

OPERATIONS UPDATE



International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies
Fédération internationale des Sociétés de la Croix-Rouge et du Croissant-Rouge
Federación Internacional de Sociedades de la Cruz Roja y de la Media Luna Roja
الاتحاد الدولي لجمعيات الصليب الأحمر والهلال الأحمر

POLAND: FLOODS

18 November, 2001

This Ops Update is intended for reporting on emergency appeals.

Appeal No. 23/2001

Launched on 9 August 2001 for CHF 2,895,944 for 5 months.

DREF Allocated: CHF 50,000

Beneficiaries: 50,000

Operations Update No. 1; Period covered: August - October 2001; Next Ops Update No. 2 expected January 2001

“At a Glance”

Appeal coverage: 64.6%

Related Appeals: 01.52/2001; Central Europe Annual Appeal

Outstanding needs: CHF 1,025,675

Update/Summary: Despite a donor response which has fallen short of expectations, the Polish Red Cross, with Federation support, has provided assistance in line with the intended relief objectives. As the winter season is now well along, further funding is urgently needed to procure coal and wood for those vulnerable persons affected by the floods.

Operational Developments

Beginning on 9 July 2001 torrential rainfall and consequent flooding affected widespread areas in Poland along the Vistula River. The first areas to be hit were the coastal cities of Gdansk and Slupsk. In addition to the extreme damage caused by high wind and rain, flood water from the Vistula river and its tributaries tore through some of the most vulnerable sections of these cities. By the time the wind and rain subsided, more than 300 homes were under water and more than \$1 million of damage was caused in Slupsk alone.

Torrential rains continued during the month of July, causing 10 deaths. The hardest hit areas were the cities and towns of southern Poland along the Vistula where 300 hectares of land were flooded. Six voivodships (districts) were affected where bridges, sewage systems, water and gas supplies, houses and livelihoods were destroyed. In addition 15,000 people were evacuated to temporary collective shelters.

Red Cross and Red Crescent action w

Within the first days of the disaster an assessment was immediately undertaken by the national society. It evaluated the need for immediate relief items (food, clothing, blankets, hygiene products, clean drinking water, and first aid kits). Local appeals were made and a national appeal was launched by the Polish Red Cross for financial support. The first phase of the emergency operation was very successful: collection and distribution of relief items, organisation and transport to the regions affected by the floods, organisation of search and rescue

dog teams in Gdansk. The Polish Red Cross has been coordinating its efforts with various agencies involved including Governmental authorities and public institutions.

The response from the Polish public was very generous. From individuals to factories, retail stores to the scouts, virtually all sectors of society -including considerable media support- participated in aiding the victims. through donations to the Polish red Cross. Results were positive and demonstrated well the capacities of the Polish Red Cross to mobilise considerable resources locally (both in kind and in cash allowing the first phase of the relief operation to be conducted entirely by the Polish Red Cross. Early donations in cash, kind and services from sister national societies (the Netherlands and German Red Cross) were very useful during this first phase. Following further assessments, an international appeal was launched by the International Federation to continue to support the Polish Red Cross in its relief operation. At the end of July, following needs assessments from local Red Cross branches, the German Red Cross undertook an assessment for the second phase of the operation.

At the end of July, the Federation granted an allocation (CHF 50,000) from the Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF) to support the Polish Red Cross in this second phase.

Red Cross and Red Crescent Society w

The Polish Red Cross is the principal emergency response agency in the field, and the local chapters managed very successfully to quickly mobilise more than 200 volunteers in affected areas to distribute relief items. A total of 1,400 volunteers have so far participated in this operation together with the regular staff, supporting the work of the local branches. A flood task force has been established to better coordinate the relief operation with the various districts involved.

Relief distributions w

Objective 1 To assess and select the most vulnerable people of the five most affected voivodships (districts) (Swietokrzyskie, Podkarpackie, Malopolskie, Lubelskie, Pomorskie).

The Polish Red Cross branch offices are efficient and experienced in working with local communities. Beneficiaries of Red Cross programmes are usually identified by the Red Cross branches together with the local welfare offices and have a long-standing familiarity with their clients. However during the flood relief operation the branches quickly recognised a new group of beneficiaries. These were people who had lost their houses and all of their belongings. Some had houses but lacked any savings that would allow them to restore their lives. The volunteers together with the branch staff have identified the most vulnerable in the affected communities and prepared lists of beneficiaries.

The flood relief task force coordinated delivery of all relief materials to the localities where it was most needed. Information was collected about needs (from the Polish Red Cross branch offices), and additional information was provided about the possibility of receiving relief consignments from both inside Poland and from abroad.

