

# Operations update



International Federation  
of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

## Namibia: Floods

Emergency appeal n° MDRNA006  
GLIDE FL- 2011- 000007-NAM  
Operations update n° 2  
31 May 2011

**Period covered by this Ops Update:** 10 April 2011  
to 04 May 2011

**Appeal target (current):** CHF 1,811,530

**Appeal coverage:** 28%

[<click here to go directly to the updated donor response report, >](#)

### Appeal history:

The Emergency Appeal was launched on the 8<sup>th</sup> of April 2011 for CHF 1,811,530 for six months to assist 37,457 displaced people/9,364 families.

**Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF):** An initial amount of CHF 296,472 was allocated from the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies' (IFRC) DREF to support the National Society's response activities.

**Summary:** The NRCS continues to assist people affected by the worst floods in decades in the northern Namibian regions of Oshana, Omusati, Ohangwena, Oshikoto, Kavango and Caprivi. The number of affected people rose to **500,000** with about 60,000 displaced, approximately **19,000** in relocation camps and **65** related deaths reported since the onset of the disaster.

The water levels rose and reached the highest levels on record in Oshana region, resulting in more communities relocated to higher ground in that region. Water levels have started to subside and some communities in Ohangwena, Omusati, Kunene, and Oshikoto Regions have started to return to their homesteads. According to the National Hydrology Division, the level of water in the north western regions is significantly subsiding

In the Caprivi Region, all the relocated communities are still in the camps as the water levels in the flood plains are still high. The sanitation situation in the camps surrounded by water in Caprivi Region remains challenging since the water table has started rising posing a potential threat of overflowing of latrines in these areas.

The provision of relief items as well as the construction of latrines and bathing shelters by the national society has enabled the supported beneficiaries to cope with the situation in the relocation camps. The National Society continues to provide non-food items to the relocated population towards the restoration of dignified daily life.

The national society appreciates the support of both local and international partners, for the contributions made to the Emergency Appeal.



Relief distribution and verification in Omusati Region/  
Photo: NRCS

This operation is expected to be implemented for a period of six months, and will therefore be completed by 30 September 2011, with a Final Report made available by December 2011 (three months after the end of the operation).

## The situation

On 29 March 2011, the government of Namibia declared a national state of emergency to respond to large-scale flooding in the northern parts of the country. The declaration was based on the results of a rapid assessment conducted on the 25 to 27 March 2011. Following the declaration of an emergency, a joint assessment was conducted by the government in collaboration with NRCS and UN agencies. According to findings of the assessment, the displaced population reached 60,000 people. Roads, bridges, business centres, crops and road network and other infrastructures were destroyed in Cuvelai basin which transverses through Ohangwena, Oshana, Oshikoto and Omusati regions. The flood is estimated to have affected over 500 000 people in the seven northern regions. Some communities were cut off from schools, health clinics, and other social amenities. In Karas region, initially the total population relocated was 12,000 but the situation has normalized and all the relocated population has returned back to their respective homesteads.

The National Society with the support of the regional office of the International Federation of the Red Cross launched an Emergency Appeal on the 8<sup>th</sup> of April 2011 to support 9,364 families. The (NRCS) has managed to mobilize the regional staff and trained volunteers in Omusati, Oshana, Ohangwena, Oshikoto, Kavango, Kunene and Caprivi Regions, for the operation.

In Kunene, the relocated population has returned to their respective homesteads and have started with the reconstruction of their damaged houses. In Omusati, Ohangwena, and Oshikoto regions, some people have started returning to their houses as the water continues to subside, although the majority are still in the camps. As for Caprivi and Kavango, the camps as established are still intact as the water levels are still high although the river levels are subsiding gradually. Generally, the situation has not yet stabilized, as more people are still in need of shelter at this stage. Table 1 below shows the total population in relocation camps per region.

**Table 1: Population in relocation camps in 2011**

Region	Households	Total Population
Omusati	235	1,424.00
Ohangwena	231	855
Oshana	896	2,532.00
Oshikoto	23	76
Kavango	377	1,243.00
Caprivi	4,134.00	17,145.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>5,896.00</b>	<b>23,275.00</b>

**Note that these are only people in the recognized government sites**

This flooding experience has demonstrated the impact of the Zambezi River Basin Initiative (ZRBI) on communities in terms of early warning systems, as most of the communities reacted positively to the warnings. To date, a total of 31 villages have been relocated permanently to higher ground in the Caprivi Region and 57 households in the Kavango Region. Through the ZRBI, the NRCS also engaged the communities in the identification of locations on higher ground and preparations of these areas as reception centres during disasters.

