

FINAL REPORT



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

GEORGIA: DROUGHT

24 April, 2002

This Final Report is intended for reporting on emergency appeals

Appeal No. No. 31/00

Launched on: 10 October 2000 for 10 months for CHF 4,720,000. Programme extended until December 2001.

DREF Allocated: CHF 100,000

Beneficiaries: 270,000 (220,000 with WFP-procured food, and 50,000 urban-based)

Operations Update No. 3; Period covered: November 2000 - November 2001; last Operation. Update (no. 2) issued 20 August 2001.

“At a glance”

Appeal coverage: 30.3%

Related Appeals: 01.58/2001; The Caucasus (2001 Annual Appeal)

The Disaster/Situation: The appeal launched by the Federation was intended to address the immediate effects of the year 2000 drought on a total of 270,000 of the worst effected beneficiaries (220,000 with WFP-procured food distribution as well as 50,000 urban-based with direct Federation food parcels). With the limited level of support received in response to the Federation’s drought appeal, assistance in the form of food aid was delivered to some 177,600 beneficiaries.

Operational Developments:

Georgia is now one of the poorest nations in the world. The huge economic decline in early years of transition has not yet been reversed. The situation in the country is dominated by crushing poverty, very high unemployment rates and rising prices. Agriculture is still the main source of income and employment for most Georgians, accounting for over half of the jobs in Georgia. Output in the sector, however, is only about 70 percent of its level in 1990. Add to this the changing demography with increasing numbers of elderly people and the decreasing fertility rate leading to a decrease in the proportion of youth and the economically active age groups, and the situation becomes even more bleak. Georgia can claim even less success in tackling poverty and reforming the social support system. Corruption, smuggling and the inability to mobilise tax revenues have reached epidemic proportions.

An already dire economic situation in the country was compounded by dry winter of 2000 followed by a prolonged and severe drought with temperatures into the 40s which damaged 60 to 95 percent of the

cereal crops in southern and eastern Georgia. The lack of rain and snow in winter and spring 2000 seriously reduced the amount of water available for irrigation. Moreover, throughout the country the number of effectively irrigated areas was slowly shrinking as main, secondary and tertiary canals had not been maintained since independence. Cereal and maize harvest in 2000 sharply reduced; only half of the average of the previous year's harvest. All this would not be so devastating if Georgia were still reliably able to import enough cereals from abroad. Output of all other food and fodder crops was also remarkably reduced. The drought effected other sectors of agriculture including potatoes, vegetables, fruits, vineyards, oilseed, fodder and livestock production. Agricultural sector production dropped from 24.5% in 1999 to 21.1% of GDP in 2000. Real GDP growth of 1.9 in 2000 was the lowest rate since 1995, and was below the government's target of 3.8%. In most regions, private vegetable gardens were damaged extensively. The drought also damaged a significant portion of pasturelands; The price for meat was going down regularly for six months (measured by IMF's Monthly Consumer price Index) -- a sure indicator of cattle slaughter and a lack of animal feed due to the drought. Milk production declined. According to FAO, the quantity of domestic vegetables and fruits in the markets also declined significantly compared to previous years. In some markets, tomato and onion prices increased by 100 percent and the price of cheese increased by 40-55 percent compared to the same time previous year. Fodder prices increased fourfold. As a result of increase in food prices caused by the drought, annual consumer price inflation rose from 4.6 % in December 2000 to 5.8% in March 2001.

Combination of inflated market prices and the effects of the drought threatened the survival of the most vulnerable. They remained marginalised and with a continuing fiscal shortfall little was done to assist them. As FAO and WFP note in their assessment, in addition to the small land holders and subsistence farmers, other population groups were directly effected and already vulnerable -- such as pensioners, widows, single-parent households, disabled persons and families without a breadwinner. Although they are entitled to benefits under the government social assistance scheme, the beneficiaries receive erratic payments of their pensions (approximately USD 6 per month, which is lower than the cost of a 'minimum survival' food basket in Georgia -- approximately USD 68 per month - defined by the World Bank) and other benefits. These arrears in payment (15 months for certain persons interviewed) place them in a critical situation in terms of food security. The most recent assessments of the situation conducted by the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (Federation) clearly confirmed that the plight of the Federation's 'traditional' groups of beneficiaries (elderly living alone, IDPs, refugees, handicapped, patients with chronic diseases, female headed households) has not improved and, in many instances, has become even worse.

