

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

SRI LANKA: DROUGHT

15 August 2002

This Ops Update is intended for reporting on emergency appeals.

Appeal No. 18/2002

*Launched on 1 July 2002 for CHF 2,457,000 for 9 months. Budget revised to CHF 1,748,000
Disaster Relief Emergency Funds (DREF) Allocated: CHF 200,000*

Beneficiaries: 18,000

*Operations Update No. 1; Period covered: 1 July - 1 August 2002; Next Ops Update (no. 2)
expected 30 October 2002*

"At a Glance"

Appeal coverage: 16.6%%

Related Appeals: Sri Lanka Annual Appeal no. 01.29/2002

Outstanding needs: CHF 1,458,500

Operational Developments:

The Sri Lanka Red Cross Society (SLRCS) and the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies have continued to survey the most affected pockets of Hambantota District. They have also shared information with government and other international and national NGOs, agencies and missions in an attempt to remain updated on the humanitarian situation.

There has been no rainfall recorded in any of the most affected Divisions during July, and in some cases since April. As other agencies complete their own assessments, they are beginning to share Red Cross and Red Crescent concerns regarding the impact on rice and other crops if there is no rainfall in August. An FAO assessment released in mid-July reported that large areas of Yala season rice (i.e. the rice expected to be harvested from the early rains in 2002) are already facing water shortages, this rice will be unable to grow to maturity unless two full months of rainfall occurs. The report notes that unless there are some showers in late July and August, some of these and other crops will have little yield.

A UNICEF report regarding a field visit in July to assess the needs of women and children as a result of the prolonged dry spell, also states that in the worst affected areas only 50% of land will be able to be cultivated this year. The report also notes that the groundwater table is depleting, and that most of the rivers and reservoirs, which are sources of drinking and irrigation water, are drying up. The report also mentions that until now water tankering has been very irregular due to logistical problems, and that if rain water harvesting systems are introduced effectively they could service families for up to 5 months. The report confirmed that some children in the worst areas could not cope with activities in school, and often did not have enough to eat at home.

The first donations to the Federation appeal from the global DREF fund and from the Swedish, Korean, Monaco, and Spanish Red Cross Societies (the latter coming as a bilateral donation to SLRCS to support the

appeal objectives) have been received. The appeal has received a positive response and indications suggest that further parties may be interested in contributing. Further donations are urgently required if the appeal is to be able to sustain the supply of urgently needed food rations and water supplies to the communities living in the worst long-term drought-affected pockets in Hambantota District.

These first donations have enabled the SLRCS to complete the survey and identification of the first 1000 most affected families in selected Gram Niladari Divisions in Hambantota Division. Tendering for food supplies and water distribution logistics has been completed, and the 10 schools to provide the locations for the construction of long term community water storage tanks have also been selected.

The Federation's regional Disaster Response Delegate visited the SLRCS national headquarters and the Hambantota branch in late July to support the setting up of the water storage tank construction programme and to assist in the food procurement process.

Red Cross Red Crescent action w

The SLRCS and International Federation launched the appeal at a press conference on 1 July in Colombo ensuring the humanitarian situation received wide coverage and attention in the . A meeting for diplomatic heads of mission was also convened in Geneva by the Federation's Secretariat. The National Secretary of the SLRCS briefed heads of missions and representatives from UNOCHA at the meeting on the current situation and the planned response.

In Colombo three co-ordination meetings have been convened by the Federation and the SLRCS to share available assessment information and the plans of all INGOs and UN family agencies regarding actual or potential intervention in the short, medium and long term. In addition the Information Bulletin and appeal have been shared with all diplomatic missions in Sri Lanka.

The Prime Minister's Office have also shown active interest and requested that the SLRCS provide the detailed assessment information collected by the National Society in March, May and June. Following two co-ordination meetings between the SLRCS, Federation and the Minister of Social Services, the Ministry and government have welcomed the appeal and launched an appeal themselves calling for others to assist the government in the drought situation. On 17th July the Minister convened a meeting between SLRCS, WFP, World Vision and Sewa Lanka to ensure further co-ordinated responses. The Minister is to visit Hambantota DS Division on 2 August and will accompany the Red Cross and inspect its operations.

