

DREF operation update



International Federation
of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

Italy: Earthquake

**DREF operation n° MDRIT001
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Update n° 1
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The International Federation's 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 response to emergencies. 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: 9 April to 14 April 2009.

CHF 700,000 (USD 613,944 or EUR 460,808) has been allocated from the International Federation's Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF) to support the Italian Red Cross in delivering immediate assistance to 15,000 beneficiaries.

This DREF operation is an opportunity for Partner National Societies and donors to support the Italian Red Cross in its ongoing operations, and un-earmarked contributions to replenish DREF are therefore highly encouraged.

Summary: A strong earthquake measuring 6.3 on the Richter scale hit central Italy on 6 April 2009. Some 298 people have been killed and 15 are still missing, with around 1,000 injured and 28,000 homeless. Several aftershocks hit the region in the following week. The Italian Red Cross is supporting the affected population with food and non-food items as well as psychological support in order to overcome the most urgent needs.

This operation is expected to be implemented over a period of three months, and will therefore be completed by 7 July, 2009. A Final Report will be made available by 7 October 2009.

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Italian Red Cross search and rescue volunteers working in the aftermath of the earthquake.

The situation

At 7:42 pm on 7 April another quake hit Abruzzo province in central Italy measuring 5.7 on the Richter scale. The shock was felt in the offices of the Italian Red Cross headquarters in Rome, some 120 km from L'Aquila, where Red Cross staff was still busy coordinating the humanitarian operation in this late hour. The aftershocks that continued since then in the region with another strong one on 13 April measuring 5.0 on the Richter scale increased the tension and added work for the 750 staff and volunteers of the Italian Red Cross working in the disaster zone.

According to the latest information 298 people were killed by the earthquake. Thousands of people rendered homeless are receiving help from various national agencies, among which the Italian Red Cross is providing water, hot meals and warm blankets in the tent camps. Rain and persistent cold have made life difficult in the camps. Many people are moving towards the Adriatic coast, being accommodated in hotels.

The Italian government has not requested international assistance, drawing upon national resources to address the most urgent needs. The Italian Red Cross has launched a National Appeal of solidarity that will enable it to carry out operations also in the medium and long term, providing adequate shelter, warm clothes, food provisions and psychosocial support for the survivors.

Coordination and partnerships

The Italian Red Cross is working in very close cooperation with the Italian Civil Protection which is leading the overall response.

Many National Societies in Europe and across the globe expressed their solidarity and are on standby ready to offer any help or assistance that may be required. So far, according to the Italian Red Cross, their human and technical resources have been sufficient to cope with the most urgent needs.

The Italian Red Cross received letters of support from several National Societies. The Irish, the British, the Austrian, the American, the Swiss and the Canadian Red Cross Societies have started local fund-raising campaigns to help the people affected by the Italian earthquake.

The British Red Cross has contributed with GBP 15,000 to the Italian Red Cross's national appeal while the American Red Cross offered USD 50,000 bilaterally. The Albanian Red Cross also contributed with USD 5,000. The Swiss Red Cross assistance of 231 tents with 1,155 bed capacity and 2,310 blankets has already arrived.

Two playrooms offered by the Ministry for Equal Opportunities and the Happy Family non-profit organization, with a capacity for 100 children have been opened and are run by the Italian Red Cross. The playrooms have tables, chairs, footballs, toys, blackboards and games. The Italian Red Cross will be setting up more playrooms in the following days. As part of the recreational activities on 12 April, a group of clowns was present in the Italian Red Cross camp of San Gregorio.

Red Cross and Red Crescent action

Progress towards objectives

The Europe Zone office, along with Geneva Secretariat and the Italian Red Cross, organized a teleconference with Partner National Societies on 8 April in order to share information on Italian Red Cross activities, the needs in the affected area and the further steps planned. Nineteen Partner National Societies participated in the conference and offered support and assistance in financial, material and human resources. It was emphasized by the Italian Red Cross that there is no need in in-kind donations as all material is available in the country. However, the Italian Red Cross remains open for bilateral cooperation or multilateral through the International Federation.

The International Federation has deployed a delegate for a short mission to Italy, to act as liaison with the Italian Red Cross and to assist them in creating a detailed plan of action for the intervention. The main focus of the plan of action will be on early recovery and rehabilitation, starting from one month after the earthquake.

More than 750 volunteers and operators of the Italian Red Cross from all over Italy are at present working in the areas hit by the earthquake taking care of 22,000 people affected.

Relief distributions (food and basic non-food items)

Objective: To provide initial emergency assistance including food and non-food items.

Activities planned:

1. Distribute non-food items including blankets
2. Contribute to temporary shelter solutions
3. Provide hot meals through mobile kitchens

Progress and impact:

The Italian Red Cross is running a total of six camps in the areas hit by the earthquake; two in Assergi, one in San Gregorio, one in Collemaggio and the fifth in Centicolella. There are now 4,500 beds available in the five camps. A sixth camp is used to accommodate Italian Red Cross operational staff active in the disaster zone. In all five Red Cross camps the shower modules are operational.

There are five mobile kitchens run by the Italian Red Cross, providing a total of 22,000 meals a day. The first one in L'Aquila provides 7,000 meals a day run by 20 Italian Red Cross humanitarian operators and another 50 Red Cross volunteers. The second in San Gregorio provides 3,000 meals a day, the third in Collemaggio, 2,000 meals a day and the fourth in Centicolella, 6,000 meals a day. The fifth soup kitchen with a capacity of 4,000 meals per day is in the area of Fintec providing meals for Red Cross staff.

Some 12,000 blankets have been already distributed to the affected population. 200 tents with a 1,000 bed capacity, received by the Swiss Red Cross, have been also set up.

9,000 Easter chocolate eggs, donated by different companies to the Italian Red Cross, were distributed on 12 April to the homeless in the camps.

Health

Objective: To provide emergency first aid and medical care, including psychosocial support.

Activities planned:

1. Provide first aid and medical care through advanced medical teams and first aiders
2. Provide psychosocial support to those affected

Progress and impact:

Nine Advanced Medical Posts of the Red Cross, located in Poggio Picense, San Gregorio, Assergi, Filetto, Paganica, Centicolella, Collemaggio, Piazza d'Armi Campo and L'Aquila, are now operational (II° level A.M.P., teams of volunteer doctors and nurses for medical aid and assistance) and two triage tents for primary first aid screening.

More than 30 ambulances are operational in the affected area.

The SEP teams for psychological support are active and at present close to the families hit by the tragedy. To date 10 volunteer psychologists and 10 volunteers are providing psychosocial support.

In the Centocella camp (L'Aquila) Italian Red Cross also provides veterinary assistance and appropriate health-related interventions to animals. The VET CARE service, manned by Italian Red Cross operators (3 veterinarians and nurses) registered in the course of a few days an average of 15 examinations per day in the surgery.

In order to alleviate the suffering of the affected population, many recreational activities were organized in the camps, especially for young children and elderly people. On 12 April Red Cross staff and volunteers organized games and various forms of entertainment. The activities were carried out not only in the Red Cross camps but also in the camps of Montereale and Castelnuovo San Pio.

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 International Federation's activities are aligned with its 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

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