

KINGDOM OF MOROCCO: FLOODS

10 April, 1996

appeal no. 02/96

situation report no. 1

period covered: January - March, 1996

All cash and kind requirements of the appeal have been met. Distributions of blankets, tents and camp beds by Moroccan Red Crescent branches are under way and food distributions are scheduled to finish at the end of this month, bringing the operation to a close. With the emergency phase almost over, the government is attempting to come to grips with the urgent problem of rehousing the homeless..

The context

The Federation's appeal was launched on 26 January, as Morocco's worst floods in 25 years, brought on by two months of rains, swept over large areas of the country. The appeal sought support for the distribution of 1,535 mt. food, shelter materials and other relief items to 18,000 of the most vulnerable among an estimated 60,000 victims in seven prefectures and eleven provinces.

During the emergency local branches of the Moroccan Red Crescent helped rescue stranded families and distributed all the stocks of food and shelter materials held by the National Society.

Latest events

According to the latest figures issued by the Ministry of the Interior, the floods inundated 132,400 hectares of land, destroying 7,187 houses and drowning 8,508 farm animals. Damage to the infrastructure is put at 468,374,000 dirhams (approximately CHF 65 million).

The Federation appeal generated a swift and generous response which covered all cash and in-kind requirements. Financial contributions included a grant of ECU 200,000 from the European Union.

The Belgian Red Cross met all in-kind needs in the appeal, despatching supplies to Casablanca. It also made a delegate available to the Federation who was assigned from 21 February onwards to assist the Moroccan Red Crescent with the management of the operation and the administration of supplies. The Federation Programme Officer for the operation visited the disaster area in early March and held discussions with the National Society on the evolution of the operation.

Red Cross/Red Crescent action

Local MRC branches are carrying out distributions according to plans drawn up by the Society's central committee. Initial figures covering goods distributed are listed below. Distributions of food, all of which is being purchased locally, will be completed by the end of April, rather than March as originally planned, since purchasing had to await the arrival of funds.

Provinces	Blankets	Tents	Camp beds
Beni Mellal	500	25	80
Casa Sebaa		5	20
Chefchaoun	500		
Essaouirra	500	20	40
Ifrane			40
Irane		20	
Jadida		30	40
Kenitra	1000	40	40
Khenifra		18	40
Larache	500		
Marrakech		20	40
Nador	500	25	80
Safi	500	20	40
Sale		15	
Sidi Kacem	500	40	40
Tanger	500		
Taroudant		20	40
TOTAL	5000	298	540

Rehabilitation phase •

The emergency phase is now virtually over and efforts are being transferred to longer-term assistance and rehabilitation. The most urgent problem facing the affected population is the repair or reconstruction of their homes. Most of the population affected by the floods are poor and were living in substandard housing units which quickly crumbled with the onset of the heavy rains. Despite a major rehousing effort by the government, most of the homeless are accommodated in temporary shelters, often schools, and it is uncertain for how long the population will be able to stay in these public buildings.

The government's reconstruction plans have been hastened in light of the urgency to find a durable solution to the problem of housing the flood victims. Fortunately, the students normally occupying the school facilities have been absorbed into other schools in the neighbourhoods in the affected areas.

The MRC has no immediate plans to become involved in longer-term rehabilitation programmes and will limit its future activities to providing food at least until the end of April. It is hoped that by that time more permanent housing solutions will have been found.

External relations - Government/UN/NGOs/Media

The relief operation has revived and strengthened links between the government authorities and local RC committees. In each affected region the authorities have worked closely with the MRC branches and have on numerous occasions expressed publicly their gratitude for the emergency work of the MRC relief teams and the co-ordination provided by the National Society. The Moroccan media has also given extensive coverage to the work of the MRC and numerous articles have appeared in the media about the Society's work. A number of embassies have also provided assistance locally to the MRC.

Contributions

See Annex 1 for details.

Robert Watkins
Desk Officer
Middle East and North Africa Department

Margareta Wahlström
Under-Secretary General
Disaster Response and Operations
Co-ordination

U:\IN\APPEALS\96029601.SAM\11/04/96