

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

11 August 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 185 countries.

In Brief

Appeal No. 05EA002; Operations Update no. 6; Period covered: 21 April to 21 July 2006; Appeal coverage: 57%; [Click here to go directly to the Contributions list on the website](#).

Appeal history:

- Launched on 27 January 2005 – <http://www.ifrc.org/docs/appeals/05/05EA002.pdf> – for CHF 5,210,000 (USD 4.38 million or EUR 3.36 million) for 12 months to assist 55,000 beneficiaries.
- Operations Update no. 1 – <http://www.ifrc.org/docs/appeals/05/05EA00201.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).
- Operations Update no. 5 – <http://www.ifrc.org/docs/appeals/05/05EA00205.pdf> – dated 10 May 2006 extended the operation's timeframe by three more months (to 31 July 2006) due to unforeseen circumstances which led to delays in food distributions.
- This Operations Update seeks to further extend the operation's timeframe by three more months (until 30 October 2006).
- Disaster Relief Emergency Funds (DREF) allocated: CHF 300,000. Funds have been reimbursed.

Outstanding needs: CHF 2,239,477 (USD 1,816,283 or EUR 1,423,699).

Related Annual Appeals:

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

Operational Summary: Within the framework of the medium-term activities for the drought operation, four water projects targeting 4,000 households in Hagaz sub-zoba (Felihito, Gizgiza, Hashishay and Muruni) were completed at the end of April 2006, and the projects have been officially handed over to the village and local authorities in the presence of the economic development officer of Zoba Anseba. The Red Cross Society of Eritrea (RCSE) has made several other achievements since the start of the operation. These include the rehabilitation of 9 water points and 2 water ponds targeting 2,000 households (10,000 people) and the distribution of 5.843 metric tonnes (MT) of drought-resistant pearl millet seeds to 1,168 households in June 2005 in Hagaz sub-zoba, as part of the emergency assistance and medium-term activities respectively. The Appeal coverage remains at 57%, the same level since Operations Update no. 5 was issued. Lack of sufficient funding has hindered progress on some planned medium-term interventions, including the provision of fuel-efficient stoves.

Through this Operations Update, the RCSE seeks to extend the operational period of its drought Emergency Appeal for three months, until 30 October 2006, in order to distribute the remaining food stocks once food distribution is

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resumed. The government has been working on a new strategy regarding food-aid distribution which has been shared with humanitarian organizations working in Eritrea, including the RCSE. It is hoped that the food stocks, which are in the national society's warehouse, will be distributed in due course.

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.**

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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

The Eritrea Drought Emergency Appeal was 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 in Hagaz sub-Zoba and other adjacent villages. This Appeal focused on emergency and short-term food distribution, medium-term rehabilitation and construction of water resources, medium-term food security, sustainable livelihood as well as improved health practices to be implemented in 17 administration areas by the Red Cross Society of Eritrea (RCSE). Capacity building activities for the national society (NS) and advocacy activities were also integrated. On 27 January 2006, the Appeal's timeframe was extended for three months. On completion of the period, a further three-month extension (until 31 July) was sought due to the announcement of a new government policy on food distribution which led to delays in food distributions.

Operational developments

According to satellite images of Africa Data Dissemination Service (ADDS), from 1 to 20 June 2006, Zoba Anseba and parts of Gash Barka received below average Kremti rains. Nevertheless, planting of the Kremti season crops has started. The rains are expected to improve the availability of drinking water and livestock forage. A number of soil and water conservation activities have been carried out throughout the country through effective social campaigns organized by the government.

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Following the announcement of a new government policy on food distribution, an assessment of the possible beneficiaries is currently being undertaken by the government to identify the most vulnerable drought-affected people to whom the Federation can distribute food-aid. However, it is not yet known when this assessment will be finalized. For this reason, the Federation is seeking another extension of this Appeal for three more months in order to distribute the remaining food stocks upon the resumption of food distribution.

Red Cross and Red Crescent action

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 have received food rations of grains, oil and lentils once a month (80 % of 2,100 kcal) from February to September 2005.

Progress

Food distribution has not resumed. In order to reduce the risks of infestation of the stored food, fumigation was conducted by a private local company with technical advice from the regional logistics unit. The fumigation was carried out in two phases and proper ventilation facilities have been put in place. A representative from the Ministry of Agriculture was present during the exercise. If food distribution is not completed within 4 to 6 months, the food may need re-fumigation.