In July 2000, the new Minister of Agriculture and Food took representatives from embassies and international organisations, including the Federation, to the regions to meet with local authorities and farmers to obtain a complete picture of the drought-effected areas. At the same time, the president of Georgia appealed for assistance from the United Nations. Responding to the situation and the Government request for international assistance, the Federation elaborated a response strategy, which included as a priority food aid to the most vulnerable persons in the country who were considered by the Federation as particularly vulnerable due to the affects of both the current drought as well as Georgia's deteriorating social welfare system.

Red Cross Red Crescent action w

The Federation's Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF) allocation, in addition to other contributions from donors, enabled the Federation to mount a quick and effective response to the crisis. Over the course of the entire operation, the programme focussed on the following activities:

- procuring and distributing food parcels to 31,000 urban-based vulnerable persons in the entire country who were considered by the Federation as particularly vulnerable due to the affects of both the current drought as well as Georgia's deteriorating social welfare system;

- assisting the World Food Programme as an operational partner by distributing WFP-procured bulk food to 146,600 beneficiaries living in the rural southern regions of Samtskhe-Javakheti and Kvemo Kartli, and monitoring the distribution operation. This activity was complementary to the first Federation objective of providing assistance to the 31,000 urban-based beneficiaries.

Objective 1. To prevent or reduce malnutrition by procuring and distributing food parcels to the 50,000 urban-based most vulnerable persons who are prioritized by the Federation as particularly vulnerable due to the affects of both the current drought as well as Georgia's deteriorating social welfare system.

Activities to achieve this objective: The initial plan foresaw four distributions (a total of 200,000 food parcels, each one intended to provide a two-month ration for 50,000 worst affected vulnerable from the urban population). Due to the limited response to the appeal and also to an intensive analysis of the beneficiary lists, one distribution round was carried out to 31,000 urban-based and vulnerable persons. The implementation stages included:

Preparation of the lists of beneficiaries: The lists of beneficiaries submitted by the Ministry of Labour, Health and Social Affairs (MoLHSA) of Georgia were checked and cross-checked by Federation monitors and reduced to 31,000 of the most vulnerable.

The beneficiaries were selected based on the following criteria: destitute urban households headed by elderly people, female headed households with young children, lone elderly and disabled people without family support, facing additional hardship due to drought.

Procurement and delivery of the required food commodities to Georgia: The commodities were an in-kind donation from the Government of Germany. Procurement of the required food commodities (see table below) was arranged by the German Red Cross.

Food Composition Table

Commodity	Ration/2mths. (g)	Ration/day* (g)	Kcals/day	Protein/day (g)	Fat/day (g)
Wheat flour	6'000	100	350	11.5	1.5
Beans	2'000	33.3	111.5	7.32	0.5
Sugar	1'000	16.7	66.8	0	0
Oil	2'000	33.3	294.7	0	33.3
Pasta	2'000	33.3	121.54	4.16	0.4
Tinned fish	1'600	26.7	58.74	5.6	4
Iodized salt	100	1.66	0	0	0
Total	14'700	244.96	1'003.28	28.6	39.7

NB: Table based on 50% RDA of Kcals, protein and fat for the temporary maintenance of an adult who is sedentary or doing only light work. * based on 30 days per month

The Federation arranged for the regional procurement of the packing material, including carton boxes, plastic bags and tape, as well as printing of the leaflets to be included in the boxes.

Warehousing & Packing: The food commodities started to arrive in Georgia in mid January 2001. The last item was delivered on 4 February 2001. Following customs clearance, all goods i.e., 186,000 kg. of wheat flour, 62,250 kg of beans, 61,920 kg of pasta, 62,010 kg of vegetable oil, 124,032 kg of tinned fish, 31,000 kg of sugar, and 3,100 kg of salt were stored in the Federation warehouse in Tbilisi. The stored commodities were then repackaged into 31,000 food parcels by workers contracted by the Federation.

Transport to the Districts: As sufficient numbers of parcels were packed, the food parcels were delivered by Federation trucks to regional distribution points.

Distribution Method Used: The distribution of food parcels was carried out in four cities: Tbilisi (21,285), Rustavi (3,065), Kutaisi (4,787) and Batoumi (1,863) through the MoLHSA staff and volunteers. The distribution started on 8 February 2001 and was completed on 28 February 2001.

