost-efficient sourcing option for items required in the operation

## Contact information

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

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

- **IFRC Zone:** Robert Ondrusek, PMER/QA Delegate, Africa phone: +254731067277; email:[robert.ondrusek@ifrc.org](mailto:robert.ondrusek@ifrc.org)

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## 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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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.
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# DREF OPERATION

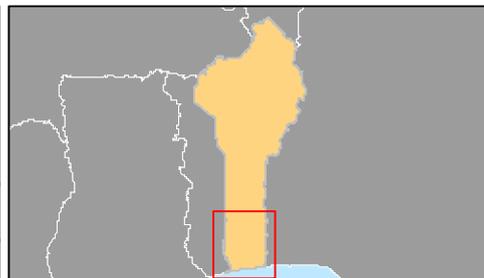
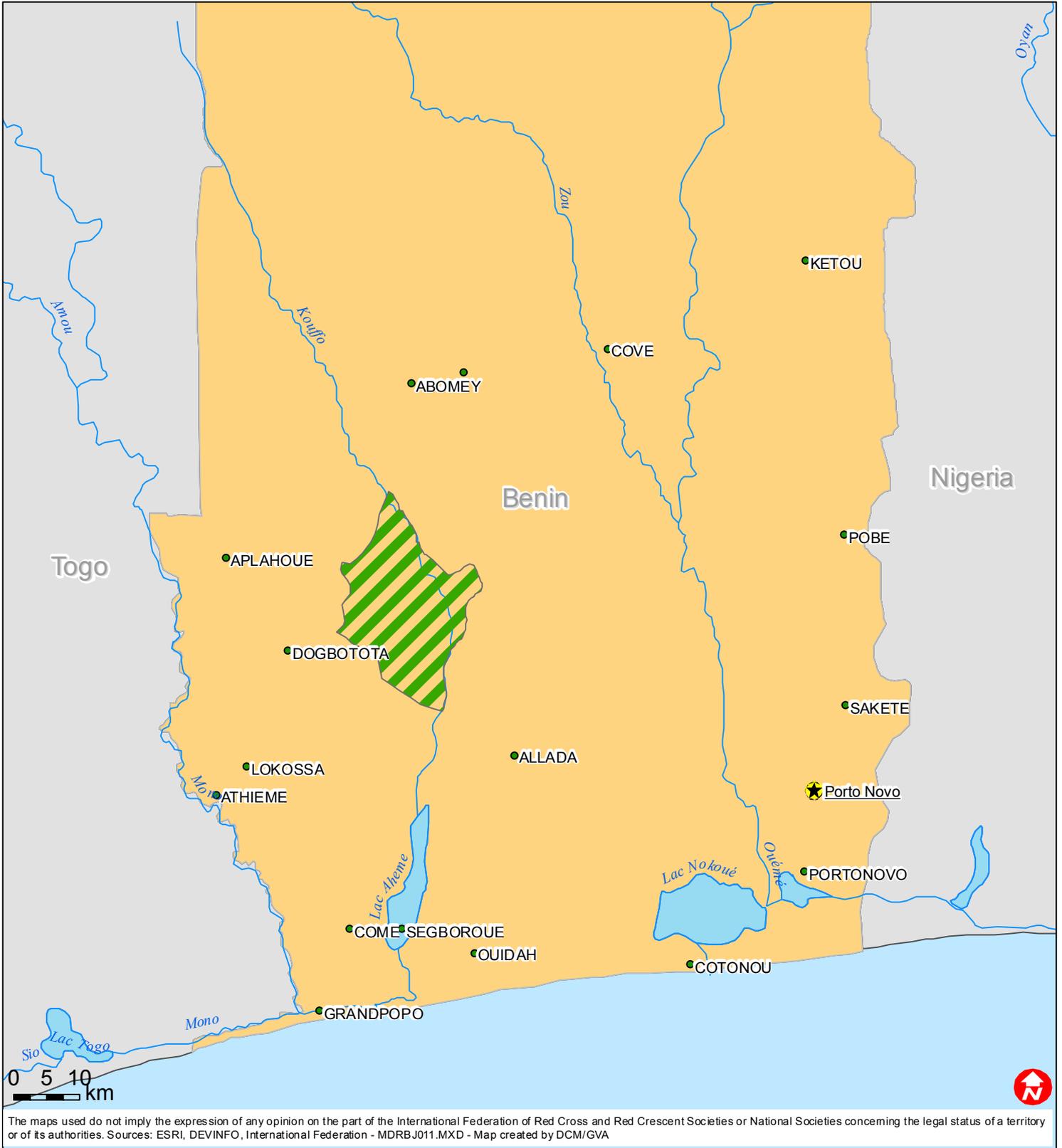
19/01/2013

Benin: Fire (MDRBJ011)

Budget Group	DREF Grant Budget CHF
Shelter - Relief	18,600
Shelter - Transitional	0
Construction - Housing	0
Construction - Facilities	0
Construction - Materials	12,400
Clothing & Textiles	17,400
Food	0
Seeds & Plants	0
Water, Sanitation & Hygiene	8,900
Medical & First Aid	480
Teaching Materials	0
Ustensils & Tools	20,240
Other Supplies & Services	4,968
Emergency Response Units	0
Cash Disbursements	0
<b>Total RELIEF ITEMS, CONSTRUCTION AND SUPPLIES</b>	<b>82,988</b>
Land & Buildings	0
Vehicles Purchase	0
Computer & Telecom Equipment	0
Office/Household Furniture & Equipment	0
Medical Equipment	0
Other Machinery & Equipment	0
<b>Total LAND, VEHICLES AND EQUIPMENT</b>	<b>0</b>
Storage, Warehousing	0
Distribution & Monitoring	300
Transport & Vehicle Costs	6,100
Logistics Services	0
<b>Total LOGISTICS, TRANSPORT AND STORAGE</b>	<b>6,400</b>
International Staff	11,500
National Staff	0
National Society Staff	4,600
Volunteers	7,400
<b>Total PERSONNEL</b>	<b>23,500</b>
Consultants	0
Professional Fees	0
<b>Total CONSULTANTS &amp; PROFESSIONAL FEES</b>	<b>0</b>
Workshops & Training	8,500
<b>Total WORKSHOP &amp; TRAINING</b>	<b>8,500</b>
Travel	4,000
Information & Public Relations	3,224
Office Costs	600
Communications	600
Financial Charges	1,000
Other General Expenses	0
Shared Support Services	0
<b>Total GENERAL EXPENDITURES</b>	<b>9,424</b>
Programme and Supplementary Services Recovery	8,503
<b>Total INDIRECT COSTS</b>	<b>8,503</b>
<b>TOTAL BUDGET</b>	<b>139,315</b>



# Benin: Fire



 Affected municipality