

# OPERATIONS UPDATE



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

## ***SYRIA (HAMA REGION) DAM COLLAPSE/ FLOODING***

3 September, 2002

*This Ops Update is intended for reporting on emergency appeals.*

*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 178 countries. For more information: [www.ifrc.org](http://www.ifrc.org)*

*Appeal No. 15/02*

*Launched on 06-06-2002 for CHF 581,000 for 1 month for 8,000 beneficiaries.*

*Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF) Allocated: 200,000 CHF*

*Beneficiaries: 8,000*

*Operations Update No. 1; Period covered: 6 June - 15 July, 2002*

### **IN BRIEF**

*Appeal coverage: 16.8%*

*Related Appeals: Middle East & North Africa 2002 regional programmes, no. 01.54/2002*

*Outstanding needs: CHF 483,669*

### **Operational Developments w**

At 15:40 on 4 June 2002 the Zaizon dam located in the north-western part of Syria collapsed. The flash-flood wiped away Zaizon village and thundered through 4 more villages (Msheek, Al-Ziyara, Quarqoor and Tal-Wast) before reaching the Orontes river. The population of Zaizon village had seen the cracks developing in the dam and managed to gather on a high ridge. For the neighbouring villages the flash flood was fully unexpected, resulting in 21 deaths. In Zaizon a total of 251 houses were completely destroyed, with 129 partly damaged. Within two days the Syrian Arab Red Crescent (SARC) had erected a tent camp and 180 volunteers and 20 staff members to run the camp during the first month. It was subsequently handed over to the government for management.

### **Coordination w**

Local authorities managed the overall co-ordination of the operation.

### **Red Cross and Red Crescent action w**

Thirty SARC volunteers erected Zaizon tent-camp (135 tents) within 48-hours after the disaster and the SARC ran the camp for the first month. Volunteers and staff stayed in the camp, sleeping in tents with those affected by the disaster. The volunteers distributed all the goods (delivered from the governmental warehouses) in the camp and were involved in the distribution in the villages as well. From the first day onwards health education

e.g. cleaning of the camp took place. After one month the management of the camp was handed over to the local authorities, the emergency phase was over and the volunteers returned to their schools and work. However the staff of Hama branch is still visiting the area every two days in order to follow up on new developing needs.

### Red Cross and Red Crescent Society w

Within a few hours after the disaster volunteers of the Hama/Edlib branches were in the area distributing food to the beneficiaries. In the same night two SARC trucks arrived at the Hama branch with the first load of tents and blankets. In total 20 full-time staff members, and 180 volunteers from all over the country were involved in the operation. The Hama and Edlib branch were in charge of the operation with heavy support from the national headquarters. They did a very good job considering the fact that this was the first disaster they were involved in. The beneficiaries thought highly of the work of the SARC.

### Objectives, activities and results w

- ◆ Emergency support by identification and classification of the 8,000 beneficiaries.
- ◆ Provision of essential shelter, food, kitchen-utensils and blankets.
- ◆ Initial period of support for one month subject to amendments following detailed assessment.
- ◆ Food parcels will be procured and distributed by the SARC in Damascus or nearby towns.

### Health and care w

Twenty persons were initially injured during the flash flood. The regional health delegate visited the area three days after the disaster and found no signs of health threats emerging. In the initial phase the SARC made available two ambulances with staff for the whole area, however they did not need to go into action. The SARC received medicines from the United Arab Emirates and the Turkish Red Crescent. The MoH has erected a prefab cabin in Zaizon tent-camp and a first-aid team and ambulance are available 24-hours per day.

### Water and sanitation w

In Zaizon tent-camp the Civil Defence provided the first mobile latrines and UNICEF built latrines and showers. During the first days after the disaster water was trucked into the camp by the government, but within a few days a water network was in place alongside the new tarmac road. In the other villages the affected persons used the latrines of their neighbours and the water network was still functioning

### Relief distribution of food and basic non-food items w

Due to considerable publicity together with the Emergency Appeal a significant amount of relief goods have been sent by various governments and National Societies. The following organisations also donated funds directly to the SARC: French Red Cross - 7,000 USD; Netherlands Red Cross - 40,000 USD; Swiss Government - 25,000 USD; and the Kuwait Red Crescent - 50,000 USD. The governments of: Morocco, Algeria, Kuwait, Libya, Italy and Iraq donated goods directly to the Syrian government. The following goods were received in kind by the SARC:

