BURKINA FASO, MALI, MAURITANIA AND NIGER:
FOOD INSECURITY

Emergency Appeal 05EA015
29 November 2007

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

Final Report; Period covered: 22 July 2005 to 23 July 2006; Final appeal coverage: 81.4%.

<Click here for the final financial report>

Appeal history:

• **Emergency Appeal** launched on 22 July 2005 for CHF 18,243,483 (USD 14,211,607 or EUR 11,642,754) in cash, kind or services to assist 44,400 households (220,000 beneficiaries) – in Burkina Faso, Mali, Mauritania and Niger – for six months.
• A Revised Plan of Action, issued on 7 August 2005, specified assistance to 76,571 households (532,000 beneficiaries) over a six months period.
• **Operation Update no. 1** was issued on 27 August 2005.
• **Operation Update no. 2** was issued on 25 October 2005.
• **Operation Update no. 3** was issued on 8 December 2005.
• **Operation Update no. 4**, issued on 9 February 2006, provided a six-month Supplementary Plan of Action and extended the appeal’s timeframe until 23 July 2006.
• **Operation Update no. 5**, dated 13 April 2006, increased the appeal budget to CHF 31,242,371 (USD 24,051,094 or EUR 19,798,714).
• **Operation Update no. 6** was issued on 7 July 2006.
• This operation was reported at length and in detail in the Operation Updates hyperlinked above as well as Operations Fact Sheets 1 to 4. For these as well as news stories, photos and press releases related to the Sahel food crisis visit: [http://www.ifrc.org/what/disasters/response/sahel/index.asp](http://www.ifrc.org/what/disasters/response/sahel/index.asp)
• **Disaster Relief Emergency Funds (DREF)** allocated CHF 280,000. Funds have been reimbursed.

This operation was 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.
Background and summary

In 2004 and 2005, countries of the Sahel region experienced the worst locust invasion of 20 years coupled with low rainfalls and drought conditions. This situation resulted in a severe food crisis and heightened malnutrition in many locations of Burkina Faso, Mali, Mauritania and Niger. Niger was, however, the most affected country.

As part of its overall stewardship for West Africa, the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies regional delegation in Dakar closely monitored the situation. Through several assessment and support missions to the concerned countries, the delegation assisted National Societies in disseminating warnings of upcoming food insecurity to affected communities as well as governments, national and international organizations.

As the food security situation became increasingly alarming, the regional delegation deployed a three-member team comprising one consultant and two Regional Disaster Response Team (RDRT) members to carry out a detailed assessment of the food security situation in Niger, Burkina Faso, Mali and Mauritania and to assist the National Societies in identifying their role in addressing the issue considering their experience and operational capacities. In coordination with the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), World Food Programme (WFP), the UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), other organizations and governments, the team developed recommendations for the Federation on ways of providing support to National Societies in the region and possible interventions. Based on the findings of the assessments and information collected through secondary sources, the main justifications for an emergency intervention were as follows:

- Loss of life: There was increasing evidence from Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF) and other sources that children were dying – particularly in Niger – as a result of the crisis in the Sahel region;
- Food and health loss: Agricultural production in Niger during 2004 was severely affected by the locust invasion and drought. Estimates from an assessment mission by the government, WFP, Famine Early Warning System Network (FEWS NET) and the Permanent Inter-State Committee on Drought Control (CILSS) in March 2005 concluded that 2.5 million people – approximately 20 percent of Niger’s population – were food insecure and required food assistance. The loss in cereal production was approximately 15 per cent compared to the average annual production over the last five years, or a grain deficit of about 225,000 metric tonnes (MT) for the year 2005. While Mali, Burkina Faso and Mauritania were not as severely affected, they were still part of the same disaster situation and needed support to discourage a further deterioration of the situation;
- Livestock loss: Livestock – particularly cattle, horses and donkeys that were least resistant to drought – were severely affected by fodder shortages. Many dead carcasses were visible throughout the hardest hit parts of Niger and Mali. Dakoro, Filingué and Ouallam were among the worst affected zones. While no epidemics were reported (only food deficiencies and parasites) it was noted that coping capacities appeared to be stretched to the limit by continuing high cereal prices that translated into poor terms of trade in the selling livestock to buy cereals;
- Employment loss: Because of food insecurity, many people were migrating in increasing numbers to larger population centres in search of employment or means to gain money. Population movement was considered a negative indicator as it could have a detrimental impact on families, communities and security.