Media interest has continued at a sustained level. The media supports the Federation's call for the longer term development issues to be addressed and also supports short term humanitarian interventions. The cumulative effects of four years of drought, which have created the humanitarian crisis in a traditionally dry zone, are also the effects of longer term development policies. The need to find long term developmental and policy level solutions have been stressed by the Federation, and meetings with the Minister for Social Services and other agencies have agreed that a multi-stakeholder meeting, to consider long term development perspectives and solutions, should be planned for September or October. In the meantime the short term situation should also be addressed, and lessons learned (as in the last drought relief intervention in 2001) should inform the forward looking policy debate.

Red Cross Society w

SLRCS volunteers and staff at both the Hambantota branch and headquarters have responded promptly and efficiently. The national Directors' management team drew up a co-ordinated plan of action with the Branch to ensure that by the end of July the training of volunteers in rapid assessment, the house-to-house survey, the recruitment of additional staff, and procurement and warehousing logistics will have been completed.

On 12th July Hambantota branch and headquarters staff trained 80 volunteers in the use of the new house-to-house multi-sectoral assessment questionnaire. The volunteers also received integrated training in health education so that they could advise the worst affected families on public health issues . The further reduction in water sources is causing a measurable increase in dysentery and other water borne diseases affecting a large number of people who are now unable to access adequate water supplies.

The multi-sectoral questionnaire was conducted at household level with 5000 families in the last week of July. In the selected Gram Niladari Divisions which were first prioritised as the most affected (also co-ordinated with local government statistics highlighting the most affected areas but independently assessed by the SLRCS).

From the 5000 completed questionnaires a final list of 1000 of the most affected families was drawn up. The Federation's regional Disaster Response Delegate visited Hambantota between 25th and 28th July to support the final identification of families and assessments regarding the location of water tanks and distribution points.

Relief distributions w

The tendering process to invite quotations for the procurement of the first relief distribution to the 1000 most affected families has been completed. The first distribution is planned for the 12th August. Following assessment of the local situation and discussions with the local Government Agents, it is also planned to encourage people in areas where the SLRCS food distributions have been made to be involved in a Shramadana (free community labour) campaign to assist with desilting community tanks and ponds to improve water retention if the rains come later in the year. This idea has been modelled on the recent local WFP programme which supported a similar community assistance component which ensured that people's willing collaboration was harnessed to rehabilitate reservoirs, canals, small tanks and agricultural roads, thus having an impact on the longer term development environment.

80 RC volunteers who were trained on 12th July in logistics and distribution will receive refresher training before the food distribution programme begins in the first week of August. They will also receive more intensive health and nutrition education training (see Objective 3 under Health programme section below).

Objective 1: *To distribute food to 3000 families for 9 months.*

Activity 1: *Personnel from SLRCS NHQ, Hambantota Branch and a Federation delegate will conduct a rapid assessment to identify an immediate 1,000 of the most vulnerable families in the district. This will be complete before mid-July, with an immediate first food distribution to these families by end of July.*

This objective has been met (see above sections on SLRCS action and Relief Distributions). The tender board in making its final assessments is to try and ensure that local co-operative suppliers might be favoured (as they are in any case the most cost effective) because experience has shown in the 2001 food procurement process that procurement from these sources not only stimulates the local economy but also saves considerably on warehousing, transport and distribution costs.

Activity 2: *Food will be procured and distributed to a further 2,000 families starting first week of August until end of February 2003 (4 distributions, with each distribution consisting of a 2 month supply and a final distribution of a one month supply of food).*

As a result of a widespread distribution by the WFP, which provided beneficiaries with food for one month, the SLRCS decided to reduce the number of months for the first 1000 families to eight and to postpone the start of the distribution to the 12th of August.

The planned expansion of the number of families who are to receive the 80% ration according to Sphere standards over these 8 months will depend on the projection of cash flows available. According to donor response to the appeal so far only 1000 of the intended 3000 families will be able to receive an 8 month food ration cycle. Further assessment revealed that many beneficiaries are afraid to store large amounts of food in their houses due to an increase in elephant attacks. To spread the risk for the beneficiaries the SLRCS decided to distribute on a monthly basis after the first two month distribution.

Further funds are urgently required to enable the programme to expand to meet the overall intended number of families and beneficiaries as co-ordinated with the local Government Agents.