## Coordination and partnerships

### Internal

The current disaster response operation is being undertaken by the NRCS, in collaboration with the Regional Disaster Risk Management Committees. At the National level, the NRCS is a member of the National Risk Management Committee.

The NRCS has been mandated by the government to head the camp management in all the relocation camps. To date, the National Society has experienced a high level of collaboration among the Regional Disaster Risk Management Committees, the UN agencies and IOM, and makes sure that the operation arrangements are fully coordinated.

At regional level, the IFRC Southern Africa regional office will coordinate with movement partners present in Namibia and also within the region to enhance mobilization of financial resources. Where needed, the IFRC Southern Africa regional office will identify suitable staff to be deployed (as RDRTs) to assist the national society in its response activities.

## Red Cross and Red Crescent action

The National Society through the Federation has so far managed to raise 28% of the funds required through the emergency appeal. This has also been complemented by local support from different stakeholders in the country and embassies. With this support, the NRCS has acquired relief items to assist the affected families with basic necessities. NRCS distributed relief items such as water purification sachets, blankets, kitchen sets and hygiene packs to the affected communities along the Orange River in the south, as well as to Caprivi and Kavango in the north east, and the four north- western regions of Omusati, Oshana, Oshikoto and Ohangwena. The construction of latrines and bathing shelters as well as hygiene promotion and health education are undertaken by volunteers on a daily basis.

## Progress towards Objectives

The NRCS continues to respond to address the plight of the affected population in all seven flood affected regions. At this stage, the response operation is focusing on the relief distribution to reduce the impact of floods.

### Relief distributions (basic non-food items)

<b>Objective: 9,364 flood-affected households are provided with appropriate non-food relief items.</b>	
<b>Expected results</b>	<b>Activities planned</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>9, 364 households receive relief items such as blankets and hygiene kits</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Conducting continuous assessments in the affected areas.</li> <li>Distributing blankets and soaps to the relocated schoolchildren and lactating mothers.</li> <li>Providing technical and financial support in logistics, warehousing and distribution</li> <li>Monitoring and evaluating the relief activities and providing reports of relief distributions</li> </ul>

### Progress:

The NS distributed items such as blankets, mosquito nets, kitchen sets, Plastic sheets, Water markers, Tarpaulins, and water containers etc to all the affected communities in the Omusati, Oshana, Oshikoto, Ohangwena, Kavango, Kunene and Caprivi Regions. See the Table 2 below on the distribution list of relief items.

**Table 2: Relief items distributed**

Relief Items	Affected Regions						Grand Total
	Caprivi Region	Kavango Region	Oshana /Oshikoto	Omusati	Ohangwena	Kunene	
Number of families supported	4,134	377	930	1,368	360	200	<b>7,369</b>
Total number of beneficiaries supported	17,145	1,243	3,823	3,739	1,349	2,000	<b>29,299 *</b>
Tarpaulins (Single)	1,579	-	1,003	370	236	250	<b>3,438</b>
Black Sheets (Rolls)	100	15	34	10	5		<b>164</b>
Mosquito Nets	546	292	10	49	397	22	<b>1,316</b>
Soaps	5,696	377	3,024	770	329	288	<b>10,484</b>
Water makers	56,111	4,500	10,000	10,000	33,400		<b>114,011</b>
Kitchen sets	14	-			39		<b>53</b>
Tents	623	27	30	27	30	2	<b>739</b>
Blankets	2,568	300	1,127	128			<b>4,123</b>
20L Jerry Cans	1,000	292	800	56	87	150	<b>2,385</b>
Hygiene kits	1,129	193	845	61	100	150	<b>2,478</b>
Pit Latrines constructed	150	11	20	10			<b>191</b>
Family showers	101	6	20	10			<b>137</b>

\*Total families including those who are lodging with their families away from their damaged homesteads

The staff and volunteers continue to distribute relief items in the relocation camps. The response actions were slowed down due to re-registration, which took time to complete. However, the relief items distribution is currently underway.