RC of	tents	blankets	medical supplies	oil (lt.)	sugar (kg)	rice (kg)	tea (kg)	others
Turkey	200	1,000	3,308 kg	3,000	3,000	3,000		3,00 kg biscuits
UAE	100	1,000						
Algiers	200	3,972	4,890 kg	900	1,000	3,000	460	920 kg pasta
Lebanon								100 mattresses
Egypt	100	6,250						
Qatar								Generator clothes
Austria		4,800						
Bahrain	300	100 rolls + 116 cartons	1,86 cartons	334 cartons	2,000 bags			200 bags flour

								143 cartons shoes + clothes
Palestine RC/Syria								22 beds + mattresses 500 kg food

Due to existing national legislation, all goods donated to and received by the SARC went straight to government storage, and the Federation has no way of confirming or tracing the distribution or current location. At the moment the SARC, supported by the Regional Delegation, is in discussion with the government if some of the goods received can be reallocated to the SARC.

Statistics on the total distribution are not available as many organisations, companies and individuals distributed directly by themselves to the population. The local authorities cannot provide any statistics either, they just distributed to everyone in need. However since the SARC was in charge of all distribution during the first month in Zaizon tent-camp and organised some distributions in the stricken villages, the following preliminary statistics can be provided:

Four villages in Hama-area were hit: Zaizon (800 inhabitants), Msheek (625), Al-Ziyara (4,659), and Quarqoor (2,366). In total around 3,394 beneficiaries have been identified and received the following assistance:

- Zaizon: 350 blankets, 1062 sets of clothes, 562 pairs of shoes, 800 shampoo and soap, 200 heaters and canisters, 4,000 kg of food, 400 chairs, 10 tables, 780 glasses, 110 tents, 15 boxes of kitchen-sets.
- Msheek: 200 blankets, 107 mattresses, 670 sets of clothes, 861 pairs of shoes, 212 shampoo and soap, 282 kitchen material, 1,000 kg of food, 190 tents (+ area around Msheek).
- Al-Ziyara: 714 kg food, 208 sets of clothes, 271 pairs of shoes, 166 mattresses and pillows, 500 blankets.
- Quarqoor: 166 mattresses and pillows, 208 sets of clothes, 271 pairs of shoes, 95 shampoo and soap, 714 kg of food, 95 pieces of soap.
- Three villages in the Edlib-area were hit: Jiser al Shogour (45,000), Al Zeyadieh (1,500), Iz Marin (3,000). The beneficiaries received aid consisting of: food, clothes, medicines, blankets, shoes, and 2,000 kg chloride.
- Jiser al Shogour: 300 blankets, 159 kitchen-sets, 50 tents, 257 sets of clothes, 283 pairs of shoes, 42 shampoo and soap, 41 heaters and canisters, 27 mattresses, and 1,341 kg of food.
- Al Zeyadieh: food, clothes, medicines, shoes.
- Iz Marin: food, clothes, medicines, shoes.

**Shelter w**

On 4-5 June two trucks from the SARC headquarters arrived in the Hama branch with 100 tents and 150 blankets. In the meantime people slept with relatives or even strangers in nearby villages or in the open air. On the fifth two additional trucks arrived with another 200 tents, 350 blankets and 300 kitchen sets.

On 6 June the tents were erected with the aid of 30 volunteers on exactly the same spot as Zaizon village and two days later the authorities finished the tarmac road. Each tent had electricity, and a water network was established with one tap per five tents.

Zaizon with 135 tents for 92 families (800 persons) is the only camp that currently exists. The numbers remain an estimate because some Bedouin families were in the area. Five prefab cabins have been erected for the MoH, police and administration. In the other villages a total of 165 tents were distributed, mainly in Msheek because it was second-hardest hit. Here the people live half of the time in tents and half of the time with their neighbours or relatives.

Soon after the disaster the government started to build a new village of 500 houses close to Zaizon, but on higher ground. The houses are meant for the people in the entire affected area with totally or partially destroyed houses. The houses should be ready before wintertime. Each house will measure 400 m<sup>2</sup> of land, of which 127 m<sup>2</sup> will be living area. The future of the inhabitants of the less destroyed houses is still unsure.

**Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement -- Principles and Initiatives w**

The Fundamental Principles have been followed, issues of diversity and gender or HIV/AIDS were not in direct focus for those four weeks.