Activity 3: *The warehouse currently available in the district will be upgraded and repaired to provide a storage area for relief and food stocks.*

At present the need to consider warehousing is low as the suppliers will be asked to deliver the food rations to pre-identified locations ensuring saving on warehousing, storage and transport costs. These logistics will be reviewed after the first distribution. The branch is considering building a warehouse on a plot of land donated by the government, which at a later date can be expanded to include an office building for the branch.

Health w

For the purposes of this appeal the “health” programme objectives and activities have been integrated and presented under the following Water-sanitation section as most health problems are connected to water sanitation issues.

Water-sanitation w

The SLRCS house-to-house multi-sectoral assessment questionnaire focuses on the important issue of water sources available to each family and community and its relationship to the public health environment. The surveys will be shared with local government health officials to ensure that any SLRCS response is fully integrated into the wider set of government health structures and responses . The views and assistance of government health officials have been sought throughout this programme, and co-ordination will continue at a District and Divisional level with both government and other sources of health assessment. For example, a recent UNICEF assessment on the health of women and children has recently been shared by UNICEF with the SLRCS.

Objective 2: *To provide drinking water to ten water collection containers at ten schools including rainwater harvesting system and hand pump.*

Activity 1: *Personnel from SLRCS NHQ and Hambantota Branch will identify the ten most suitable schools, in the worst affected areas, to receive water tanks. School assessment will be based on the scarcity of water, quality of the school’s roof to maximise run-off catchment, the distance of the school from the village, and the availability of volunteers in the area for maintenance of the tanks and pumps. This assessment will be carried out by the end of June.*

The assessment to select the locations for the construction of longer term underground water storage tanks was completed by the SLRCS in July. The selected schools are in the following areas and Divisional Secretariats:

- (i) Schools in Hambantota Divisional Secretariat (DS): Boondala Junior Vidyalaya, Gonnoruwa Junior Vidyalaya, Keliypura Junior Vidyalaya
- (ii) Schools in Lunugamvehera DS: Angunakolawewa Junior Vidyalaya, Mahaaluthgamara Junior Vidyalaya
- (iii) Schools in Sooriyawewa DS: Wewegoda Primary School, Ranmuduwewa Primary School, Andarawewa
- (iv) Schools in Tangalle DS: Palathuduwa Vidyalaya, Wagegoda Vidyalaya.

Activity 2: *Construction of water collection tanks by the end of August.*

The Hambantota Branch has arranged, for technical support from local government engineers during the building of the tanks. The Federation’s regional Disaster Response delegate visited the area in the last week of July and gave technical advice to SLRCS volunteers and communities in the areas on tank maintenance and on issues regarding the collection and quality of stored water . After discussions with all stakeholders, it was decided that for each school two Ferro cement containers with a capacity of 10.000 litres each, rainwater harvesting systems and distribution taps would be the most applicable equipment when local conditions and technologies are taken into consideration. This equipment is also easier to maintain and repair than some other water storage and collection equipment. Parents of the school children will participate in the building of the tanks and will be introduced to the concepts of rain water harvesting and the technique of building with Ferro

cement. The enthusiastic co-operation of local communities has enabled the SLRCS to bring forward the commencement of the tank building process which will now begin in the second week of August

Local government officials approached the SLRCS at the end of July, and asked that the RC take over repair and maintenance responsibilities for 36 of the governments 200 tube wells, these wells are currently in a state of disrepair and are thus inoperable. The government has proposed that a SLRCS volunteer could be assigned, with designated community volunteers, to maintain the tube wells in the future. A lack of funds means the SLRCS is unable to entertain this proposal at the present time, however, the maintenance and repair of ten of these tube wells will be put in the budget as it is argued that operational tube wells will enable an early termination of the water bowsering programme in these areas

Activity 3: *Tankering water to these water points will begin in mid-July. In the first month, while tanks are being constructed, water will be distributed directly from bowsers. Bowsers (mobile distribution tanks) will deposit water directly into the tanks once construction is complete. This activity will continue until the first rains appear in November/December. The contract is to be renewed on a monthly basis until the rains start but with a maximum of five months.*

Assessment of the nearest clean water supply sources has been completed by the Branch, in co-ordination with Local Government Agents. There are three water points available in the three Divisions of Ambalantota, Lunugamvehera, and Sooriyawewa. Tendering for water, water trucks and tractors to transport them has been completed.