On 22 July 2005, the International Federation launched an Emergency Appeal seeking CHF 18,243,483 to assist 44,400 households over a period of six months. While the Federation Emergency Appeal put forth immediate response efforts, those longer-term in nature were left for further definition pending programme support, general activity progress and evolution of the crisis at hand. After initial emergency response efforts and with the structural nature of the crisis in Niger and other affected countries becoming clearer, it became apparent that the initial six-month timeframe incorporating emergency, post-crisis and developmental activities was too tight. By mid-January 2006, activities undertaken as part of the emergency appeal had reached 644,525 people (beyond the revised target

1 In French: Comité Inter-Etate pour la Lutte contre la Sécheresse au Sahel
of 536,000 beneficiaries), mainly due to a high response to supplementary feeding for malnourished children and their families. The appeal was subsequently revised; the number of targeted people was increased to 76,571 families (536,000 beneficiaries) and the timeframe was extended until end of July 2006. In line with these changes, the Appeal budget was increased to CHF 31,242,371 (USD 24,051,094 or EUR 19,798,714) on 13 April 2006.

Among the various programmes of the Sahel operation, principal beneficiaries included moderately malnourished children and their families, households suffering from severe food shortages, the elderly, the ill, orphans and disadvantaged pastoralist communities. Through the Red Cross/Red Crescent intervention, the assisted populations benefited from sensitization and education campaigns as well as community projects such as food-for-work, building and repair of wells, health, nutrition and hygiene training, skill enhancement and professional development.

This operation was effectively planned and managed, and achieved clear impact. Based on the initial success in delivering the intended assistance, initiatives were undertaken to implement plans previously outlined in the appeal, with a reasonable expectation that donors would support the activities and meet their obligations accordingly. Unfortunately, the anticipated funding support did not materialize, but the Federation had already engaged and committed with the National Societies and other partners. As a result, the operation was faced with a considerable deficit (see attached final financial report). While this may raise valid questions over financial management and discipline, the Federation will resolve the situation transparently, working with the concerned National Societies. For further questions related to this issue, please refer to the list of <contact details> provided at the end of this report.

Analysis of the operation - objectives, achievements and impact

Goal: Provide support to the affected Red Cross and Red Crescent national societies in order to decrease and further prevent vulnerability to food insecurity and malnutrition by immediately responding in the form of livelihood interventions for 76,571 households (536,000 beneficiaries) over a six-month period. [As per the Revised Plan of Action of 7 August 2005].

Specific objective 1 (Relief - general food distributions): Distribute a monthly general food ration to 76,571 households (536,000 people) in Burkina Faso, Mali, Mauritania and Niger.

Achievements

Burkina Faso: Food distributions in the Northern provinces of Burkina Faso were completed by the end of April 2006. However, following a field visit undertaken by the Federation, Burkinabe Red Cross Society and the Luxembourg Red Cross in Yatenga, Loroum and Soum provinces in December 2005, it was found that the northern regions still experienced severe effects of the drought as well as attacks by caterpillars and seed-eating birds. In some areas, food stocks could potentially last only two months since some producers were already eating their new crop while they harvested. The assessment mission concluded that distributions needed to be continued in these areas, especially Oudalan, Soum, Yatenga, Loroum, Soum and Oudalan provinces.

Consequently, a supplementary round of distributions was done in Soum, Oudalan and Yatenga, reaching 19 sites and 8,984 households with approximately 998 metric tonnes (MT) of foodstuffs. Rations comprised of the following: 70 kg of millet, 20 kg of rice, 15 kg of niebe and 6 litres of vegetable oil per household in Oudalan Province; 60 kg of millet or sorghum, 30 kg of rice, 15 kg of niebe and 6 litres of vegetable oil in Soum and Yatenga provinces.

Mali: Mali Red Cross distributed commodities provided by the World Food Programme (WFP). In total, 41,413 children, aged between 5 and 59 months, benefited from 1.491 MT of food.
Mali Red Cross, supported directly by the Federation, provided an additional 329 MT of food. Four distribution rounds were planned over 120 days and took place at 104 sites among 14 communes in Timbuktu, Goundam and Gourma-Rharous. They targeted 10,226 children, of whom 4,036 were female. Rations were composed of 250 grammes of enriched flour (CSB), 30 grammes of oil and 20 grammes of sugar per child per day.

Niger: The Federation completed its two rounds of general food distribution in Tillabéri and Agadez provinces by mid-October 2005, in line with the onset of the year’s harvest. An estimated 143,558 beneficiaries were reached and over 3.327 MT of foodstuffs distributed.

