

DREF Bulletin



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

MALAYSIA: FLOODS

*Final Report for
DREF Bulletin no. MDRMY001
24 July 2007*

The Federation's mission is to improve the lives of vulnerable people by mobilizing the power of humanity. It is the world's largest humanitarian organization and its millions of volunteers are active in over 185 countries.

In Brief

Period covered by this Final Report: 25 December 2006 to 25 March 2007.

History of this Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF)-funded operation:

- **CHF 50,000 (USD 41,425 or EUR 31,426) allocated from the Federations DREF on 25 December 2006 to support the Malaysia Red Crescent's initial assessment and relief effort.**
- **This operation is expected to be implemented for three months; a DREF Bulletin Final Report (narrative and financial) is published in this report.**

Background and Summary

Unexpected torrential rains resulted in two consecutive waves of flash floods hitting the southern and south-western coasts of Peninsula Malaysia. The first wave washed over the country from 19-27 December 2006, while the second wave lasted from 13-20 January 2006. Both waves affected the states of Johor and Melaka in particular, hitting the same areas again and again. The low lying areas of Batu Pahat and Segamat districts suffered the most damage, as they remained submerged for a longer period of time. The flooding is said to be the worst in 100 years.

The disaster left 17 people dead and caused tens of thousands to flee from their home. Altogether, the government evacuated approximately 58,000 people in the first wave and about 133,500 in the second. According to the government of Malaysia, both floods affected 184,868 and 137,533 people respectively (source: government of Malaysia).



The storms and floods wreaked houses and buildings in Kluang district. Malaysian Red Crescent Society.

Statistics from the national security council indicated that there were 800 badly damaged or destroyed houses. News reports estimated that 52,000 hectares of agricultural land was damaged. Sturdy homes and buildings collapsed, while roads cracked and infrastructure was crippled. The floods caught many by surprise as well, leading to extensive loss in personal property. Total damages are estimated at RM 1.26 billion (CHF 0.45 billion), with repercussions on the lives, livelihoods and businesses of the affected (source: government of Malaysia).

Those who were displaced were housed temporarily in organized relief centres, schools and other public buildings, relatives or host families and in their own front yards. Up to 215 centres were set up following the first floods, while 502 were set up after the second. Government services were mostly focused on the centres, where medical,

food, water and sanitation needs were met. This provision was deemed by the Malaysian Red Crescent Society (MRCS) assessment team to be adequate. However, this meant that people living in other locations received significantly less assistance.

To top up basic services provided, the government of Malaysia gave each affected family RM 300 and RM 500 (CHF 108 and CHF 180) as immediate assistance. In the meantime, primary and secondary schoolchildren each received RM 200 and RM 300 (CHF 72 and CHF 108) to purchase books and school uniforms. According to the public works authorities, the government also gave targeted families financial aid to refurbish homes that were damaged by floodwaters. Loans were also meted out to affected businesses.

In addition, the government has put aside RM250 million (CHF 90 million) for the National Disaster Relief Trust Fund, which has also received substantial funds from the general public and private companies.

Global warming and climate change has been blamed for the sudden floods, which stemmed from unexpected downpours that caused the many rivers in the state of Johor to overflow. While many responding parties, including the government and MRCS, were prepared to face incoming monsoon season in the northern and eastern states of Malaysia, the floods in the south were largely unforeseen.

Analysis of the operation – achievements and impact

The Malaysian Red Crescent Society had pre-positioned buffer stocks in the northern and eastern states of Penang and Kelantan. Nevertheless, when the floods struck Johor and Melaka, the national society was quick to adapt to the changing situation. Assessment teams were deployed immediately to the affected areas, with special focus on Johor Baru, Kota Tinggi, Segamat, Kuang and Batu Pahat districts, to assess and serve the immediate needs of the affected population.

An immediate plan of action was developed for the relief phase based on the assessment findings. This included regular delivery of food, hygiene kits as well as other relief items and services to the affected population to reduce their vulnerability. Later on in the operation, the plan of action was expanded to incorporate recovery needs of targeted survivors.



A boy receives medical attention from an MRCS doctor. Malaysian Red Crescent Society.

In total, 42,000 people were assisted through the delivery of food and non-food relief, while an additional 1,826 patients were treated by MRCS mobile health clinics. Humanitarian assistance was mainly delivered through the state of Johor's network of chapters. Other than relief and medical services, chapters helped out in relief centres by providing psychological support and hot meals. Volunteers revisited the Johor Baru, Kota Tinggi, Segamat, Batu Pahat and Muar chapters in particular to reassess and monitor needs and support them in relief and planning.

The International Federation reinforced the MRCS relief operation with CHF 50,000 released from its Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF). These funds were used for targeted support to 500 families in the districts of Segamat and Batu Pahat in Johor state. More than 80 per cent of the funds were used to procure and distribute food and non-food items, as well as hygiene kits for the said families (contents are available in the Relief section). The rest was used to support the deployment of staff and volunteers and to cover logistical costs.