Monitoring: The Federation's team of monitors ensured proper planning, implementation and monitoring during and after distributions to make sure that the inputs reached the targeted beneficiaries. In order to achieve this, new levels and modalities of monitoring were worked out and adopted: MoLHSA provided updated beneficiary lists on a regular basis to Federation. After collection, the lists were compared with the Federation's existing data base. Necessary adjustments were made, very few though (e.g., adding the names of new beneficiaries and excluding those who had died or moved, removing double names, removing those not eligible for assistance). The Federation was using 5 % sample for monitoring purposes, although spot checks covered up to 5.5 % at times in selected areas. Thus, 1,715 beneficiaries were monitored before the operation started. In addition, the Federation representatives were present at the distribution points to ensure the project objectives were met. Beneficiaries expressed their satisfaction with the contents of the food parcels. They expressed gratitude for the attention and support during this time. Food provided within the framework of the operation offered the minimum level of sustenance and dignity for this vulnerable group in Georgia.

An injection from the Canadian government through the Red Cross International Aid Trust of Canada and the Government of Norway/Norwegian Red Cross enabled the Federation to further address the outstanding needs of the most vulnerable in Georgia specifically related to the needs of the elderly living alone. The continuation of the assistance permitted the Federation to fill in the gaps in the operation and sustain the most vulnerable amongst those targeted by the appeal. Thanks to this kind contribution, another three rounds of supplementary food were provided to another 3,000 urban-based pensioners, mainly bed ridden and homebound in order to cover their basic food needs.

Procurement and delivery of required commodities to Georgia was arranged by the Logistics Department of the Federation Delegation in compliance with the Federation standard procurement procedures. Suppliers were identified through tender procedure: quotations from three different suppliers were requested, received and compared based upon price, quality, time of delivery, terms of payment and previous experience with the Federation. Commodities i.e. wheat flour (54 MT), sugar (9 MT), vegetable oil (18,000 Lt.), iodized salt (0.95 MT), canned fish (14 MT plus another 16,000 tins), beans (8 MT) and pasta (18 MT), as well as packing material (carton boxes, plastic bags and adhesive tape) started to arrive in Georgia in early July 2001 and were stored in the Federation's central warehouse in Tbilisi. The stored commodities were then repackaged into 9,000 food parcels by workers contracted by the Federation. As sufficient numbers of parcels were packed, the food parcels were delivered to regional offices of the Social Welfare Departments for subsequent hand-over to homebound beneficiaries.

The distribution of food parcels was carried out in six cities: Tbilisi (1,857), Kutaisi (400), Zugdidi (320), Rustavi (80), Batumi (150), Akhaltsikhe (160) and Gori (33) through the MoLHSA staff and volunteers. Thus, 3,000 most vulnerable urban-based pensioners were provided with three rounds of food parcels each consisting of 6 Kg. of wheat flour, 2 Kg. of beans, 1 Kg. of sugar, 2 Kg. of pasta, 0.1 Kg. of iodized salt, 4 cans of fish and 2 Lt. of vegetable oil. The food aid was delivered by government social welfare distributors in Kutaisi, Rustavi, Zugdidi, Gori and Akhaltsikhe while in Batoumi, the distribution was carried out by the Federation's Mobile Technical Team. Distribution commenced on 8 August 2001 and continued through November 2001.

In addition to food aid, the project provided basic health care and social services to the project beneficiaries. Over three months (September-November 2001), Red Cross home carers (10) were visiting 80 lone, home-bound elderly persons on a regular basis offering personal and domestic hygiene, as well as cooking and shopping. The elderly were also supplied with hygiene parcels from the Federation's existing stock. Intensive and continuous monitoring ensured proper implementation of the operation.

Objective 2. As an operational partner with WFP, to distribute bulk food during 8 month period to 220,000 drought victims in the two worst affected southern regions of Georgia - Samtskhe-Javakheti and Kvemo Kartli.

On 31 January 2001, the WFP signed a Letter of Agreement with the Federation within the framework of its project Emergency Operation GRC 6302.00, whereby it intended to supply certain quantities of various commodities for distribution, and pay the landside transport, storage and handling costs associated with the agreed pledged commodities. WFP agreed to have these commodities distributed in support of drought-affected rural vulnerable population in Georgia (143,600 beneficiaries living in the rural southern regions of Samtskhe-Javakheti (Adigeni, Akhaltsikhe, Borjomi, Aspindza, Akhalkalaki and Ninotsminda) and Kvemo Kartli (Tsalka, Tetri Tskaro, Dmanisi, Bolnisi, Marneuli and Gardabani) in a just, impartial, accountable and prudent manner. The Federation agreed to co-operate with WFP as an operational partner by providing services for reception and handling, secondary transport, distribution and monitoring of WFP food aid commodities.