The Federation and SLRCS have suggested changes in the government water distribution system which has been welcomed by the local government officials. The SLRCS will purchase two water bowsers to add to the bowser donated by SCF. The SLRCS will also rent 2 tractors and two tanker trucks. The government has made three water bowsers available to the SLRCS, bringing the total available water bowsers to six. This will allow 3 bowsers of 2,500 litre capacity to supply one village per day, enabling 75 families to receive 100 litres of water each every 3 days. Two water stations will be allocated to supply three bowsers with water. They will then be pulled by a tractor to an agreed point in a village. It is expected that this system will double the capacity of the water trucks, compared with the current system of distributions “door to door”.

Co-ordination with local government bowsering has resulted in the SLRCS being requested to supply water to 7 of the 16 most affected Divisions, while government will provide water to the remaining 9 Divisions. The local government officials have requested that the SLRCS consider another 4 Divisions for water bowsering but the present SLRCS level of funding does not allow for this scaling up. Support is urgently required to meet this increased demand. Further co-ordination was established by clustering the divisions so that the SLRCS operates where it carried out food distributions last year, but not this year so that the strong volunteers base in this area can be used for the water bowsering program.

The water bowsering programme is to commence by the 12th of August after the SLRCS Branch volunteers have received their intensive training in water-sanitation and public health education. This education will help volunteers disseminate information regarding safe storage of water in households (see objective 3 activity 1 below).

Activity 4: *The system will be maintained by volunteers throughout the project.*

The Federation’s regional Disaster Response delegate discussed with Branch officials the roles of SLRCS community volunteers in maintaining water catchment and pumping activities. Further community level training is planned in the areas where water tanks will be used. This training is designed to ensure the continued maintenance of water storage and collection equipment by the community and will teach volunteers about water quality maintenance.

Objective 3: *To disseminate sanitation and health practices through a sustainable network of volunteers targeting female heads of families.*

Activity 1: *The SLRCS will train 40 volunteers in Community Based Health and First Aid (CBHFA) and provide them with a first aid kit, a bicycle and dissemination material. Two of these volunteers will be selected to be trained as trainers in order to facilitate further development of the volunteer pool.*

The training of 40 SLRCS volunteers has been planned to enable them in turn to train others thus creating a larger volunteer pool. The training for these 20 female and 20 male volunteers is to be conducted by highly credible local health professionals including the retired Principal of the Nurses Training School, the SLRCS Health Director, and the SLRCS national First Aid Co-ordinator. The curriculum is to include training in the monitoring of childrens weight, maintaining growth charts, preventing diarrhoeal dehydration through oral rehydration therapy, maintaining proper nutritional standards in families, and education on personal hygiene and environmental sanitation.

Activity 2: Volunteers will organise meetings with families in the most vulnerable areas, targeting particularly female heads of families, to disseminate information on nutrition and sanitation, and to discuss possible community based programmes in these areas.

It is planned that the volunteers trained under the objective above will travel widely in the worst affected areas on bicycles and meet door to door with the most vulnerable families, targeting female heads of households and conducting community level education on safe water, nutrition, prevention of communicable diseases, and environmental sanitation.

National Society Capacity Building w

The national and Branch structures have been further strengthened. The national Relief Co-ordinator will be supported by a specially recruited field relief co-ordinator to ensure that the Branch is able to access the support it needs in order to implement the relief programme. An accountant has been deployed for the duration of the relief operation to support the Branch.

As in the previous drought operation of 2001 the National Society has continued to grow in confidence in raising public awareness of the needs of most vulnerable people through media coverage and advocacy. Their increased networking with the national Ministry of Social Services, and with local government officials at the Hambantota District level, has brought credibility and requests for an expansion of their work into new areas of the country.

Due to the quality and quantity of SLRCS volunteers the local government officials have requested that the SLRCS consider expanding the water bowsering plans to cover an extra 4 Divisions in addition to the 7 that have been planned.