Given the immense distances involved both within and between distribution areas, two logistical hubs were established for each distribution centre – one in Filingué and one in Agadez. A dedicated group of Red Cross Society of Niger volunteers were recruited and trained for the operation (130 in Tillabéri and 50 in Agadez). The Red Cross teams worked in close cooperation with village heads and local leaders in identifying and confirming beneficiaries.

Impact
The nutritional status of vulnerable families was markedly increased. It was estimated that calorie intake had been raised from 90 calories per person to 1,777 calories per person, which was within the accepted norm of 2,100 calories per person.

Constraints
Targeting and initial estimates of numbers of beneficiaries for general food distributions were based on government census figures. As a result, beneficiary numbers were generally underestimated and members of semi-nomadic communities were not always included. Furthermore, relief teams identified a number of ‘gap villages’ with equivalent needs that had not been included in lists initially received. A degree of ‘on-the-spot diplomacy’ and flexibility ended up being demonstrated by Federation relief teams in allocating rations and adjusting second round distributions in order to meet the needs of additional people vulnerable throughout a number of communities.

The distances and remote nature of many villages created logistical challenges and an increased workload for relief distributions – in one case mules were used as a local means of transportation for general food distributions. In Burkina Faso, the greatest constraints were distances between the capital, Ouagadougou, and main areas of operation, posing a challenge in purchasing, transport and general programme implementation. Distributions in areas such as Soum were complicated by the existence of large areas of swampy land following the rainy season, making access highly difficult. To counter the problem, distribution points were established in the nearest dry areas. Although new distribution points posed greater travelling distances for beneficiaries, they remained accessible by cart enabling the local population to still receive much needed food assistance in a fairly timely manner.

In Mali, transport was challenging as some villages were not reachable by road; ‘pinasses’ or motorized pirogues were, therefore, rented. Unfortunately, pinasses could not ensure totally secure transportation since some goods could become wet and unusable and others could be lost overboard. Furthermore, the duration of distributions in Mali was prolonged due to difficulties in the identification of children as many bear similar names. In addition, due to migration habits, organizing distributions for nomadic populations was generally a challenge.

Specific objective 2: (Health – supplementary feeding): Provide basic health services through emergency supplementary feeding for targeted vulnerable children aged under five years, to a total population of 24,500 in Niger.

Achievements
Red Cross/Red Crescent supplementary feeding programmes were operational in Niger since 1 August 2005 in cooperation with the French Red Cross (who already had an established bilateral programme in Niger), the Qatari Red Crescent and the Spanish Red Cross in the regions of Tahoua, Maradi, Zinder, Tanout and Agadez. By the close of September 2005, the government of Niger had a new protocol in place, establishing its responsibility for the nutritional situation in the country. By that time, the Federation was questioning the merits of a ‘parallel system’ of a supplementary feeding being conducted by the international humanitarian community as a long-term venture. It became clear that the Federation, in partnership with the Red Cross Society of Niger needed to assist government regional authorities in making their health centre personnel more tangibly responsible for the management of malnutrition.
By mid-January 2006, 48,525 moderately malnourished children had been treated through the Red Cross/Red Crescent supplementary feeding centres at Tahoua, Maradi, Zinder, Agadez-Arlit and Tanout. An additional 3,825 moderately malnourished children were treated between February and September 2006. In addition to the treatment rations for malnourished children (UNIMIX), their families received protection rations, bringing the total number of beneficiaries to 291,150. The protection rations were composed of 100 kg of cereals, 50 kg of beans and four litres of vegetable oil per month. This ration was halved after the harvest (end of October 2005), and was discontinued completely in December 2005.

Constraints
The caseload of supplementary feeding centres was higher than expected, putting additional strain and workload on Red Cross volunteers and delegates. The overwhelming response to supplementary feeding and the provision of family protection rations – the combination of a health programme and relief activity – posed challenges for ensuring quality programming, adequate training and service provision, general staff supervision and management.

Another main challenge for the supplementary feeding treatment programme was the prevalence of malaria and other endemic diseases in Niger. As a result, the health programme of the Qatari Red Crescent involved additional training and treatment for malaria as part of its supplementary feeding activities. Vaccination programmes were also implemented at a number of the feeding centres.

The protection ratios that were being provided to families with malnourished children were ultimately discontinued due to the following reasons:
- Anecdotal evidence indicated that children were been kept deliberately malnourished so that their families could receive the rations;
- Observations by staff and volunteers showed that some mothers took their children to the health centres only when there were distributions of family rations;
- Some women gave their children purgative plants to keep them thin, thus eligible for the programme.