Attached is a table showing the international relief supplies received. In summary, seven Red Cross societies and three governments provided relief consignments. This made for a total of 37 shipments, with a weight of 364,44 kilograms, and a value of 5,726,323 PLN (approximately CHF 2,311,141).

Objective 2 To provide non-food assistance for up to 4000 families in the five most affected vovoidships.

For the second phase of the relief operation the Polish Red Cross reallocated over CHF 1,000,000 from the head office's disaster relief account, as well as CHF 425,000 from the money collected by PRC branches in the areas affected by the flood. Polish Red Cross local branches have begun the process of purchasing the relief items (coal and household equipment essentially) and are forwarding them to the selected beneficiaries.

In each affected district various items such as refrigerators, stoves, blankets, coal and the like were distributed to those who had been identified as beneficiaries. (For procurement details on these items, please see Logistics, Objective 1). Thanks to a generous response from the private and business communities, a wide range of goods were available for one-off distribution.

The branches are currently reporting to Polish Red Cross headquarters how distribution of relief items were organised in these five voidvoidships during the first phase of the operation. List of beneficiaries are available at the branch level. The report on the specific activities carried out during the second phase of operations will be ready by the end of January 2002.

Objective 3 To provide daily lunches to 1.000 children for 160 days.

The Polish Red Cross has not been able to achieve this goal. Unfortunately the society did not receive enough funds to cover the costs for this activity. However, the PRC branches from the flood affected areas are providing lunches to only about 15% of the children needing them. Thanks to some donors, this activity could start, but more support is definitely needed.

Logistics

Objective 1 To procure relief goods.

Thanks to a generous response from the Polish public, (individuals, retail establishments, industrial companies and embassies, with the active support of the media), the Polish Red Cross was able to procure not only relief goods, but also the means to transport them, and even contributions of fuel for the trucks and cars being used. Relief goods were also generously provided by other Red Cross societies (such as the German, Dutch and Danish Red Cross). Each local Red Cross branch was able to organize local supplies, but also to receive, store and distribute goods received from other National Societies and from the PRC headquarters.

The following are just a few of the many examples of goods procured, and how they were procured: In Kielce, collected funds were used to buy 45 refrigerators, 63 washing machines, 15 stoves and so on. The Red Cross was assisted in this by a local Appliance/Electronic Goods store. Elsewhere, two petrochemical firms provided some five hundred litres of fuel for transport operations, while some local trucking companies provided needed vehicles and the like. Funds for procurement came from a wide range of sources. Together with local media, a victim's aid bank account was established, which collected 372,248 ZL (approximately CHF 151, 020) . A television special with TV and Radio Lublin raised some 53,248 ZL (approximately CHF 21,602). These represent just two of dozens of different fund raising activities that involved contributions from every aspect of society. In kind assistance was also received from sisters Red Cross societies, which was greatly appreciated such as rubber boots, new and used clothes, tents and related equipment, garbage bags, hygienic supplies, and insect repellent.

Objective 2 & 3 Red Cross local branches to distribute, with the support of volunteers. To provide transport for volunteers and staff to affected region.

Various forms of transport were offered by trucking companies. In addition to this, transport was also provided by the military. A large number of trucks and cars were made available in each affected area for transporting relief goods, victims and volunteers which allowed a smooth implementation of the operation (distributions).

National Society Capacity Building w

Objective 1 Strengthen the disaster relief and preparedness capacity in headquarters and local branches in the affected regions.

The Polish Red Cross still plans to hold training courses for branches and HQ in the areas of disaster response and preparedness as well as communications, but implementation has been postponed until the first quarter of

2002. There are several factors influencing this decision: at the moment the PRC is undergoing severe structural changes. In addition, there are currently elections taking place at all levels including the elections for President and the board in headquarters (planned on December 1). As a result the training component has been delayed.

The Polish Red Cross has an existing disaster preparedness plan. However there is a recognised need for this to be reviewed and adjusted, particularly given the fact that the structure of the National Society will itself be changing. Once the new National Society structures have been established, the alterations to the DP plan can then commence. This will occur in 2002.

The local community participated in repairing the Red Cross premises in Slupsk. The repairs to the roof and premises have been successfully completed. The cost was in the area of 9,500 CHF. The branch was pleased to receive renovation materials and equipment as a donation. In addition, painting and small repairs were carried out by inhabitants of the intervention home as well as by volunteers.

Coordination

Coordination is carried out by the Polish Red Cross HQ. During the most critical and urgent phase of the operation a flood relief task force was established. This included the participation of delegates from the German Red Cross assigned in the country for this disaster. Two daily meetings were organised, task force members collected and evaluated information from the PRC branches regarding both needs and support offered. Following this the task force coordinated the sending of relief consignments to the areas where they were most needed.

