

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

ERITREA: DROUGHT

10 May 2006

APPEAL EXTENSION

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 over 183 countries.

In Brief

Appeal No. 05EA002; Operations Update no. 5; Period covered: 24 January to 20 April 2006; Appeal coverage: 57%; [Click here to go directly to the attached Contributions list](#) and [here to go directly to the Contributions list on the web site](#).

Appeal history:

- Launched on 27 January 2005 for CHF 5,210,000 (USD 4.38 million or EUR 3.36 million) for 12 months to assist 55,000 beneficiaries. Refer to <http://www.ifrc.org/docs/appeals/05/05EA002.pdf>
- Operations Update no. 1- <http://www.ifrc.org/docs/appeals/05/05EA0021.pdf>, dated 4 March 2005
- Operations Update no. 2- <http://www.ifrc.org/docs/appeals/05/05EA00202.pdf>, dated 21 March 2005.
- Operations Update no. 3- <http://www.ifrc.org/docs/appeals/05/05EA00203.pdf>, dated 2 September 2005.
- Operations Update no. 4- <http://www.ifrc.org/docs/appeals/05/05EA00204.pdf>, dated 27 January 2006, extended the appeal timeframe for three months (until 30 April 2006).
- This Operations Update seeks to extend this operation's period by three more months (to 31 July 2006) due to unforeseen circumstances which have led to delays in food distributions.
- Disaster Relief Emergency Funds (DREF) allocated: CHF 300,000. Funds have been reimbursed.

Outstanding needs: CHF 2,239,477 (USD 1,706,918 or 1,438,790).

Related Emergency or Annual Appeals:

- Eritrea: Annual Appeal 2005: <http://www.ifrc.org/docs/appeals/annual05/05AA001.pdf> (Appeal no. 05AA001).
- Eritrea: Annual Appeal 2006-2007: <http://www.ifrc.org/docs/appeals/annual06/MAAER001.pdf> (Appeal no. MAAER001).

Operational Summary: The drought operation, which is currently operating outside its previously extended three-month timeframe, is implementing four medium-term water projects as the approval to distribute the remaining food is awaited from the government of Eritrea. The implementation of the water projects, including the construction of check dams and sub-surface dams, is proceeding well and they are all close to being finalized. The final inspection and approval is pending.

There has been no food distribution by all humanitarian agencies since October 2005. The issue is being discussed at the highest political levels; the suspension remains until this is finalized. This has had a negative impact on the improvement of livelihoods and food security. The Finnish Red Cross, which had donated an additional 220 metric tonnes (MT) of wheat, was forced to reallocate this consignment due to the suspension of food distributions.

The Appeal coverage remains at 57%, the same level since Operations Update no. 4 was issued. Lack of sufficient funding as well as access to the relief operation areas also hindered progress on some planned medium-term interventions such as effective economic water farming methods and the provision of fuel-efficient stoves.

This operation is aligned with the International Federation's Global Agenda, which sets out four broad goals to meet the Federation's mission to "improve the lives of vulnerable people by mobilizing the power of humanity".

Global Agenda Goals:

- Reduce the numbers of deaths, injuries and impact from disasters.
- Reduce the number of deaths, illnesses and impact from diseases and public health emergencies.
- Increase local community, civil society and Red Cross Red Crescent capacity to address the most urgent situations of vulnerability.
- Reduce intolerance, discrimination and social exclusion and promote respect for diversity and human dignity.

For further information specifically related to this operation please contact:

- *In Eritrea:* Birikhty Tekletsion, Programme Coordinator, Red Cross Society of Eritrea, Asmara; Email: rcse6@eol.com.er; Phone +291.1.15.16.93; Fax +291.1.15.18.59
- *In Eritrea:* Per Gunnar Jenssen, Federation Representative for Eritrea, Asmara Email PG.Jenssen@ifrc.org; Phone +291.1.15.05.50; Fax +291.1.15.18.59
- *In Kenya:* Anitta Underlin, Federation Head of Regional Delegation, Nairobi; Email: anitta.underlin@ifrc.org; Phone +254.20.283.51.24; Fax +254.20.271.84.15 and Steve Penny, Disaster Management Coordinator, East Africa Regional Delegation, Nairobi; Email: steve.penny@ifrc.org; Phone +254.20.283.51.17; Fax +254.20.271.27.
- *In Geneva:* Amna Al Ahmar, Federation Regional Officer for East Africa, Africa Dept.; Email: amna.alahmar@ifrc.org; Phone +41.22.730.44.27; Fax +41.22.733.03.95

All International Federation assistance seeks to adhere to the Code of Conduct and is committed to the Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Disaster Response in delivering assistance to the most vulnerable. For support to or for further information concerning Federation programmes or operations in this or other countries, or for a full description of the national society profile, please access the Federation's website at <http://www.ifrc.org>

Background

Since the launch of the Eritrea Drought Emergency Appeal on 27 January 2005 for CHF 5,210,000 (USD 4.38 million or EUR 3.36 million) to assist 55,000 beneficiaries in Hagaz sub-Zoba and other adjacent villages for 12 months, the progress made in implementing activities has been reported against through four Operations Updates. The updates are available on the Federation website.¹

This appeal has focused on short-term food distribution, rehabilitation and construction of water resources, coupled with long-term activities in water, food security, dry land farming and improved health practices.