Specific objective 3 (relief – cash distribution): As per the Revised Plan of Action of 7 August 2005, a cash distribution was foreseen targeting 20,000 beneficiaries, or 4,000 households, to communities in Niger and Mali.

Achievements
As of 18 November 2005, cash distributions were completed at Tanout assisting 34,278 beneficiaries (5,713 households) in 88 villages and three pastoralist settlements. One-time cash grants of XOF 120,000 (approximately USD 240 or EUR 182), were provided to each household.

As part of the cash project – and through a unique partnership between the Federation, British Red Cross, Swedish Red Cross and University of Arizona – a monitoring regime began in the aftermath of the distributions to assess their impact at household, village, market and regional levels. Quantitative and qualitative information gathering also focused on the impact of cash distributions on the nutritional status of recipient and non-recipient households. The report of the evaluation is available upon request.

In summary (according to the Phase III evaluation report), households that received financial support from the Red Cross/Red Crescent were less likely to be indebted (4.9 per cent compared to 25.3 per cent). Among indebted households, cash recipients were lesser in debt compared to those who did not receive cash (average amount to be repaid XOF 24,514 for cash villages and XOF 64,625 for control villages). These findings support reports from...
Phase I and II evaluations, which indicated that households used financial resources from the Red Cross cash distribution to pay off loans and reduce indebtedness. The reports are available upon request.

**Impact**

Assistance was provided to 5,713 vulnerable families at a critical juncture in the yearly cycle, by providing them with the means to manage their immediate economic needs and reestablish their households on a more secure financial footing.

**Constraints**

Opposition to cash distribution by some non-governmental and international organizations, coupled with unclear support from the authorities, led to a degree of confusion that came close to derailing the project. A last-minute message received from the Governor of Zinder, conveyed through the Head of the CCA (who is responsible to the Cabinet and Office of the Prime Minister), temporarily suspended cash distributions just prior to the scheduled start of the project. Following extensive negotiations, a formal agreement with the government was reached, sanctioned by the President of Niger, with full support from the Red Cross Society of Niger.

Lack of banking facilities in Tanout and surrounding remote villages led to some logistical and security challenges. However, these were successfully addressed and the project progressed well.

**Specific objective 4 (Logistics, administration and telecoms): Immediately augment the existing Red Cross and Red Crescent National Societies with logistical, administrative and telecommunications infrastructure in the four different countries of the Sahel operation.**

**Achievements**

**IT/Telecoms:** The Mali Red Cross benefited from the presence of an IT/Telecoms delegate during the first six months of the Sahel operation when the main installations were done. The Sahel operation IT/Telecoms team installed a wide area network/local area network (WAN/LAN) with an access point and Internet connection for approximately 15 users. A counterpart from the National Society was recruited and trained; before leaving Mali, the Sahel operation IT/Telecom team handed over to the IT/telecom counterpart who would ensure proper maintenance of the equipment, with support from the team in Niamey. A total of five laptops and three radios were provided by the British Red Cross and two new desktops, one network printer and radios by the Federation.

In Mauritania, the Federation installed three high frequency (HF) and very high frequency (VHF) bases in Zoucrete, Nouakchott and Nema/Nouadibhou, and two mobile HF and VHF units (with 15 handsets), in response to population movements.

In Burkina Faso, the British Red Cross provided the Burkinabe Faso Red Cross Society with four laptops, two Thuraya satellite phones as well as HF and VHF equipment in two vehicles.

In addition to IT/telecom bases that already existed in Niger, the Federation provided the Red Cross Society of Niger with one laptop, two desktops, one network printer, two HF and VHF bases for Niamey and Tahoua as well as two HF and VHF mobiles and 15 handsets. An IT/telecom counterpart was recruited and trained, and an Internet connection was provided.

**Logistics:** Overall, logistics of the operation functioned well, despite some under-staffing and staff change challenges. The fleet in Niger ran at full capacity, with 31 Federation vehicles and 11 rental vehicles covering over 200,000 km a month, often over difficult terrain. The operation in Mali was also a logistical success, as commodities were delivered to a much dispersed set of beneficiaries, also over very challenging terrains.
For the distributions that were undertaken in Burkina Faso, 333.5 MT of rice, sorghum and oil were transported from the Red Cross Society of Niger/Federation/Transport Support Unit (TSU) warehouse in Niamey to the various distribution sites. Two Federation logistics were dispatched from Niger to support the relief delegate and the Burkinabe Red Cross Society to complete the distributions and to assess the National Society’s capacities.

