

EMERGENCY APPEAL



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

TAJIKISTAN: FOOD DEFICIT

Appeal no:26/01
21 August 2001

***THIS APPEAL SEEKS CHF 6,795,218
IN CASH, KIND AND SERVICES
TO ASSIST 130,000 BENEFICIARIES FOR 9 MONTHS***

The Situation

Tajikistan is facing a second year of severe food shortages. The country has experienced a fourth consecutive year of very low rainfall. This has compounded serious structural problems that have existed since the break-up of the former Soviet Union which led to the loss of external inputs and subsidies.

Tajikistan has not been able to meet its own needs for wheat, its main staple food. Only 7 percent of the country is arable land, the rest being high mountainous region. Dysfunctional irrigation systems and unclear policies on land ownership and use have also hit production. In addition, Tajikistan inherited former Soviet agricultural policies that favoured the production of cotton, the country's current main source of income.

Almost five years of civil war and a chronic lack of resources has hit social and economic life. Health care and the overall social safety net have been undermined. The country remains the poorest of all former Soviet republics.

Last year, Tajikistan was affected by a drought which caused a massive shortage of wheat. As such, the president called for international assistance and two assessments - one by the World Food Programme (WFP) and the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO), and another by a Federation Field Assessment and Coordination Team (FACT) - were carried out. The latter resulted in the Federation conducting a relief operation to assist 130,000 people with food, and provide aid in seeds, public health and water and sanitation.

In May 2001 another major dry spell caused a second consecutive crop failure. On 23 May, the president again appealed to the international community for assistance in food. Between 19 June and 3 July, the WFP and FAO completed a crop and food supply assessment. The report indicates that the average rainfall in March and April - months critical for wheat growing - was only 44 percent of the long-time average. The estimated total cereal output is 303,000 tonnes, 15 percent lower than the WFP/FAO revised 2000 estimate, and 36 percent lower than the latest five year average. The reported food gap is 341,000 tonnes of wheat, taking into account estimated commercial import and pledged food aid. As such, the WFP and FAO recommend a targeted food assistance between October 2001 and June 2002 for one million vulnerable people, particularly those in remote border areas and mountainous regions.

The Needs

Immediate Needs

After a request from the Red Crescent Society of Tajikistan (RCST), the Federation deployed a FACT between 29 July and 7 August, to assess needs and coping mechanisms. It also aimed to support the RCST and the Federation delegation to coordinate the disaster response. The FACT visited districts that were part of the RCST and Federation drought emergency response last year. It collected agricultural output and health information, interviewed farmers, and visited private households, local markets, pharmacies, and local authorities. Most districts visited this year were also visited by the FACT in 2000, which allowed wheat production comparisons to be made.

Indications are that wheat production is 20 percent down on last year's reduced levels. In most cases, rain-fed land, mostly used for the wheat growing, has yielded no harvest. It has not even returned the quantity of the seeds planted. At the same time, irrigated land has also suffered considerable crop failure because of reduced water in rivers and canals, which further compounds the effects of malfunctioning irrigation systems.

Macro level initiatives and interventions by the Tajik Government and its international partners, including humanitarian organizations, have failed to arrest an increase in poverty and suffering. Coping capacity at household level, already weak last year, has been further undermined. Levels of chronic malnutrition and anaemia continue to worsen.

Most households are selling livestock and essential household assets - such as doors, windows and parts of the roof - so that they can buy food and seeds. Food reserves are often non-existent and the winter has yet to begin. Many people are in debt after borrowing food or seeds to prepare this year's harvest. People are unable to accumulate essential non-food items, because all resources are used to secure basic food for the coming winter. Children are most often the first to suffer. The FACT assessment found that most children of vulnerable families do not have winter clothes or shoes, and are therefore unable to attend school.

The low rainfall has compounded several structural factors causing acute shortages in supplies of water for irrigation and human consumption. These include aging systems, low maintenance of canals and pumps, inability to pay high electricity bills, lack of fertilizers, and outdated irrigation techniques. As a result, harvests on irrigated land have failed and the consumption of unsafe water has caused the spread of waterborne diseases and further reduced the generally low hygiene practices in rural areas.

Food insecurity can be identified at three levels:

- the lack of *availability* of sufficient wheat,
- a reduced *access* to food by vulnerable groups (up to 20% of the population),
- and problems related to *utilization* of food that can be accessed.

The poor health of large parts of the population reflects the latter factor. There exists high incidence of diarrhoeal diseases, typhoid and tuberculosis, which all reduce the capacity of people to fully benefit from available food.