Federation Delegation w

The Sri Lanka Federation delegation has an experienced staff of four persons (check numbers here). The Federation's regional Disaster Response delegate has visited the programme at all stages from initial assessments and evaluation of the 2001 drought relief operation to the setting up of logistics for the new programme's activities.

The delegation's main role has been to provide support to the Sri Lanka Red Cross in its assessment work, and to assist in the facilitation of national level drought co-ordination meetings with other INGOs, NGOs and UN family agencies.

Co-ordination

As in the previous drought relief operation in 2001, the Federation has played an important role in facilitating co-ordination between all agencies by being asked to chair three national interagency planning meetings in July alone. Reports from assessments made by UNICEF, FAO, SCF, and other agencies have been collected and disseminated to increase understanding of the humanitarian situation.

In order to continue to raise awareness about the specific food, water, and community health needs of the most (long-term) severely affected communities, the Red Cross has continued to share the results of its valuable and unique house-to-house survey with other agencies and missions.

The Federation is working with other interested agencies to convene a national development policy workshop later in 2002 in order to develop a strategy to assess the longer term development of the areas affected by the drought. The objective of the workshop is to bring together policy makers from the government and all other institutions to relate the humanitarian situation into a wider developmental context and search for more sustainable long term solutions to the needs of the communities in the most highly vulnerable pockets.

Outstanding needs

This appeal has not received the required for support from donors. The Federation and the SLRCS have adjusted the budget accordingly and to respond to operational needs. Donors are encouraged to provide the appropriate level of contributions to allow the operation to continue as planned.

For further details please contact: Ewa Eriksson, Phone: 41 22 4252; Fax: 41 22 733 03 95; email: eriksson@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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Sri Lanka - Drought						ANNEX 1	
APPEAL No. 18/2002		PLEDGES RECEIVED				16.08.2002	
DONOR	CATEGORY	QUANTITY	UNIT	VALUE CHF	DATE	COMMENT	
CASH							TOTAL COVERAGE
REQUESTED IN APPEAL CHF ----->				1'748'000		16.6%	
KOREA, REPUBLIC - RC				20'000	18.07.2002		
MONACO - RC		10'000	EUR	14'725	01.07.2002		
PRIVATE DONORS		210	EUR	306	01.08.2002		
SPANISH - RC		12'000	EUR	17'637	07.08.2002	BILATERAL	
SWEDISH - GOVT		700'000	SEK	112'700	18.06.2002	RELIEF ITEMS REPLENISHMENTS	
JAPAN - RC		82'844	USD	124'132	14.08.2002		
SUB/TOTAL RECEIVED IN CASH				289'500	CHF	16.6%	
KIND AND SERVICES (INCLUDING PERSONNEL)							
DONOR	CATEGORY	QUANTITY	UNIT	VALUE CHF	DATE	COMMENT	
SUB/TOTAL RECEIVED IN KIND/SERVICES				0	CHF	0.0%	
ADDITIONAL TO APPEAL BUDGET							
DONOR	CATEGORY	QUANTITY	UNIT	VALUE CHF	DATE	COMMENT	
SUB/TOTAL RECEIVED				0	CHF		

		ANNEX 1
<u>REVISED BUDGET SUMMARY</u>		APPEAL No. 18/2002
Sri Lanka - Drought		
TYPE		VALUE
RELIEF NEEDS		IN CHF
Cereals		743'000
Vegetables		306'000
Sugar		56'000
Food oil		160'000
Water and sanitation		56'000
Medical & first aid		6'000
Teaching materials		1'000
TOTAL RELIEF NEEDS		1'328'000
<u>CAPITAL EQUIPMENT</u>		
Vehicles		38'000
Computers		2'000
Office equipment		8'000
<u>PROGRAMME SUPPORT</u>		
Programme management		118'000
Technical support		35'000
Professional services		39'000
<u>TRANSPORT STORAGE & VEHICLE COSTS</u>		96'000
<u>PERSONNEL</u>		
Expatriate staff		42'000
National staff		13'000
<u>ADMINISTRATIVE & GENERAL SERVICES</u>		
Travel & related expenses		2'000
Information expenses		9'000
Administrative & general expenses		18'000
TOTAL OPERATIONAL NEEDS		420'000
TOTAL APPEAL CASH, KIND, SERVICES		1'748'000