Initially the operation envisaged assistance to 220,000 drought victims, however, the Household Food Economy Survey conducted by the WFP revealed the necessity to reduce the number of beneficiaries and focus particularly on the vulnerable due to the effects of both the drought as well as Georgia's deteriorating social welfare system.

At the beginning of the operation, Federation together with WFP representatives carried out a sensitization campaign on the forthcoming distribution. The campaign included meetings and discussions with respective local authorities about their responsibilities during the operation, including:

- preparation of beneficiaries lists according to the predefined criteria,
- provision of secure warehouse/storage facilities,
- provision of volunteer distributors,
- provision of volunteers for loading/unloading, and
- informing beneficiaries on the nature of the Federation's operation, the target of the beneficiary groups and distribution details.

The Federation adjusted the existing operational infrastructure and expertise to the needs of the large-scale food distribution programme. The logistics infrastructure was upgraded and distribution points were established in cooperation with the government authorities.

The procurement and delivery of food commodities was arranged by WFP. The bulk food started to arrive in early February. In total, 6,767.107 MT of wheat flour, 422.856 MT of beans and 345.250 MT of vegetable oil were delivered to the Federation's central warehouses in Tbilisi and Akhaltsikhe and were then dispatched to distribution points in the regions.

The distribution was carried out according to the pre-established distribution plan. It commenced in early March 2001 and continued through November 2001. Three distribution rounds were carried out from centralized distribution points (i.e., the beneficiaries collected their food supplies from pre-established distribution points, 163 in total: 83 in Kvemo Kartli and 80 - in Samtskhe-Javakheti).

Distribution was carried out by Federation distributors and volunteers identified by the local authorities according to the lists prepared by local committees. The ration cards were filled in and distributed to beneficiaries in advance, before the distribution started in order to make identification of persons on the list easy and less time-consuming during the distribution.

Distribution was made in accordance with food basket and ration level agreed with WFP as follows:

- w** During the first two rounds, a daily ration of 400 grams of iron fortified wheat flour, 30 grams of beans and 20 grams of vegetable oil fortified with vitamin A.
- w** During the last, third round, an increased daily ration of 800 grams of iron fortified wheat flour, 60 grams of beans and 40 grams of vegetable oil fortified with vitamin A.

The beneficiaries had been informed about the quantity and type of food rations to be distributed in advance through leaflets printed by the Federation, as well as changes in the ration level caused by insufficient availability of food aid was discussed with the recipients through distribution committees and/or community leaders. Ration quantities were displayed prominently at the distribution sites, written in the local language so that people know their entitlements.

Within the framework of the operation, in total, 6,691,799 MT of wheat flour, 420,465 MT of beans and 334,749 MT of vegetable oil were supplied to around 138,433 persons. Each beneficiary received a month ration within the first two distribution rounds, i.e., 12 kg of wheat flour, 0.9 kg of beans and 0.6 kg of vegetable oil, while within the last third round - a two-months ration, i.e., 24 kg of wheat flour, 1.8 kg of beans and 1.2 kg of vegetable oil. Commodities were distributed equitably and free of charge, without discrimination.

After each round, the Federation monitors carried out the post-distribution monitoring in both regions to make sure that inputs reached the targeted beneficiaries and project objectives are met. Overall the distribution progressed satisfactorily according to the pre-established distribution plan. Equity in the distribution process was of primary importance and the involvement of people from the disaster-affected population in the project implementation was encouraged. Special efforts were made to ensure the participation of women and balanced male and female representation within the assistance operation. 40-50 per cent (in some regions 100%) of the local committee members, as well as 50 per cent of volunteers involved in the distribution were women. Participation in the food aid project also served to reinforce people's sense of dignity and worth. It generated a sense of community and ownership which helped to ensure the safety and security of those who were receiving food aid, as well as those who were responsible for its distribution. People were involved by disseminating information about the food distributions, and by supporting in crowd control and security.

National Society Capacity Building w

Despite the fact the development of national society is one of the priority areas for the Federation, this aspect of the programme suffered a setback when the Chamber of Control of Georgia initiated an investigation of the Georgian Red Cross Society (GRCS). The Federation temporarily suspended the transfer of funds to the GRCS. On 4 May 2001, 34 staff members of the GRCS resigned from their positions due to disagreements with their National Society leadership. The resigned staff members formed the committee for the Revival of the Georgian Red Cross Society and demanded the resignation of the current President. To prevent any delays in programme implementation, short-term Federation contracts were offered to and signed with some of the above mentioned staff until the situation improves. There was no interruption in the programme implementation.