In Filingue-Abala (Niger), as part of food-for-work activities, a sub-office and warehouse were temporarily established at Abala. Ten Transport Support Unit trucks were dispatched as part of the food-for-work effort, and a stock of 200 MT of cereals was put in place. TSU operational hubs were based in Tahoua and Maradi, with approximately 20 trucks in each location and 30 trucks remaining in Niamey.

Logistics training in Niamey was completed, with similar training (for about 10 people per session for 3 days) undertaken in Zinder, Agadez, Tillabery, Tahoua and Maradi. The warehouse and compound of the Red Cross Society of Niger were also renovated to include a new entry zone, an improved grading to protect the area against ground water and rains as well as new roofing.

Apart from supporting the Federation and other Red Cross/Red Crescent activities, the TSU supported WFP cooperating partners such as Action Against Hunger (ACF\(^2\)), Concern and Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF) through ‘cluster deployments’ of up to ten trucks.

**Impact**
The logistics team supported Federation operations and Partner National Society programmes, concentrating its activities on the general food distributions and supplementary feeding programmes. Though the enormous distances that had to be covered (compounded by an often unreliable supply chain) posed some challenges, beneficiary needs were met in a timely and regular manner.

**Constraints**
In Burkina Faso, internal and external communications were hampered by a lack of equipment, difficult and unreliable connections and a lack of available technical personnel to pursue implementation of IT/telecoms activities.

The long distances involved in transporting goods across the region, the quality of the transport infrastructure and weather conditions at certain times, compounded by an unreliable supply chain, posed challenges for operational logistics. Despite the constraints, the Federation possessed a dynamic logistics team able to overcome obstacles so that beneficiary demands could be met in a timely and regular manner.

Among logistical challenges, one difficulty was the imposition by the Government of Niger on limits of tonnage for trucks passing through Niamey. Shipments for a number of organizations, most notably the Federation, WFP and United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF), were blocked in transit due to the new regulations which levied fines of XOF 10,000 per metric tonne on cargo exceeding 25 metric tonnes. In response, the Federation sought and received a temporary exemption for its food commodities that were already en route.

The receipt of food commodities was a complicated process since limited information tended to be provided by freight forwarders regarding expected delivery times. Discussions with freight forwarders on behalf of Sahel Operation staff improved the situation, resulting in the ultimate receipt of all goods.

**Specific objective 5 (Relief - livestock interventions for Mali and Niger):** As per the Revised Plan of Action of 7 August 2005, it was anticipated that 5,000 pastoralists would be assisted in Mali and Niger.

**Achievements**
The food distributions also provided the opportunity to undertake parallel activities in the area of livestock health and support. On 11 November 2005, livestock vaccination sensitization campaigns started in different villages in the Salam Region, in cooperation with the Malian Ministry of Livestock. Radio stations broadcasted campaign information in four local languages and heads of villages were contacted as part of the sensitization process.

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\(^2\) In French: Action Contre la Faim
In turn, 15,897 heads of livestock were vaccinated in Salam and Gourma Rharous. The number of cattle attended to was well above the original target of 10,000, despite reticence amongst pastoralists in identifying exact numbers of cattle due to taxation implications.

In December 2005 and January 2006, two rounds of fodder distributions were undertaken in the Salam Region. Their purpose was to ensure livestock fodder consumption, prevent livestock sales on the markets and guarantee fodder in cold periods. There were two main breeder selection criteria; at least one malnourished child in the household and breeders had to own between 10 and 50 livestock heads. Roughly 10,400 livestock heads benefited from fodder distributions totalling 180 MT.

**Impact**

Reinforcing vulnerable livestock, thereby enabling on-going viability of pastoralist communities through a livestock vaccination programme and the distribution of fodder, enabled them to build up their livestock capacity so as to survive the extreme temperatures period that begins in December.

**Specific objective 6 (Relief - cereal bank support for Mali and Niger):** As per the Revised Plan of Action of 7 August 2005, it was anticipated that food stocks could be placed at cereal banks in 250 of the worst affected communities in Mali and Niger.

**Achievements**

As monitoring progressed, it became evident that cereal banks could be a means of further assisting people affected by drought in Niger. Preliminary investigations suggested that as many as 50 villages could benefit from cereal banks as a means of enhancing their longer-term food security.

A project manager from the British Red Cross arrived in Niger to develop a pilot cereal bank project, along with academic staff from the University of Arizona. In addition to the funding provided by the British Red Cross, the Federation agreed to provide logistics support for the research and implementation phases of the pilot project.