Apart from the DREF allocation, the MRCS received a large number of in-kind goods (worth RM 3 million or CHF 1.08 million) and moderate cash donations (RM 1.56 million or CHF 0.56 million) within the country. While the national society appreciated the in-kind goods from the general public and private companies, the high volumes posed severe strains on its logistics capacity. This is because these in-kind donations often do not come

with additional support for logistics and human resources. Nevertheless, thanks to the help from local government forces and a national four-wheel association, the MRCS was able disburse the in-kind goods to the disaster-hit populace.

Human resource deployment

In the first wave of floods in December 2006, up to 86 MRCS staff and volunteers were mobilized at the disaster's onset, out of which 23 were regional disaster team (RDRT) trained and 63 were trained through the rapid deployment squad. Many of them were tasked to assist in 81 of the relief centres set up by the government. These staff and volunteers came from the state branches of Kedah, Perlis, Penang, Sarawak, Selangor, Kuala Lumpur and the national headquarters. The MRCS also deployed a trained Scuba search and rescue team, who were volunteered from the local council.

The MRCS was much more prepared when the second wave hit the country in January 2007. This time, the national society deployed 1,200 trained volunteers and staff. In both floods, the assessment teams contributed significantly to the operation. They liaised with authorities, determined and corrected operational problems as well as identified new areas for assistance. In addition, the teams drew up distribution and logistics plans while adjusting the national headquarters distribution plan to match changing needs.

Volunteers in particular played a key role across the operation. They managed relief centres, packed relief goods and provided logistics support. They operated IT and communication posts and helped run MRCS and government relief centres. Volunteers staffed medical and first aid teams, boat teams and relief teams in every area of the operation.

Beneficiary selection

Malaysian Red Crescent Society assistance was especially targeted for flood-affected people that had more than 50 per cent of their houses destroyed. The beneficiary selection criteria prioritized families that had:

- Senior members more than 65 years of age
- More than two children under the age of five
- Disabled family members
- Family members suffering from serious illnesses (e.g. tuberculosis, HIV/AIDS)

Food and non-food relief

In the floods immediate aftermath, the MRCS actively distributed relief from its own disaster preparedness stock, starting from Johor Baru before fanning out to other districts. Assisted by Malaysian RDRT trained members, the Johor Baru chapter set up, coordinated and maintained a small warehouse that was used to receive in-kind donations. Three more RDRT members were deployed to Segamat, Batu Pahat and Johor Baru to assist in coordination.

To meet the demands and needs of the flooded communities, the MRCS deployed five lorries, five boats, five four-wheel drive vehicles, a mobile control unit, a communication unit and a bus.

All in all, 42,000 people were provided with food and non-food relief goods as well as hygiene kits. The MRCS set up mass cooking facilities that served hot meals to both beneficiaries and relief workers. Relief items were also distributed to more remote and isolated villages and families.



Volunteers unload much needed mattresses that would be distributed later to flood survivors. The floods destroyed much private property, including bedding. Malaysian Red Crescent Society.

Types of relief provided can be segregated into specially packed family packs and hygiene kits, as well as an assortment of other non-food and food items. The contents are laid out below:

Family parcels contained:

- Rice
- Sugar
- Salt
- Canned food (sardines)
- Biscuits
- Coffee/tea
- Cooking oil
- Mineral water
- Baby diapers

Hygiene kits contained:

- Toothpaste
- Toothbrush
- Towels
- Sanitary napkins
- Body soap
- Disinfectant liquid

- Detergent

Other non-food items distributed:

- Garbage bags
- Tee-shirts
- Used clothes
- Stoves
- Slippers
- Undergarments
- School bags
- Mattresses
- Bleach
- Pillows

Other food items distributed:

- Canned food (baked beans, chicken curry)
- Margarine
- Baby milk

It was reported that distribution through the Johor Baru chapter went especially well, which is a credit to its dedicated and motivated staff and volunteers. The chapter's good relationship with the local authorities is also acknowledged.

Health and care

A health team was deployed to the affected areas. Through mobile clinics that were set up, 1,826 patients received treatment. The team also conducted a health assessment, visiting the affected chapters to develop a plan of action for health and hygiene promotion activities. Additionally, the team liaised with the local authorities to discuss plans and avoid duplicating services.

Impact

During field visits from the MRCS teams, it was reported that beneficiaries receiving Red Crescent assistance have expressed gratitude. A trip by the deputy chairman of MRCS and the chairman for disaster management to different locations revealed that people were most grateful over the contents of the food parcels, which gave people a good variety for cooking. The food assistance also complemented the hygiene kits.

Excellent relationships between some of the MRCS chapters and local authorities meant that information sharing was regular and up to date. Good cooperation between the two also ensured that beneficiaries received timely distributions, as the government could supplement the assistance provided by MRCS and vice versa. The Segamat chapter's partnership with the authorities was a good example of this.