The Federation is addressing the long-term aspects of the humanitarian disaster in Tajikistan - such as the creation of a high level of vulnerability and lack of ability to cope with the effects of drought - through ongoing preparedness activities and the food security programme of the Federation and RCST. Organizational development will also be strengthened through Federation programmes over the next two years. Projects include small-scale food security initiatives targeting small farmers, relief assistance to the most vulnerable such as the urban poor, community-based water and sanitation activities, and health promotion.

The Proposed Operation

Objectives and Activities planned w

The overall aim of the operation is threefold, to improve the:

- *availability of basic food items* through procurement and distribution of wheat flour, vegetable oil and iodized salt;
- *access of the most vulnerable groups to food*, through beneficiary targeting and monitoring; and
- *utilization of food*, through public health promotion and small-scale water and sanitation activities at the community-level.

Relief distributions w

Objective 1: To provide 130,000 people (approximately 22,000 households) with essential food items for six months.

A total of 9,750 tonnes of wheat flour, 520,000 litres of vegetable oil and 130 tonnes of iodized salt will be distributed in three rounds over six months. Each beneficiary will receive a full ration of 75 kg of wheat flour, 4 litres of oil and 1 kg of iodized salt, split in three rounds. The food items will be partly provided by WFP and pre-positioned in operational areas, following the finalization of a partnership agreement.

Makhallas, the local authorities closest to the community and most aware of the vulnerability of each group, will select beneficiaries. The *Makhallas* will receive a refresher course on the selection criteria, the concept of food-for-work, as well as dissemination of Red Cross/Red Crescent principles and minimum standards in humanitarian response. At the same time, refresher training will be organized for RCST field monitors and relief officers on pre and post-distribution monitoring as well as basic relief procedures. The seminar will also include new monitors.

Seven districts have been selected for food distribution: Ghanchi, New Matchoh, Zafarabad and Shakhristan in the northern region of Sughd (former Leninabad), and Dangara, Sovietsky and Farkhor of the Khatlon region, in the south of the country. Twenty percent of the total population of each district will be assisted with food. The size of the targeted population and selection of operational areas are in line with the RCST's and Federation's drought emergency operation 2000-2001, ensuring continuity of assistance.

The selection of beneficiaries will be made according to the following criteria:

- 1) People with access to small plots of land, with less than three heads of livestock and without an alternative source of income;
- 2) Families with more than three children;
- 3) Families headed by women; and
- 4) Elderly without family support.

Targeting will focus on vulnerable households, not individuals. Each member of the selected household will receive a full ration of food, except for children under the age of two.

Bread is the essential, if not the only, food item in vulnerable households and wheat flour is consumed in larger proportions than the Federation standard of 146 kg per person per year. The assessment indicated that up to 250 kg per person per year can be consumed, if no other food items are accessible. The operation will consciously limit itself to a 50% (six months) distribution of 146kg, not 250kg, to avoid harming remaining coping and solidarity mechanisms of the target community. The smaller food needs of children will be compensated by increased needs of adults in households.

Out of the total 130,000 beneficiaries, 10 percent will be selected by the community for food-for-work activities to rehabilitate water sources and supply systems for drinking and small-scale irrigation. For more details, refer to the 'water and sanitation' chapter below.

Objective 2: To assist 65,000 schoolchildren between 7 and 15 years of age with winter clothes and shoes, to protect their health and enable them to continue their education.

The children will be selected from households targeted for food distribution. Second-hand winter clothes will be donated in-kind and transported to operational areas, while the shoes will be procured regionally. The distribution will be carried out in one cycle before winter together with the first or second food distribution round, pending the final distribution schedule.

It is expected that this will increase school attendance during winter. Use of donated clothes and shoes, as well as school attendances, will be monitored.

Health w

Objective: To improve community health through education, better hygiene and safe drinking water in health facilities.

A total of 264 Red Crescent volunteers, trained during the last year's drought operation, will carry out public health campaigns in their respective communities. These will cover the prevention of water-borne diseases, safe use of water, as well as hygiene and sanitation practices. The campaigns will be designed in cooperation with local health facilities to address the needs of each community. Further volunteer training on specific topics, as well as production of public health information material, will be conducted through the Federation's and RCST's annual health programme.

A total of 1,000 primary health care facilities - known as *feldershky akushersky punkt* (FAP) - in the north and south will each receive one water-filter, a six-month supply of oral rehydration salts, and a six-month supply of soap. This will enhance the extremely limited capacity of health institutions as well as promote the safe use of drinking water and help rehydration treatments.