### Challenges

At this stage, the number of people that are still in the relocation camps is still high and therefore there is a need to increase the supplies. The plans are underway way to speed up the procurement process of the non-food items.

Emergency shelter	
Objective: <b>9,364 households have access to a safe and adequate emergency shelter</b>	
Expected results	Activities planned
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The targeted 9,364 displaced families are provided with shelter materials</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Distribution of tarpaulins to the affected 7,364 families</li> <li>Trainings of volunteers and public awareness to beneficiaries related to the use of tarpaulins</li> </ul>

**Progress:**

In total 3,438 tarpaulins and 739 tents were distributed in the relocation centres. The distribution of relief items continues and more relief items have been procured and awaiting delivery to the relocation sites. More shelter materials are needed especially by the families returning to their houses, to use while re-constructing their houses. The other challenge is that more areas can now be reached and more needs of shelter are being identified in the areas that were not accessible when the water was high. Shelter materials are thus required to assist these communities now in their relocation centres.

Training on the use of shelter materials was conducted during the distribution in the relocation centres. In addition, a total of 8 NRCS staff members were trained as ToTs on Camp Coordination and Camp management. The training was conducted in collaboration with International Organization for Migration (IOM). These will then continue training Volunteers in all the relocation sites.

**Challenges:**

As water levels subside and many communities are reached, the need for shelter increases since some of the population could not come to the relocation centres in fear of loss of their properties. However, the Society in collaboration with RDRMC is planning to do an assessment to establish the long-term damage of the current floods disasters to the population.

**Emergency health and care**

<b>Objective: Health risks, morbidity and mortality resulting from the emergency are reduced among affected population through the provision of health promotion, preventive, community-level and services to households in affected regions for six months.</b>	
<b>Expected Results</b>	<b>Activities planned</b>
Mortality and morbidity of <b>43,729</b> beneficiaries as a result of the emergency are prevented through a primary health care oriented programme.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide first aid and referral services for affected communities through 100 volunteers in the coming six months.</li> <li>• Distribute mosquito bed nets within the two months of the operation</li> <li>• Refresher training for 100 volunteers on communicable disease surveillance in coordination with MoH and District Health Offices.</li> <li>•</li> </ul>
The resilience of the community is improved through better health awareness, knowledge and behaviour change	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Refresher training for 100 community-based volunteers on health promotion as well as hang up/keep up.</li> <li>• Sustain health promotion campaigns within the affected population focusing on malaria targeting 9,364 households in affected areas.</li> <li>• Support and provide printed and other materials to be used in the health promotion campaign (such as posters, flyers, manuals, educational materials, etc).</li> <li>• 50 more volunteers will be trained in the Community Based Health &amp; First Aid (CBHFA) approach to assist in responding to the issues surrounding emergency at the same time ensuring that prevention is emphasized in order to minimize disease outbreaks through proactive health education in affected communities and also strengthening</li> </ul>
Psycho-social support is provided to affected households	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Train 150 staff and volunteers of the Society engaged in Psychological Support in emergency</li> <li>• Identify and provide Psycho-Social Support to the affected families.</li> </ul>

**Progress:**

The trained volunteers on CBHFA and health education during the previous disasters are continuing to conduct hygiene promotion and health education in all the camps. The volunteers trained on drama performances are also complementing the health awareness component. The volunteers have also been involved in the community based disease surveillance and referrals to the clinics. The NRCS is planning to conduct training of a total 200 volunteers on Hygiene promotion, health education and disease surveillance with support from WHO.

A total of **1,316** bed nets have been distributed from the prepositioned stocks. Initially the Society did not procure bed nets since the government indicated that they had enough stock in the regions. However the stocks could only support 3,000 people and there is a need to procure enough bed nets to reduce the possibility of malaria outbreak in the affected populations.

#### Challenges:

There is an urgent need to train more volunteers, but the planned training for staff and volunteers was postponed to June 2011.