Village lands were identified, sites were confirmed using the Global Positioning System (GPS) and official documents were signed by village chiefs who authorized allocation of the land. A total of 21 cereal banks were constructed in villages around Tanout; construction was completed in July, 2006, before the onset of the rainy season. The banks were built using cement bricks, concrete and steel. The rationale for using these materials to build the cereal banks, instead of local traditional materials, was based on research done (reflecting on the use of both types of products) with an important factor being the reduction of overhead costs, thus contributing to longer-term sustainability.

Twenty one village committees for cereal bank management were created and a three-day management training was conducted. Several items, including tables, chairs, notebooks, pens and cleaning products for the cereal banks, were provided. Since the cereal banks began operating during the lean season, rice sales started immediately after construction was completed and management committees were in place.

According to the original design, households were required to pay a XOF 500 membership fee in order to purchase cereals\(^3\) from the banks. In Farak, 200 households were active in the cereal banks, with each household eligible to purchase up to five tias per week. Funds collected from the sales were to be kept until after the harvest, when prices dropped significantly and more cereals could be purchased for use in the next lean season.

**Constraints**

Due to the requirement to pay membership fees, it was found out that 30 per cent of households were not accessing food in the banks by July 2006. Management committees were primarily comprised of men, and it was not possible to ascertain whether the most vulnerable households were represented in the committees. Given that literacy and numeracy skills were some of the criteria used to select members of the committee, it is likely that the most vulnerable households were not represented. In Farak, CARE had been working for two years, providing support to

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\(^3\) During a post-operation evaluation of the project, a meeting with women in Farak village revealed that they were paying XOF 850 per tia of rice in the banks, compared to XOF 1,100 in the market.
women’s village banks. The skills gained by the women in managing cereal banks could have been capitalized upon in setting up the management committee for the Red Cross-supported cereal banks. Women, who had proven their ability to manage the savings of village banks and had gained the trust of their members, could have formed the management committees. The Red Cross has realized this and in future, such interventions shall take into consideration available skills and gender balance.

Specific objective 7 (Health – post-emergency health for Niger): Sustainable health interventions to promote resilience and improve the longer-term health of the most vulnerable are advocated.

Achievements

Malnutrition strategy
As part of the technical support-transition process for the integrated health centres (CSI)\(^4\), and on behalf of the Federation and the Red Cross Society of Niger, 60 health officers and 30 general staff were trained in malnutrition screening and treatment (according to the national protocol), and supplementary feeding stock management. The training and integration of services was undertaken in 15 health centres, including Hadachimo, Mogheur, Dangona, Maboya, Illéla, Bagaroua, Séhia, Tébaram, Toulou, Edir, Dandoutchi, Tajaé, Dandaji and Moulléla. As part of the integration strategy, the Federation trained 40 Red Cross Society of Niger volunteers who will continue providing technical support to community health centres.

Because chronic malnutrition is a result of specific behaviours towards food and hygiene, the main focus of the Sahel operation health team at Tahoua was educating key people (matrons within communities and Red Cross Society of Niger volunteers) as agents who would sensitize and mobilize the local populations. To this end, 60 matrons and 40 Red Cross Society of Niger volunteers working with the CSI in Tahoua and Illéla districts were trained in nutrition information, education and communication (IEC).

Matrons were considered key people as they are usually the traditional advisers of mothers on children’s health issues within communities. Training sessions for matrons typically lasted two days while for volunteers took one day. A training of trainers (ToT) session for Red Cross Society of Niger counterparts in nutrition and education was also undertaken through the health programme in Tahoua. In addition, 150 training sessions on nutrition followed in July 2006.

Mobile health
Following a pilot mobile health team project initiated in October 2005 in the Tahoua area, a Memorandum of Understanding was entered into with the regional health authorities for on-going delivery of much needed basic health care to remote communities that lacked access to basic health services.

In November 2005, three mobile clinics were set up in Tahoua, with five trained volunteers in each. They visited 48 different sites (120 villages in three different health districts), often together with the major (nurse) from the nearest health centre. During the visits, they vaccinated children aged under five years, made prenatal and post natal consultations, sensitized women on basic health issues, conducted malnutrition screening, and provided de-worming medication.

Between March and August 2006, 9,888 children had been vaccinated and 1,906 de-wormed. The vaccination coverage in the region where the clinics were operating was more than 90 per cent. 2,674 prenatal consultations were held where women were vaccinated, and 3,731 malnourished children were identified and sent to malnutrition centres. About 8,196 women were reached with messages/information on breastfeeding issues, weaning, diarrhoea, vaccination of new-borns, malaria, use of mosquito nets, food-environmental-and body hygiene, and family planning.