Activities should help reduce the incidence of water-borne diseases. Levels of illness and the campaign's impact will be checked and adjusted if need be. Monitoring will be carried out through visits to households and institutions, focus group interviews with housewives and schoolchildren, as well as meetings with health officials and community leaders.

Water-sanitation w

Objective: To improve people's access to safe drinking water and small-scale irrigation through food-for-work activities.

This will be linked with the food distribution. Ten percent of food beneficiaries will be selected by the community to carry out water projects in the communities. In the seven operational areas, communities with unacceptable drinking water sources will be identified. A survey of drinking water sources and small-scale irrigation systems which can be rehabilitated will be carried out so that the Federation and RCST water and sanitation team can implement relevant projects. Food-for-work activities will be planned in cooperation with the local authorities. The work will be carried out before and/or after winter. Field monitors will disseminate information on appropriate use of water, both for human consumption and irrigation.

By the end of the operation, communities should have increased water supplies for household consumption as well as rehabilitated and cleaned irrigation systems and canals. Awareness of, and practice in, the safe use and management of water should also have improved. Monitoring of impact will be through interviews with beneficiaries and local authorities, visits to fields and households, levels of water-borne diseases and survey of crops on plots of land where irrigation systems have been rehabilitated.

National Society Capacity Building w

The Federation's 2000 drought emergency operation created an opportunity for the RCST to develop the capacity of its two regional branches which had not been involved in large-scale relief activities before. To assist the Kulyab and Sughd branches, the Federation set up two field offices. They comprised expatriate staff, RCST drought programme coordinators, as well as field officers and monitors. Individuals were

recruited and trained in relief operation skills, such as the beneficiary selection process, monitoring, distribution and warehousing. In addition, over 250 volunteers were recruited and trained in public health campaigns. The Federation and RCST headquarters' relief teams jointly coordinated operations.

The capacity developed last year will be utilized for this operation. There will also be further refresher training, organized for monitors and field officers, as well as the possible recruitment of additional monitoring teams.

The trained RC volunteers will continue to implement public health campaigns in their communities. They will also be provided with further training through the Federation's and RCST's annual health programme, covering the whole country. It is expected that operational National Society branches will assume more responsibility in operation management, and the Federation delegation will provide support.

Finally, this operation will be closely linked to the RCST priority programme areas, as identified in its Country Assistance Strategy. These are:

- Disaster response - the RCST will continue to play an active role in managing most aspects of the operation, such as beneficiary selection verification, monitoring, storage and distribution.
- Disaster preparedness - in view of the persistent nature of the disaster, the RCST will establish an early warning system to predict agricultural output, analyze coping capacities and plan appropriate assistance.
- Health - this component of the emergency appeal is directly linked with the RCST's ongoing health programmes, supporting the shift from curative to preventive health care through public health education.
- Promotion of humanitarian values - the RCST will continue to promote Red Cross/Red Crescent principles and values, and raise awareness of its mandate and activities. It will cooperate with local authorities, as well as with other humanitarian organizations on several other issues.
- Organizational and branch development - the decentralization of the management structure from headquarters to branches will continue. This will occur with the building of capacity at branch level, especially in terms of the volunteer-base.

Coordination w

Last year's drought emergency operation resulted from the successful cooperation of partners, including the government of Tajikistan, UN agencies and NGOs. This cooperation will continue to ensure support of all humanitarian partners, coverage of the most vulnerable regions, as well as cooperation of local authorities in the beneficiary selection process and other aspects of project implementation.

To achieve this, the International Federation and RCST will formulate cooperation agreements with the local authorities (*hukumats*) of the regions of Sughd and Khatlon. These will define each party's responsibilities during implementation. A partnership agreement with WFP is expected to be reached to continue cooperation on distribution of WFP-allocated food. Regular inter-agency food coordination meetings will continue to achieve harmony on issues such as beneficiary selection criteria, size and quality of food rations, the appropriate approach to rehabilitation.

Monitoring and Evaluation w

In respect to relief distribution, the system of pre and post-distribution monitoring will be maintained:

- Pre-distribution monitoring of at least 20 percent of beneficiaries proposed by the local authorities will be carried out by the RCST and Federation's monitors and field officers. After experiences during last year's operation when 15 to 20 percent of the lists were verified, monitoring should be increased to ensure more accurate targeting. However, in view of the limited time frame, the original requirement of 20 percent has not been formally increased.
- Post-distribution monitoring of the beneficiary households will provide information on impact, both in terms of the length of its use and appropriateness.

