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DREF operation update Sierra Leone: Fire

 International Federation
of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

DREF operation n° MDRSL004
GLIDE n° FR-2013-000003-SLE
Update n°1- 19 February 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.

Period covered by this update: 16 January to 9 February, 2013.

Summary: CHF 167,769 was allocated from the IFRC's Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF) on 15 January, 2013 to support Sierra Leone Red Cross Society (SLRCS) in delivering assistance to 2,253 beneficiaries. Unearmarked funds to repay DREF are encouraged.

The objective of SLRCS intervention was to support the families affected by the fire disaster in Bo, Pujehun, Bonthe and Moyamba districts. A rapid needs assessment was conducted by the SLRCS branches involving its trained volunteers and in collaboration with the Office of National Security (ONS) and identified the most urgent needs as shelter, NFIs and food as some communities food storage facilities had been destroyed by the fire.



Distribution of basic household items.
Photo/Sierra Leone Red Cross.

As of 2 February, 2013 the National Society branches in the affected communities had completed the distribution of NFIs and shelter kits to 450 family heads in Rogbenk community (Port Loko branch), Tiama community (Moyamba branch), Blama Gbani community (Bo branch) and Bompalia community (Bonthe branch). Following the distributions, most of the persons have returned to their villages to begin reconstructing their burnt houses.

The relief objectives have been achieved successfully and plans are now under way to initiate awareness raising activities and preparedness measures to help the communities prevent or reduce the impact of such disasters if they occur in the future.

As part of the operation monitoring strategy, information on the impact of SLRCS intervention on the lives of the fire affected families was collected by the media. Reports indicate that there is a widespread consensus that even as the only humanitarian organisation that responded; the Red Cross response has been timely, relevant and has contributed to an improvement of the living conditions of the affected families.

This operation is expected to be implemented within three months, and completed by 15 April 2013. In line with Federation reporting standards, the Final Report (narrative and financial) is due 90 days after the end of the operation (by 15 July 2013).

The major donors and partners of DREF include the Australian, American and Belgian governments, the Austrian Red Cross, the Canadian Red Cross and government, Danish Red Cross and government, the

European Commission Humanitarian Aid and Civil Protection (ECHO), the Irish and the Italian governments, the Japanese Red Cross Society, the Luxembourg government, the Monaco Red Cross and government, the Netherlands Red Cross and government, the Norwegian Red Cross and government, the Spanish Government, the Swedish Red Cross and government, the United Kingdom Department for International Development (DFID), the Medtronic and Z Zurich Foundations, and other corporate and private donors. The IFRC, on behalf of the Sierra Leone Red Cross, would like to extend thanks to all for their generous contributions.

Details of all donors can be found on :http://www.ifrc.org/docs/appeals/Active/MAA00010_2012.pdf

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The situation

The risk of fire increased as a result of the dry Hamatan wind that blew across the country. Several villages have been affected by fire disasters between 2 and 28 January, 2013 leaving a total of 279 houses burnt down rendering 450 families (2,257 individuals) homeless. Those affected include Blama Gbani in Bo district, Tiama camp in Moyamba district, Bompilia in Bonthe district and Rogbenk in Port Loko district.

The only humanitarian assistance provided to those affected by the fire was the assistance by SLRCS through the support of the DREF. Plastic sheets, kitchen sets, buckets, mosquito tents, soap, mats, blankets and shelter kits were distributed to the beneficiaries who lost their houses and belongings. After the distribution of these items, the families who were staying with host families in nearby communities have returned to their villages and began rebuilding and repairing the destroyed houses. As of 9 February, 2013 massive rehabilitation and reconstruction of houses is going on in each of the affected locations clearly manifesting the impact of the relief intervention and specifically the provision of shelter kits.

Coordination and partnerships

The Office of National Security (ONS) has the mandate of coordinating the activities of all disaster responders at national and district levels. However, until the time SLRCS intervened with relief support it was evident in all the response operation coordination meetings that the Red Cross was heavily relied on.

SLRCS has collaborated with the Office of National Security (ONS) during the assessments of the situation and response coordination. In Bo and Bonthe district, the Town Council and the office of the Mayor collaborated with the SLRCS in responding to the needs of the fire victims. ONS provided food items in Blama Gbani while the local council in Port Loko lobbied a local construction company to supply 80 bundles of CI sheets to Rogbenk community in Port Loko district.

Throughout the implementation, the SLRCS national headquarters is providing technical support in coordination, logistics, human resources, vehicles and other resources between branches and headquarter level.

In addition to supporting this response operation, the IFRC country team is currently supporting the SLRCS in response to a cholera epidemic in the country.

Red Cross and Red Crescent action

Progress towards outcomes

The SLRCS has mobilized its 10 Emergency Task Force (ETF) members, staff and volunteers in the affected districts. A total of 26 staff and volunteers (senior management, first aid workers and volunteers) are actively involved in the field providing assistance to those affected, initially in First Aid and now relief, technical support for shelter reconstruction and in the near future awareness raising and mitigation activities to reduce any future impact if the disaster should recur.