Operational developments

According to the National Food Information System (NFIS) report, the overall performance of *Kremti* rain (from July to September 2005) was good. It improved the availability of cereals in the short-term as well as the condition of livestock forage. However, agricultural production accounts for only half of the country's food needs, thus commercial imports and food aid remain critical. Even if the average rainfall was good, there are numerous "dry pockets" reported at the local level, and out of 17 administrative villages in the Red Cross operational area, a third reported no harvest at all. No official crop report has been issued yet. The December – February rainy season in the eastern provinces started by mid February, and is estimated to be more scarce than usual. This had an impact on livestock that usually are taken to the escarpment and eastern lowlands for grazing during these months. No official report on the situation has been released.

A number of dry wells have been recovered while dams collected sufficient water, temporarily solving the problem of critical shortage of drinking water. Despite these positive trends, it is estimated in the NFIS report that it will take

¹ For Updates click on the following: [Operations Update no. 1](#), or [Operations Update no. 2](#), or [Operations Update no. 3](#) and [Operations Update no. 4](#)

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3 to 4 consecutive good rainy seasons for true recovery in the agriculture and livestock sectors as well as water table levels. As established by the World Health Organization (WHO), malnutrition rates in most of the country are acute (at above 15%), which constitutes a serious threshold.

There has been no food distributed to populations affected by drought in most of the country since September 2005. However, the Red Cross Society of Eritrea² (RCSE) was able to finalize the September 2005 distributions. A new government policy on food distribution has been announced but is yet to be released.

Currently, the balance of food in the RCSE warehouse is 1,430.85MT of wheat, 149.65MT of lentils and 109.13MT of oil, which is beyond its carrying capacity. The RCSE has been forced to rent an additional warehouse (with a capacity of 500MT) and to recruit two temporary guards for it. Due to the long storage time of the food, fumigation is urgently needed; so far this has not taken place due to a lack of necessary capacity in the country as well as lack of funds.

As there are unofficial reports that some communities may face a serious lack of food during the upcoming lean period, the Federation is seeking an extension of this appeal for three more months in order to distribute the remaining food stocks once the Government of Eritrea allows this to happen.

Red Cross and Red Crescent action - objectives, progress and impact

Emergency food and water assistance

Objective 1: To immediately improve livelihood and food security by provision of monthly food distributions to 55, 000 people for 8 months.

Expected result

- 11,000 households (55,000 people) in Hagaz *sub-zoba* received food rations of grains, oil and lentils once a month (80 % of 2,100 kcal) from February to September 2005.

Constraints

- No distribution took place during the reporting period; like all humanitarian organizations, the RCSE was not allowed to continue the food distributions.

Objective 2: To improve sustainable livelihood and food security by provision of monthly food distributions to 27,500 people for 4 months depending on crop yields in September 2005.

Expected result

- 5,500 households (27,500) people in Hagaz *sub-zoba* have received food rations of grains, oil, lentils and iodized salt once a month (80% of 2,100 kcal) from October 2005-January 2006.

Constraints

- No distribution has taken place during the reporting period; like all humanitarian organizations, the RCSE was not allowed to continue the food distributions.

Objective 3: To reduce morbidity and vulnerability to water-related diseases by improving access to safe drinking water.

Expected result

- 2,000 households (10,000 people) in Hagaz *sub-zoba* have access to safe water within one kilometre from their village from February 2005, increasing to 4,000 households by October 2005.

Progress

- The RCSE has reviewed the nine water points and two water ponds finalized in June 2005. All of them are functioning well. One hand pump has been replaced with a solar system by the government.

² Red Cross Society of Eritrea- <http://www.ifrc.org/where/country/cn6.asp?countryid=188>

Medium term food security, sustainable livelihoods and integrated health

Objective 3: To reduce morbidity and vulnerability to water related diseases by improving access to safe drinking water.

Expected result

- 4,000 households in Hagaz *sub-zoba* have access to safe water within one kilometre from their village by October 2005.