Last Objective - Coordination

The Federation was maintaining an effective working relationship with its partners. It was an active participant in the planning efforts in response to the damage caused by the severe drought. Special

attention was given to exchanging strategic information with the donor and counterpart agency community. The Federation was attending interagency coordination meetings regarding the distribution of bulk food in the most affected regions. Regular consultations were carried out with local government representatives, and private households. The nature of the Federation's operation and the target of the beneficiary groups and districts were co-ordinated with the MoLHSA, WFP, FAO, Counterpart International and other NGOs. A plan of action established by the Federation was an integral part and complementary to the operations planned by these organisations

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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.

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

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

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INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION OF RED CROSS AND RED CRESCENT SOCIETIES

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Appeal No & title: 31/2000 GEORGIA DROUGHT

Period: year 2000, 2001 up to end February 2002

Project(s): GE561, GE563, GE564

Currency: CHF

I - CONSOLIDATED RESPONSE TO APPEAL

FUNDING	CASH		KIND & SERVICES		TOTAL INCOME
	Contributions	Reallocations	Goods/Services	Personnel	
Appeal budget less Cash brought forward	4,716,085				
TOTAL ASSISTANCE SOUGHT	4,716,085				
<u>Contributions from Donors</u>					
DREF	100,000				100,000
Icelandic Red Cross (DNIS)	4,150				4,150
Monaco Red Cross (DNMC)	6,987				6,987
Switzerland - Private Donors (DPCH)	2,000				2,000
Finnish Red Cross (DNFI)	75,937				75,937
Swedish Govt.via Swedish Red Cross (DGNS)	85,750				85,750
Canadian Govt.via Canadian Red Cross (DGN)	111,795				111,795
Norwegian Govt.via Norwegian Red Cro (DGN)	137,985				137,985
Norwegian Red Cross (DNNO)	15,332				15,332
WFP Agreement Georgia Drought (DH0528)	417,309				417,309
German Govt.via German Red Cross (DGNDE)	39,361				39,361
German Red Cross (DNDE)	24,732				24,732
German Govt			429,075		429,075
<u>Outstanding pledges</u>					
WFP	25,000				25,000
<u>Refund to be finalised</u>					
German RC/Govt - DEM 14,834	-12,610				-12,610
TOTAL	1,033,729		429,075		1,462,804

II - Balance of funds

Opening balance	
CASH INCOME Rcv'd	1,033,729
CASH EXPENDITURE	-1,007,377

CASH BALANCE	26,351

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III - Budget analysis / Breakdown of expenditures

Description	Appeal Budget	CASH Expenditures	KIND & SERVICES		TOTAL Expenditures	Variance
			Goods/services	Personnel		
<u>SUPPLIES</u>						
Shelter & Construction						
Clothing & Textiles						
Food/Seeds	2,737,100	128,149	429,075		557,224	2,179,876
Water						
Medical & First Aid						
Teaching materials						
Utensils & Tools						
Other relief supplies	228,000	12,586			12,586	215,414
Sub-Total	2,965,100	140,736	429,075		569,811	2,395,289
<u>CAPITAL EXPENSES</u>						
Land & Buildings						
Vehicles						
Computers & Telecom equip.	16,370	519			519	15,851
Medical equipment						
Other capital expenditures	6,200	215			215	5,985
Sub-Total	22,570	734			734	21,836
<u>TRANSPORT & STORAGE</u>	607,934	295,058			295,058	312,876
Sub-Total	607,934	295,058			295,058	312,876
<u>PERSONNEL</u>						
Personnel (delegates)	465,932	30,724			30,724	435,208
Personnel (local staff)		325,338			325,338	-325,338
Training						
Sub-Total	465,932	356,062			356,062	109,870
<u>GENERAL & ADMINISTRATION</u>						
Assessment/Monitoring/experts	23,480	14,389			14,389	9,091
Travel & related expenses	4,000	4,311			4,311	-311
Information expenses	14,400	1,903			1,903	12,497
Administrative expenses	93,900	61,306			61,306	32,594
External workshops & Seminars						
Sub-Total	135,780	81,909			81,909	53,871
<u>PROGRAMME SUPPORT</u>						
Programme management	318,006	81,444			81,444	236,561
Technical services	95,194	24,385			24,385	70,810
Professional services	105,570	27,050			27,050	78,519
Sub-Total	518,769	132,879			132,879	385,890
Operational provisions						
Transfers to National Societies						
TOTAL BUDGET	4,716,085	1,007,377	429,075		1,436,452	3,279,633

Consumption rate: Expenditures versus income 98%
Expenditures versus budget 30%