Constraint

Due to the government's new food aid strategy, food distribution did not take place during the reporting period. However, an assessment by the government is in progress to identify the people most affected by the drought. Once the assessment is finalized, it will be known when and where the Federation can distribute the food-aid.

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 to January 2006.

Constraint

There has been no progress in this activity.

Medium-term food security, sustainable livelihoods and integrated health

Objective 2: Promote food security through the improvement of farming practices.

Expected result: 30 households in Hagaz *sub-zoba* have received information on effective economic water farming methods before the start of the farming season in 2005.

Constraint

No progress was made as the consultant from the Swedish Red Cross, who was identified to undertake the activity, was assigned to other missions.

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.

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Progress

Construction work on the medium-term water projects including two check dams and two sub-surface dams in Felihito, Gizgiza, Hashishay and Muruni, which started in February, was completed during the reporting period. During the work, 691 cubic metres of soil was excavated and 288 gabions (3 x 1 metre) were filled with 963 cubic metres of stones. Technical evaluation was also given by the soil and water conservation expert of the Zoba Anseba. At the end of April 2006, the entire construction work was completed and the projects have been officially handed over to the village and local authorities in the presence of the economic development officer of Zoba Anseba.

Impact

It is expected that, in the long-term, the water projects will lead to increased water yields in the existing water points. The RCSE has gained technical experience on the construction of dams, which will enhance its participation in Eritrea's soil and water conservation strategy.

Constraint

The required quality and quantity of gabions was not available in the country and had to be imported from Nairobi, Kenya. This, as well as the inaccessibility of the road to Muruni, delayed the implementation of the project.

Objective 4: To improve the health status of targeted communities through community-based first aid (CBFA), participatory hygiene and sanitation transformation (PHAST) and provision of basic sanitation installations.

Expected result 1: The population in 15 communities in the relief operation area have received health promotion and basic first aid services through the RCSE integrated disaster preparedness and response and community health development programme by end of 2005.

Expected result 2: Activities initiated through the current emergency relief programme have been integrated in the RCSE annual programmes from 2006.

Constraint

Planned trainings in PHAST and basic sanitation installations were not carried out due to shortage of funding.

Objective 5: To improve household economy and reduce environmental degradation through the provision of fuel-efficient stoves.

Expected result: 300 households in Hagaz sub-zoba have installed fuel efficient stoves by end of January 2006.

Constraint

No further progress has been made since a meeting that was conducted with the Ministry of Agriculture in Zoba Anseba during the reporting period owing to lack of funding.

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 RCSE and the local administration have held discussions on the withdrawal of food distribution and the new government strategy related to food distribution as well as the cash and food-for-work plan.

Objective 2: To promote the Movement's Fundamental Principles and Humanitarian Values in the intervention area.

Expected result: The Movement's Fundamental Principles and Humanitarian Values are known and adhered to in the intervention areas

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Progress

Promotion of Fundamental Principles and Humanitarian Values has been ongoing hand-in-hand with the water projects.

Capacity building

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

Expected result 1: The RCSE has sufficient management capacity to plan for and conduct emergency relief operations in addition to conducting their annual development programme.

Expected result 2: The RCSE has sufficient logistics capacity to conduct emergency relief operations.

Constraint

Planned activities did not take place due to lack of funding.

Federation coordination

During the reporting period, the regional delegation in Nairobi and the country representative worked closely with the NS to find solutions to resume food distribution – unfortunately without a tangible result – pending the implementation of the government’s new strategy for food distribution applicable to all humanitarian organizations in Eritrea.

Country coordination meetings among the relief organizations in Eritrea have been inactive since October 2005. Information sharing related to this operation has been informal in various meetings. A visit led by the water and sanitation (WatSan) officer from Geneva was conducted to the NS to discuss the African Caribbean Pacific-European Union (ACP-EU) Water Facility programme with the country Water Resource Department and the EU office in Asmara. A similar meeting was held with the EU Brussels office in Geneva in June 2006. The meeting was also attended by the three co-financing partners of the Eritrea Water Facility programme, namely the Austrian Red Cross, the Danish Red Cross and the Netherlands Red Cross as well as the RCSE.

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