Other sister national societies supported the Polish Red Cross through the Federation or directly. Decisions regarding relief items and their final destinations were taken by the flood relief task force in the headquarters after checking with the flood affected branches. Operational reports are prepared in the branches and sent to headquarters for consolidation.

Outstanding needs

While the entire appeal is covered at 64.6 %, the support for the second phase remains very low, insufficient to meet the needs of those affected. This second phase is perceived as the most difficult one and more support is very needed.

Polish Red Cross has demonstrated its effectiveness in responding to the immediate needs after the disaster mobilizing by itself both financial and human resource to help the most vulnerable. Unfortunately, the end of the emergency phase meant also a decrease of interest from donors, leaving affected people in a critical situation for another long winter period . Persisting problems include humid houses, lack of basic equipment such as kitchenware, lack of building material to restore houses and so on.

The main outstanding needs identified so far are heating materials and household equipment for 3,079 families. The winter has already come, it is then crucial that these needs be covered.

For further details please contact: Penny Elghady, Phone: 41 22 730.43.19; Fax: 41 22 733 03 95; email: Elghady@ifrc.org

All International Federation Operations seek to adhere to the Code of Conduct and are committed to the Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Disaster Response (SPHERE Project) in delivering assistance to the most vulnerable.

This operation seeks to administer to the immediate requirements of the victims of this disaster. Subsequent operations to promote sustainable development or longer-term capacity building will require additional support, and these programmes are outlined on the Federation's website.

For further information concerning Federation operations in this or other countries, please access the Federation website at <http://www.ifrc.org>.

Peter Rees-Gildea
Head a.i.
Relationship Management Department

Lynette Lowndes
Head
Europe Department

POLAND: FLOODS						ANNEX 1
APPEAL No. 23/2001						PLEDGES RECEIVED
						17.12.2001
DONOR	CATEGORY	QUANTITY	UNIT	VALUE CHF	DATE	COMMENT
CASH						
REQUESTED IN APPEAL CHF ----->				2'895'944		TOTAL COVERAGE 64.6%
<u>First Emergency Phase</u>						
Contributions received at Polish RC from public donations in Poland				400'000	July 2001	
Contributions received from private sector/foundations in Poland				100'000	July 2001	
Western Union Foundation		25'000	USD	41'837		
<u>Second Phase</u>						
AMERICAN - PRIVATE/RC		30'000	USD	50'205	09.08.2001	
GERMAN - RC		200'000	DEM	150'422	06.11.2001	CAPACITY BUILDING
MONACO - RC		80'000	FRF	18'432	09.08.2001	
NETHERLANDS - GOVT/RC		11'746	EUR	17'375	03.08.2001	PROGRAMME MGT & CONTROL
NORWEGIAN - GOVT/RC		81'000	NOK	15'395	09.08.2001	
SUB/TOTAL RECEIVED IN CASH				793'666	CHF	27.4%
KIND AND SERVICES (INCLUDING PERSONNEL)						
DONOR	CATEGORY	QUANTITY	UNIT	VALUE CHF	DATE	COMMENT
<u>First Emergency Phase</u>						
Polish supermarket chain	Food items (nooddle, rice, veg., meat, w ater)			41'000	early july	Donations in kind to Polish RC
Collection of items	Non food item (blankets, clothing, boots, sleeping bags, bedding)			280'000	early july	
	Hygienic products			140'000	early july	
German RC	Blankets			60'000	28.07.2001	Donations in kind to Polish RC
	Rubber boots			63'406	28.07.2001	
	Sleeping bags/Bed linnen			35'315	28.07.2001	
	Medecines/Disinfectants			69'248	28.07.2001	
	Garbish bags			5'434	28.07.2001	
Netherlands RC	Hygiene parcels			193'000	03.08.2001	Donations in kind to Polish RC
	Rubber boots			53'700	03.08.2001	
	Garbage bags			6'400	03.08.2001	
	Gloves/toilet paper/cleaning product			15'200	03.08.2001	
	Transport of relief goods			15'900	03.08.2001	
Norwegian RC	Various items			98'000	03.08.2001	
SUB/TOTAL RECEIVED IN KIND/SERVICES				1'076'603	CHF	37.2%
ADDITIONAL TO APPEAL BUDGET						
DONOR	CATEGORY	QUANTITY	UNIT	VALUE CHF	DATE	COMMENT
SUB/TOTAL RECEIVED				0	CHF	
THE FOLLOWING PROJECTS ARE LINKED TO THIS APPEAL:						
PPL504						