Impact
The mobile health teams contributed to the improvement of access to primary health in the Tahoua region. Due to improved access, the vaccination coverage amongst children under 11 months was increased in the region and in other areas of operation under the supplementary feeding programmes.

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\(^4\) In French: Centre de Santé Intégré (CSI)
Burkina Faso, Mali, Mauritania and Niger: Food Insecurity; Appeal no. 05EA015; Final Report

Constraint
Distances to these remote villages were great, sometimes between 150 and 230 km, and road access was nonexistent.

Specific objective 8: Water and sanitation (WatSan), Niger

Achievements
Following an assessment mission undertaken in September 2005, a number of potential water and sanitation activities were outlined that were to be implemented immediately or over the mid-term and longer-term. Among the activities were the following: construction and rehabilitation of well; construction and rehabilitation of school latrines; and construction and rehabilitation of family latrines. With assistance from the Swedish Red Cross, implementation of WatSan activities began. The programme was later scaled up with financial support from the Qatari Red Crescent and it is being implemented after the close of the Sahel operation.

Eighty volunteers from the Red Cross Society of Niger were trained in Participatory Hygiene and Sanitation Transformation (PHAST), a methodology that builds on people’s innate ability to address and resolve their own problems. In turn, the Red Cross volunteers trained community-based volunteers in the targeted villages; the Red Cross volunteers were equipped with motorbikes to facilitate easy reach (five villages per volunteer). More than 70 of these volunteers conducted sensitization activities in 235 villages of Tahoua, Tillabery and Zinder. In Tahoua and in Filingué, 110 water management committees have been formed and their members trained. The committees are now responsible for managing the wells constructed/rehabilitated under the project. Similar committees will be established in Zinder. The WatSan activities will continue until end of July 2007.

Impact
Hygiene promotion, using the PHAST methodology, in Tahoua contributed towards cholera prevention – in 2006 – in areas where cholera is endemic, such as in Bouza.

Constraints
At the beginning, implementation of activities was slow because there were no community-based volunteers in the targeted villages. Due to delays in implementation, water and sanitation activities should continue for two years to assure the ownership of the infrastructure by the beneficiaries.

Specific objective 9: Logistics – capacity building

Achievements
Different trainings were provided to the Red Cross Society of Niger volunteers and staff. The sessions include a training that was held in Niamey for 15 members of the governance and executive branches of the National Society. The five-day workshop covered issues such as project planning, logistics, preparedness and response, procurement, warehousing and transport management as well as IT/telecommunications. During the last day of training, a visit to the National Society’s warehouse and a brainstorming session were undertaken about the future of logistics within the Red Cross Society of Niger. Three days of training were also held for volunteers and staff members in Zinder, Agadez, Tillabery, Tahoua and Maradi.

An emergency stock of 1,000 MT of cereals was pre-positioned for the Red Cross Society of Niger at its Niamey warehouse. The emergency stock was treated as per Federation standards, with National Society staff members trained in warehousing techniques. In the framework of the general logistics training, a specific module on warehousing was provided. At the Red Cross Society of Niger Tahoua base, a logistics counterpart was fully integrated into Federation activities.

Specific objective 10: Relief-livelihoods capacity building in Niger

Achievements
Livelihoods small grants programme
The small grants project was implemented by the Irish Red Cross in Agadez and divided into two parts; family grants and collective grants for micro-projects. Family grants were meant to assist vulnerable families until the next rainy season and reinforce their coping mechanisms in future by contributing to replenishment of their household
economy. Collective grants for micro-projects were oriented towards reinforcement of food security of local communities.

After a series of surveys and assessments, the Irish Red Cross, as the manager of the activity, decided to provide grants to ten per cent of the vulnerable populations in each village (people aged over 60 years, and pregnant/lactating women). Focus groups, with women, revealed that small animals were considered the highest priority to improve livelihood security; some women identified food as their greatest need while others indicated the need for alternative sources of income, such as weaving palm frond for sale in the local market.

Accordingly, the Red Cross implemented a programme where staff, with support from branch volunteers, purchased small ruminants (sheep and goats) in bulk for distribution to targeted households. Beneficiaries participated in assessing the general health of the animals before they were purchased. Cereals were also purchased in bulk and given to extremely vulnerable households, based on family size. Finally, palm fronds were provided directly to women to make mats, and the Red Cross volunteers assisted in marketing. This programme ended in August 2006.