#### Water, sanitation, and hygiene promotion

**Objective: The risk of waterborne diseases is reduced through the provision of safe water, adequate sanitation as well as hygiene promotion to 9,364 families in the seven affected Regions for six months.**

Expected results	Activities planned
Safe water is provided to 9,364 families while damaged systems are restored.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Distributing household level water storage (i.e. jerry cans) to the affected families.</li> <li>Distribution and training on water Purification sachets/Tablets (WPT).</li> </ul>
Appropriate sanitation, including excreta disposal, solid waste disposal and drainage, is provided to 9,364 families in the seven affected regions for six months.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Creating defecation fields.</li> <li>Building pit latrines in relocation centres.</li> <li>Facilitate vector control and prevention measures in collaboration with government</li> <li>Provide domestic solid Waste disposal facilities.</li> </ul>
The health status of the population is improved through behaviour change and hygiene promotion activities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Refresher training for 100 community-based volunteers on PHAST/in emergencies</li> <li>Conduct hygiene promotion campaigns within the affected population focusing on behaviour change.</li> <li>Provide IEC materials for health promotion campaign.</li> </ul>

#### Progress:

The Society managed to distribute 2,383 jerry cans, and 114,011 water makers. Distribution continues in all the relocation centres in all the affected regions. In total, the Society managed to put up 191 pit latrines in the different relocation centres. Bathing shelters (137) were also provided for both women and men in all the different camps.

**Table 3: Total latrines bathing shelters constructed**

Region	Pit latrines	Bathing shelters
Caprivi	150	101
Oshana	20	20
Omusati	10	10
Kavango	11	6
Kunene	0	0
<b>Totals</b>	<b>191</b>	<b>137</b>

The Society was also mandated by the government to do camp management in all the relocation centres. As a result, the society is in the process of establishing camp management structures in all the relocation centres. This will also include a committee on water and sanitation. The communities will be provided with the necessary skills on sanitation and also trained on PHAST methodology.

Different hygiene materials translated in the specific languages were acquired from the Water and Sanitation project and also from UNICEF. These materials were distributed in all the camps.

Similarly, the IEC materials used during the 2009 ERU team have been reproduced and disseminated in all the camps by the volunteers. Volunteers in all the camps assisted the communities in establishing solid waste disposal pits in all the camps.



Figure 1: Posters on Hygiene promotion translated into local language.

Refresher trainings on sanitation aspects for the volunteers are planned for, with the support of UNICEF, the Ministry of Health and Social Services, as well as WHO. The training will focus not only on volunteers in the relocation camps but also those from the communities around the border between Namibia and Angola.

#### Challenges:

Limited number of volunteers conducting hygiene promotion currently remains a challenge due to low funding. The plan is to increase the number of volunteers trained on hygiene promotion to cover all the affected areas. There are also fears of the Cholera outbreak in Angola spilling over to Namibia. Therefore, the Society plans to scale up disease surveillance through the volunteers in an attempt to contain the diseases.

#### Logistics

<b>Objective: To support the relief operations, delivering a range of relief items in line with the operational priorities.</b>	
<b>Expected results</b>	<b>Activities planned</b>
The operation has coordinated mobilization of relief items and efficient dispatch of goods to the final distribution points.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Procure and distribute relief stocks and controlling supply movements to end user</li> <li>• Monitor and evaluate relief activities and reporting on the relief distributions</li> <li>• Facilitate appropriate warehousing and transportation to distribution points</li> </ul>

#### Progress:

At this stage, the Society managed to deliver all the procured relief items through the DREF to all the affected regions. Distribution is also underway. There is proper record keeping at the warehouses in the affected regions. The two cards distribution system is being utilised for proper records keeping and accountability. The Red Cross distribution cards system has been approved by Regional councils to be utilised for the distribution of relief items in all the relocation camps. The Society is also currently in the process of developing a database that will assist the Regional Councils with proper registration and records of the flooded areas. This database upon completion will be based at the regional level, with the Regional Councils.

#### Communications – Advocacy and Public information

The NS with technical support from the IFRC regional office will conduct awareness and publicity activities including field trips to sensitise the public and media on the situation on the ground and the humanitarian response. Press releases and conferences are held to update the public on the Red Cross floods interventions. Volunteers also disseminate the principles and values of the Movement during their response operation.