Progress

- Construction work on middle-term projects— including two check dams and two sub-surface dams— in Gizgiza, Muruni, Hashishay and Felihito started in February 2006. The distribution of 300 gabions to be used in these projects took place late January and early February. In all the villages, dissemination on advantages and maintenance of sub-surface dam/check dam has been conducted. Promotion of further water management activities has also been carried out.
- In Hashishay, the construction of the sub-surface dam is nearing completion. 210 m³ of soil has been excavated, 86 gabion boxes have been filled and 258 m³ of stones have been collected by the community.
- In Gizgiza, the construction of the sub-surface dam is also nearing completion. 245 m³ of soil has been excavated, 81 gabion boxes have been filled and 243 m³ of stones have been collected by the community.
- In Muruni, the construction of the check dam is more than 60 % completed, with 175 m³ of soil excavated, 39 gabion boxes filled and 117 m³ of stones collected by the community.
- In Felihito, the construction of the check dam is more than 65 % completed. 65 m³ of soil has been excavated, 15 gabion boxes have been filled and 75 m³ of stones have been collected by the community.

Advocacy and public information

Objective 1: To ensure that the needs and rights of the most vulnerable in relation to the drought situation are secured.

Expected result

- The needs and rights of the most vulnerable have been secured.

Progress

- The Federation representative in Eritrea continues to apply for regular visits to the relief operation areas to witness and follow up the progress made in the distribution of food as well as in the water projects. So far, though, no access has been granted this year. Representatives from the Swedish Red Cross and Finnish Red Cross met with the person responsible for water projects in Anseba *zoba* in mid-February, but project visits could not be conducted.

Constraints

- As most activities have been delayed and suspended since October 2005, no field trips were conducted during the reporting period.

Capacity building

Objective: To build the response and operational capacity of the national society at headquarters and branch level.

Expected results

- The RCSE has sufficient management capacity to plan for and conduct emergency relief operations in addition to conducting its annual development programme.
- The RCSE has sufficient logistics capacity to conduct emergency relief operations.

Progress

- No specific activities have been carried out in the reporting period.

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Constraints

- Planned activities— including the procurement of a 4 wheel drive vehicle, basic office facilities and equipment as well as training in reporting, administration, volunteer management and finance— did not take place due to lack of funding.

Federation coordination

The task force comprised of the senior management of Red Cross Society of Eritrea and the Federation Representative has not met during the reporting period. In January 2006, the regional delegation in Nairobi called for a meeting regarding the drought in the Horn of Africa, and the RCSE senior management as well as the Federation representative participated. As no international support regarding the drought had been sought in the period, a proposed Field Assessment and Coordination Team (FACT) mission to Eritrea has been postponed until a new policy has been released by the government. Information and coordination meetings among relief organizations in Eritrea still stand suspended by the government since October 2005.

[Contributions list below; click here to return to the title page.](#)

Eritrea - drought

ANNEX 1

APPEAL No. 05EA002

PLEDGES RECEIVED

09/05/2006

DONOR	CATEGORY	QUANTITY	UNIT	VALUE CHF	DATE	COMMENT
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CASH

REQUESTED IN APPEAL CHF ----->					5,210,000		TOTAL COVERAGE
							57.0%
BRITISH - RC		25,000	GBP	56,650	07.09.05		
FINNISH - GOVT/RC		136,000	EUR	210,188	11.11.05		TRANSPORTATION & DISTRIBUTION COSTS
ICELANDIC - RC		250,000	ISK	4,900	26.08.05		
JAPANESE - RC		144,500	USD	163,574	14.02.05		
MONACO - RC		20,000	EUR	30,970	27.01.05		
NETHERLANDS - GOVT		550,967	EUR	852,897	27.06.05		
NORWEGIAN - GOVT/RC		2,750,000	NOK	512,875	28.02.05		
SWEDISH - GOVT		800,000	SEK	136,800	31.01.05		TECHNICAL ASSESSMENT, PLANNING MISSION
SWEDISH - GOVT		1,000,000	SEK	171,000	26.04.05		
SUB/TOTAL RECEIVED IN CASH				2,139,854	CHF		41.1%

KIND AND SERVICES (INCLUDING PERSONNEL)

DONOR	CATEGORY	QUANTITY	UNIT	VALUE CHF	DATE	COMMENT	
FINNISH - GOVT/RC		479,241	EUR	739,948	06.06.05	WHEAT GRAINS, LENTILS, SOYA BEAN OIL, TRANSPORT	
FINNISH - GOVT/RC		58,700	EUR	90,721	11.11.05	220 MT WHEAT, TRANSPORT/INSUR.	
SUB/TOTAL RECEIVED IN KIND/SERVICES				830,669	CHF		15.9%

ADDITIONAL TO APPEAL BUDGET

DONOR	CATEGORY	QUANTITY	UNIT	VALUE CHF	DATE	COMMENT
SUB/TOTAL RECEIVED				0	CHF	