Needs assessment	
Outcome: SLRCS has a better understanding of the situation and needs of the five targeted Communities affected by fire.	
Outputs (expected results)	Activities planned
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The SLRCS has conducted an in-depth assessment of the situation and emergency needs in affected areas. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rapid orientation/training of 60 volunteers in assessment methodology Conduct rapid emergency needs and capacity assessments.

Progress: A rapid needs assessment was conducted by the SLRCS branches involving its trained volunteers and in collaboration with the ONS. The basic needs identified were shelter, NFIs and food as some communities food storage facilities had been destroyed by the fire.

Relief distributions/ Emergency shelter	
Outcome: The immediate sheltering needs of 2,253 displaced persons are met, during three months.	
Outputs (expected results)	Activities planned
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Emergency shelter and basic household items provided to 450 displaced families. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Deployment of one (1) RDRT staff with shelter and relief expertise for two months to provide training of volunteers and support the implementation of the operation. Rapid orientation/training of 60 volunteers in relief distribution Develop beneficiary targeting strategy and registration system to deliver intended assistance. Purchase 900 tarpaulins, shelter construction materials (woods, bricks, basic tools, ropes etc), 900 blankets, 900 mosquito nets, 900 mats, 450 jerry cans, 450 plastic buckets. (450 kitchen sets will be procured and sent from Dakar.) Distribute shelter and household items. Distribution per family include 2 tarpaulins, 2 blankets, 2 mosquito nets, 1 kitchen set, 2 mats, 1 jerry can, 1 plastic bucket. Assist target population in the construction process of emergency shelter Monitor and evaluate the relief activities and provide reports on relief distributions. Develop an exit strategy.

Progress: Registration of beneficiaries in all locations was done by the respective branch volunteers supervised by the head of the branch. Beneficiaries were established by targeting the family heads of households affected by the fires. A total of 450 families were targeted for assistance.

The National Society branches in the affected communities had completed the distribution of NFIs and shelter kits to 450 family heads in Rogbenk community (Port Loko branch), Tiama community (Moyamba branch), Blama Gbani community (Bo branch) and Bompalia community (Bonthe branch).

A National Disaster Response Team member (NDRT) was deployed to the operation and provided technical support to each community in the reconstruction of shelters adapting them to the international standards.

As part of the operation monitoring strategy, information on the impact of SLRCS intervention on the lives of the fire affected families was collected by the media. Reports indicate that there is a widespread consensus

that even as the only humanitarian organisation that responded; the Red Cross response has been timely, relevant and has contributed to an improvement in the living conditions of the affected families.

Challenge: Bad terrain and poor road network has caused difficulties in accessing the affected areas hence slowing down the follow-up efforts within the affected communities

Emergency health	
Outcome: The adverse effects of the disaster on health of affected population are reduced	
Outputs (expected results)	Activities planned
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First Aid services have been provided to injured persons affected by the disaster. • Referral services for the injured persons to health facilities for treatment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Red Cross volunteers continue to provide First Aid and referral services to injured persons to appropriate health facilities. • Procurement of 10 First Aid kits to be provided to the SL RC teams active in the affected communities. • Monitoring and reporting of activities

Progress: Red Cross volunteers provided First Aid and referral services to injured persons to appropriate health facilities during the initial assessments.

NS preparedness	
Outcome: SLRCS better prepared to respond to fire disasters and have contributed to reduce the risks of fire outbreaks in high risk communities in the five affected districts, during high risk season.	
Outputs (expected results)	Activities planned
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The SL RC preparedness and capacity to respond to and mitigate the effects of emergencies related to fires has increased. • High risk communities in the five affected districts have increased knowledge and are better prepared to mitigate and prevent risks of fires. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Train / retrain 60 volunteers in SL RC branches on fire response, mitigation and prevention • Initiate social mobilization activities through the development of IEC materials and fire mitigation and prevention messages in five SL RC branches. • Monitor and report on the situation

Progress: The implementation of the planned activities is being initiated.

Logistics	
Outcome: Timely and effective logistics support provided to the emergency operations	
Outputs (expected results)	Activities planned
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To provide effective logistical support that enables rapid assistance provided to targeted beneficiaries. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transport relief supplies to final distribution points. • Identify suitable warehouses for storage of relief items. • Maintain mobilisation table. • Local procurement of shelter items, NFIs, first aid kits (as specified under relief distribution/emergency shelter and emergency health outcomes), in line with national procurement guidelines. • Procure kitchen sets from Dakar in line with IFRC procurement guidelines and transport to Sierra Leone for distribution by the national society.

Progress: Local procurement of shelter items, NFIs and First Aid kits was done in line with national procurement guidelines and trucks hired for the transportation of NFIs from Freetown to the district branch offices and shuttles hired for transportation from the branch offices to the distribution sites. Field monitoring trips were made possible through provision of fuel by logistics for this operation, while volunteers in the field were facilitated (perdiems and accommodation) by local branches.

Challenge: The prices for the non food items were too high compared to the budgeted cost.

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For further information specifically related to this operation please contact:

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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.



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.