### **National Society Capacity Building w**

This disaster was the first of its kind for the national society, and from that point of view they responded extremely well. 180 volunteers, many already trained in a DP program (in a bilateral program with the Turkish Red Crescent and through the Federation), left their jobs and studies and hastened to the disaster area. Twenty full-time members from the Hama and Erbid branches and the national headquarters in Damascus were involved day and night. However during this operation it became clear that the SARC is, with only four full-time employees, severely understaffed. Therefore two more co-ordinators on disaster preparedness and health should be employed and trained. Distribution, overall logistics, co-operation and reporting should be improved on national level as well as the local level, and of course further training on disaster preparedness, including how to perform assessments, should take place. A workshop on this latest subject is planned for October together with the national societies of Iraq and Jordan. The SARC president has asked the Federation for further support. On 19/20 August the Deputy Head of Regional Delegation and the Field Delegate will visit a SARC executive board meeting and discuss with them the future capacity building strategy of the society.

### **Federation Delegation w**

Within three days after the disaster the Regional Delegation Amman had two delegates (Information and Health) on the spot accompanied by the regional French bilateral delegate. The regional finance/administration delegate spent two days in Damascus to explain to the SARC finance-officer the financial, logistic and reporting procedures. A landcruiser from the Regional Delegation was made available for the Hama branch for 2 weeks as they did not have enough means of transportation. A Federation relief / liaison delegate stayed in Syria from 11 till 22 June in order to assist the SARC and monitor Federation inputs and provide feedback. The regional field delegate stayed in Syria from 21 - 26 July and assisted the SARC in drafting this report.

### **Advocacy/Public Information w**

The regional information officer conducted two missions to the site to help the SARC answer information requests from the local and international media. Interviews were given to Syrian television in the days following the disaster; local newspapers published extensive articles about the relief efforts by the National Society and its volunteers. A press release was issued by the Federation to publicize its appeal for supporting the victims. Two stories about the SARC response were published on the Federation's web site, and two more in Al-Ittihad, the monthly Arabic- and English-language newsletter of the regional delegation.

### **Outstanding needs w**

During the reporting period a total of around 150,000 USD (including DREF money) in cash was received by the Federation for this operation. During the first days of the operation considerable quantities of in-kind assistance arrived, and therefore cash donations were used mainly to cover internal transportation, personal, administrative, coordination, and other costs. Around 80,000 USD has been spent, and the SARC has proposed extending the operation to disburse the remainder on activities related to educational assistance (e.g. school-uniforms and material) and hygiene articles for babies and women.

The SARC is also in need of a 4 WD vehicle, a minibus, some computers and two more staff members to start and co-ordinate Disaster Preparedness and Health programmes, in line with Strategy 2010. The SARC has also requested technical assistance through an OD delegate to undertake a thorough assessment of the branches and to provide advice for the future.

*For further details please contact: Evgeni Parfenov, Phone: 41 22 730 4325; Fax: 41 22 733 03 95; email: parfenov@ifrc.org*

*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. 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 programmes are outlined on the Federation's website. For further information concerning Federation operations in this or other countries, please access the Federation website at <http://www.ifrc.org>.*

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Syria - dam collapse, flooding						ANNEX 1
APPEAL No. 15/2002		PLEDGES RECEIVED				30.08.2002
DONOR	CATEGORY	QUANTITY	UNIT	VALUE CHF	DATE	COMMENT
<b>CASH</b>						
REQUESTED IN APPEAL CHF ----->				<b>581'000</b>		<b>TOTAL COVERAGE 16.8%</b>
AMERICAN - PRIVATE DONOR		10'000	USD	16'117	06.06.2002	SYRIAN ARAB RCS NAT. STAFF
CANADIAN - GOVT/CIDA/IHA		49'500	CAD	51'163	17.06.2002	
JAPANESE - RC		12'000	USD	17'688	14.08.2002	
LIBYAN - RC				5'000	11.06.2002	
MONACO - RC		5'000	EUR	7'363	06.06.2002	
SUB/TOTAL RECEIVED IN CASH				97'331	CHF	16.8%
<b>KIND AND SERVICES (INCLUDING PERSONNEL)</b>						
DONOR	CATEGORY	QUANTITY	UNIT	VALUE CHF	DATE	COMMENT
SUB/TOTAL RECEIVED IN KIND/SERVICES				0	CHF	0.0%
<b>ADDITIONAL TO APPEAL BUDGET</b>						
DONOR	CATEGORY	QUANTITY	UNIT	VALUE CHF	DATE	COMMENT
SUB/TOTAL RECEIVED				0	CHF	