Constraints

- Some weaker chapters do not have a system of documenting their relief distribution properly. The MRCS national headquarters is monitoring this situation and, from time to time, sends down teams to assist some of these chapters in their relief work.
- Communication another challenge as some chapters do not even possess a functional fax machine, making regular reports on activities difficult.
- There was a heavy demand on the logistics capacity of the MRCS, as the areas were widespread. In the end, the MRCS had to depend on government agencies and a national four-wheel drive association to help distribute emergency relief items and transport volunteers.

- Human resource capacity at the branches and chapters (except for the Johor Baru chapter) was not enough to deal with the disaster. There were only a minimum of five volunteers at each chapter, although this increased by the time the second floods hit.
- Despite there being a large number of trained volunteers from other states on hand and ready for deployment, most of them only had three days of approved leave from their employers. This duration was too short to send volunteers to the affected areas, as a high turnover it would result in an ineffective operation.

Looking ahead towards recovery

Although the flood situation has stabilized, it does not diminish the needs of affected communities. Some of them are still displaced as their homes have collapsed or their villages are still inundated by stagnant water. Crops and harvests destroyed because of flooded agricultural land also led to a loss in livelihoods and income.

The MRCS has taken these needs into consideration, as well as pockets of the population that have fallen outside the government's relief net. As a result, the plan of action has been revised to include livelihoods, reconstruction and rehabilitation programmes. Additionally, agricultural needs will be met through the distribution of corn seeds and assisted provision of ducks, chickens and calves.

How we work

All International Federation assistance seeks to adhere to the [Code of Conduct for the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and Non-Governmental Organizations \(NGO's\) in Disaster Relief](#) and is committed to the [Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Disaster Response \(Sphere\)](#) in delivering assistance to the most vulnerable.

The Federation's Global Agenda

The International Federation's activities are aligned with under a Global Agenda, which sets out **four broad goals** to meet the Federation's mission to "improve the lives of vulnerable people by mobilizing the power of humanity".

Global Agenda Goals:

- Reduce the numbers of deaths, injuries and impact from disasters.
- Reduce the number of deaths, illnesses and impact from diseases and public health emergencies.
- Increase local community, civil society and Red Cross Red Crescent capacity to address the most urgent situations of vulnerability.
- Reduce intolerance, discrimination and social exclusion and promote respect for diversity and human dignity.

Contact information

For further information specifically related to this operation please contact:

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[Final financial report below; click here to return to the title page](#)

International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

MDRMY001 - MALAYSIA FLOODS

FINAL REPORT

Selected Parameters	
Reporting Timeframe	2006/12-2007/7
Budget Timeframe	2006/12-2007/6
Appeal	MDRMY001
Budget	APPEAL

All figures are in Swiss Francs (CHF)

I. Consolidated Response to Appeal

	Health & Care	Disaster Management	Humanitarian Values	Organisational Development	Coordination & Implementation	TOTAL
A. Budget		50,000				50,000
B. Opening Balance		0				0
Income						
<u>Cash contributions</u>						
DREF		-832				-832
C1. Cash contributions		-832				-832
<u>Reallocations (within appeal or from/to another appeal)</u>						
DREF		50,000				50,000
C3. Reallocations (within appeal or		50,000				50,000
C. Total Income = SUM(C1..C6)		49,168				49,168
D. Total Funding = B + C		49,168				49,168

II. Balance of Funds

	Health & Care	Disaster Management	Humanitarian Values	Organisational Development	Coordination & Implementation	TOTAL
B. Opening Balance		0				0
C. Income		49,168				49,168
E. Expenditure		-49,168				-49,168
F. Closing Balance = (B + C + E)		0				0

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Reporting Timeframe	2006/12-2007/7
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III. Budget Analysis / Breakdown of Expenditure

Account Groups	Budget	Expenditure					TOTAL	Variance
		Health & Care	Disaster Management	Humanitarian Values	Organisational Development	Coordination & Implementation		
A							B	A - B
BUDGET (C)		50,000					50,000	
Supplies								
Shelter - Relief			237				237	-237
Clothing & textiles			3,700				3,700	-3,700
Food			19,241				19,241	-19,241
Water & Sanitation			13,731				13,731	-13,731
Utensils & Tools			2,707				2,707	-2,707
Other Supplies & Services	40,773		1,353				1,353	39,420
Total Supplies	40,773		40,969				40,969	-196
Transport & Storage								
Transport & Vehicle Costs			1,739				1,739	-1,739
Total Transport & Storage			1,739				1,739	-1,739
Personnel Expenditures								
National Society Staff			3,254				3,254	-3,254
Total Personnel Expenditures			3,254				3,254	-3,254
General Expenditure								
Travel	5,977							5,977
Office Costs			10				10	-10
Total General Expenditure	5,977		10				10	5,967
Program Support								
Program Support	3,250		3,196				3,196	54
Total Program Support	3,250		3,196				3,196	54
TOTAL EXPENDITURE (D)	50,000		49,168				49,168	832
VARIANCE (C - D)			832				832	