In addition, field officers and monitors will constantly monitor beneficiary households. This will establish trends - such as in coping capacities, alternative sources of income, health, school attendance, and future crops - which will lead to a better evaluation of population vulnerability. Monitoring will also determine the effectiveness of food-for-work projects and health campaigns in communities, and any lessons learned.

By the end of the year, an internal mid-term review will be conducted. The findings will be used to adapt the second phase if needed.

In the spring 2002, the Federation delegation, jointly with the RCST, will carry out an early warning evaluation of the agricultural season 2002 for the areas served by this operation. This will be done through a comparative assessment of wheat planted, estimated harvest, availability of water for irrigation, local food prices and alternative sources of income. The evaluation will enable the Federation and RCST to plan mid-term assistance and address issues related to rehabilitation and development.

An external evaluation of the programme will be conducted at the end of the operation.

Capacity of the National Society w

The RCST has developed a considerable capacity to implement large-scale relief operations. While before last year, this capacity was mainly present at headquarters as most disaster response projects have been implemented in Dushanbe and the surrounding Rayons of Republican Subordination (RRS), last year's drought operation was used to develop NS branch capacities in the north and south of the country. Staff and volunteers were recruited and trained and directly involved in the operation.

The coming operation will be carried out in the same areas, where National Society relief capacity already exists. The intention is to strengthen it further, through additional training and a more active role of the branches in management. The necessity for more National Society field officers and monitors will be considered, in view of the increased monitoring requirements. Expertise will continue to be shared between headquarters and branch programme coordinators. A stronger link between the emergency operation and RCST ongoing activities will be created, especially in health and water and sanitation.

Present Capacity of the Federation w

Last autumn, the Federation's delegation in Tajikistan set up a field structure to carry out the 2000 drought emergency operation. This included opening two field offices and recruiting additional expatriate and national staff. The same structure will remain in place, with field offices in Kulyab (south) and Khujand (north). Each will be managed by one relief delegate and the existing national staff. The health and water and sanitation components will be implemented by the delegation's health coordinator and water and sanitation delegate (recruitment in process). The overall emergency operation will be managed by a relief co-ordinator in Dushanbe. Accordingly, additional expatriate staff needed for the operation are:

- drought programme coordinator;
- two relief delegates;
- water and sanitation delegate (also to cover delegation's annual programme);

The existing administrative and logistical capacities, including transport and warehousing, will remain functional. Any further needs will be estimated after the final agreement with WFP on the food-distribution pipeline.

Budget summary

See Annex 1 for details.

For further details please contact: Susanna Soderstrom, Federation Desk Officer, Phone: 41 22 730 4424; Fax: 41 22 733 0395; e-mail: soderstr@ifrc.org.

All International Federation Assistance 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.

In line with the Minimum Reporting Standards, the first operations update on this appeal will be issued within 30-days of the launch and the second will be issued over the course of the operation; a final narrative and financial report will be issued no later than 90 days after the end of the operation.

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 programs are outlined on the Federation web site.

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

Jean Ayoub
Director
Disaster Management and Coordination

Didier J. Cherpitel
Secretary General

		ANNEX 1
<u>BUDGET SUMMARY</u>		APPEAL No. 26/2001
Tajikistan Food Deficit		
TYPE		VALUE
RELIEF NEEDS		IN CHF
Shelter & construction		16'776
Clothing & textiles		1'209'461
Foods & seeds		2'283'890
Water		566'000
Medical & first aid		0
Teaching materials		4'500
Utensils & tools		8'000
Other relief supplies		85'200
TOTAL RELIEF NEEDS		4'173'827
<u>CAPITAL EQUIPMENT</u>		182'061
<u>PROGRAMME SUPPORT</u>		
Programme management (automatic calculation)		458'202
Technical support (automatic calculation)		137'161
Professional services (automatic calculation)		152'111
<u>TRANSPORT STORAGE & VEHICLE COSTS</u>		409'103
<u>PERSONNEL</u>		926'252
<u>ADMINISTRATIVE & GENERAL SERVICES</u>		
Travel & related expenses		29'900
Information expenses		82'700
Administrative & general expenses		173'776
Expert fees		70'125
TOTAL OPERATIONAL NEEDS		2'621'391
TOTAL APPEAL CASH, KIND, SERVICES		6'795'218
LESS AVAILABLE RESOURCES (-)		
NET REQUEST		6'795'218