<b>Objective: Regular credible and reliable information to the public is provided</b>	
<b>Expected results</b>	<b>Activities planned</b>

<p>A steady flow of timely and accurate information between field and other stakeholders is maintained.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conduct awareness campaigns through print and electronic media</li> <li>• Support field staff in producing regular field updates for sharing with stakeholders</li> <li>• Develop/adapt IEC materials for public education on impact of floods</li> <li>• Ensure the visibility of the Red Cross in response operations</li> <li>• Collaborate and support other NS programmes to produce IEC material and develop social mobilisation campaigns</li> <li>• Collect visual materials of the operation</li> <li>• Organize at least one media tour to the operation area</li> <li>• Strengthen the communication capacity of the national society</li> </ul>
---	--

### Progress:

With the assistance of the Federation Senior Communication Officer, the Society managed to profile the current response activities of the NS, a press release was posted on the IFRC website. Similarly, the floods operation was covered on CNN.

Constant updates are being provided to the local media on a regular basis. The Society also plans to conduct a media tour where media practitioners will be invited to participate. The objective is to increase the Society's disaster operation visibility.

## Capacity of the National Society

Though there are still areas for improvement, the NRCS has shown growth in its capacity to respond to emergencies over the last few years, The NRCS has staff and volunteers at its disposal that are trained in disaster response. Its National Disaster Management Response has gained experience from previous disasters, especially in the Caprivi Region. The National Disaster Response Teams (NDRT) has jointly carried out simulation exercise and developed contingency plans for the flooding season. These exercises were supported by the Office of the Prime Minister, OCHA and the Regional Councils. There is a pool of more than 4,000 volunteers who can be mobilised country wide to respond to disasters. These volunteers have been capacitated in the field of hygiene promotion, water and sanitation, gender issues and disaster response. The NRCS has at its disposal 5 RDRT trained staff and 1 ERU trained staff on water and sanitation.

The NRCS camp management capacity came out strongly during the presentations of the joint assessment findings conducted by the OPM, NRCS and the UN agencies. As a result of the findings in the camps, the National Disaster Risk Management Committee chaired by the Secretary to Cabinet mandated the Society to take up the responsibility of camp management in all the relocation camps. The Society has standardised all the registration process and at the moment, the registration is under way to collect concrete figures in all the relocation centres.

## General Operation Challenge

The Society launched an emergency appeal on the 8<sup>th</sup> of April 2011, the response towards the appeal has been relatively low, as at this stage the appeal is only about 28% covered. In relation to the scale of the emergency the Society's response operation is currently limited and compromised, as there is relatively very few resources. Therefore, the Society still appeals for more resources to be able to effectively respond to the emergency. Some bilateral proposals have been done and still awaiting response through the Belgium Red Cross and ECHO and there has also been some positive responses from the local population, private sector and also diplomatic missions in Namibia.

## 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 \(NGOs\) 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 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

## Contact information

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

- In Namibia: Dorkas Kapembe-Haiduwa, Secretary General; Tel no +264 61 413750; email: [dorkas.kapembe-haiduwa@redcross.org.na](mailto:dorkas.kapembe-haiduwa@redcross.org.na)
- In IFRC Southern Africa Region: Ken Odur, Regional Representative, Johannesburg, Email: [ken.odur@ifrc.org](mailto:ken.odur@ifrc.org), Phone: +27.11.303.9700, Fax: + 27.11.884.3809; +27.11.884.0230
- In IFRC Africa Zone: Head of Operations; Dr. Asha Mohammed, Email: [asha.mohammed@ifrc.org](mailto:asha.mohammed@ifrc.org); Tel: +27.11.303.9700; +27.11.303.9721; Fax: +27.11.884.3809; +27.11.884.0230
- In IFRC Southern Africa Region : Regional Disaster Management Coordinator; Farid Abdulkadir Email: [farid.aiywar@ifrc.org](mailto:farid.aiywar@ifrc.org); Phone: Mobile: +27.83.440.0564 Tel: +27.11.303.9700; +27.11.303.9721; Fax: +27.11.884.3809; +27.11.884.0230
- In Geneva: Christine South, Operations Coordinator for Southern Africa region; phone: Tel +41 22 730 4529; fax: +41 22 730 0395; email: [christine.south@ifrc.org](mailto:christine.south@ifrc.org)