Food-for-work projects: In Mali, in addition to relief food distributions, ‘food for work’ and ‘food-for-training’ programmes were implemented up to end of November 2005. ‘Food-for-work’ and ‘food-for-training’ distributions were made at the beginning and the end of the work/training sessions, and they aimed at protecting the child rations already distributed. Among the food-for-work projects were dyke construction, reforestation, water pipe construction, irrigation, warehouse construction and market gardening.

Food-for-training projects were mainly oriented towards HIV/AIDS sensitization, elimination of illiteracy and nutrition education. Beneficiaries received 2 kg of cereals and 75 grammes of oil per day when participating in a food-for-work project and 1.2 kg of cereals and 45 grammes of oil per day when participating in a training session.

In Niger, following an initial assessment and discussions with community members on the most important needs at the community level, food-for-work projects were designed and implemented in Agadez, in Filingue-Abala, and in Tahoua.

A pilot project was undertaken in Fadama and Tillimoune, two villages north of Abala and close to the Mali border. Activities in both villages focused on provision of water and agriculture. They included:

- Soil recuperation and improvement of a water catchment in Fadama and Tillimoune;
- Rehabilitation of a community well in Fadama and Tillimoune.

By July 2006, 1,113 workers had benefited from the food-for-work projects in Tillimoune and Fadama. In Tillimoune, the projects included well rehabilitation and soil rehabilitation (through construction of half moons), construction of stone walls and planting trees. Rehabilitation of wells was completed, and 2,630 forest half moons, 5,008 agricultural half-moons and 4.16 km of stone lines were installed. More than 6,000 trees were planted. In Fadama, in addition to soil rehabilitation, there were three additional projects; one to deepen a pond (to make it a year-round catchment area), the second to build four micro-dams (to slow down water flow so that water would filter down to the water table), and the third to rehabilitate a deep well. All projects were identified by communities. Well reconstruction and the four micro-dams were completed.

In Tahoua, four food-for-work projects were conducted to recuperate 80 hectares of land through the construction of half-moons and planting acacia trees. A total of 23,710 half-moons were dug, and 5,200 acacia trees were planted. A rotation system for teams of workers was established so that each team would work for one day out of three, leaving the other two days available for working in their fields. At least 719 persons, including 77 branch volunteers and 10 technical specialists, worked in the projects and received sufficient food to meet their family needs for one month.

Impact
The assistance provided to 5,713 vulnerable families at a critical juncture in the yearly cycle, helped them with the means to manage their immediate economic needs and re-establish their households on a more secure financial footing.
The relatively substantial cash grant provided vulnerable households with a choice in coping mechanisms. Evaluation reports indicate that families that benefited from small grants used the funds to buy foodstuffs, cattle and necessary household implements, such as carts, and to pay off debts. This showed that households prioritized investing in their longer-term economic viability over shorter-term needs.

Households were not constrained to pay off debts by selling their harvest at a loss. Cash-in-hand enabled agro-pastoralist communities to decide when to buy and when to sell, thereby ensuring better management of their harvest and livestock. It also enabled stockpiling of millet, to help families apportion their harvest to last them through the lean period, which soon followed.

Constraints
Unfortunately, one of the dams constructed in Fadama did not hold, and there was insufficient time remaining in the project to rehabilitate the dam. In addition, trees were not planted as expected and the Red Cross eventually gave 2,000 of the trees to the Department of the Environment for planting elsewhere.

Specific objective 11 (Reporting-media-communications – advocacy and public information): Promote and disseminate within the target audience the activities highlighted in the Supplementary Plan of Action – Appeal Extension and overall Sahel operation.

Achievements
Throughout the operation, the Federation information delegate held regular interviews with international, local and regional media. The delegate also accompanied camera teams to the field, and briefed journalists interested in the relief operation as well as communication teams of Partner National Societies. In addition, key documents, photographs and fact sheets were developed and shared with partners, stakeholders and national societies interested and/or involved in the operation. Articles were published on the Federation’s website and a dedicated section focusing on the Sahel food crisis was created.

Continuous training was provided to the Federation regional information officer, in Dakar, on the professional role foreseen within the Federation, focusing on information-gathering during disasters and reporting. This aimed at ensuring continuity of highlighting forgotten disasters once the operation closed. In addition, documents on information management during disasters – produced by the Inter-Americas Communicators Network – were shared with the Red Cross Society of Niger press officer.

Training packages on promotion of Humanitarian Values and Red Cross principles, including information on the Code of Conduct of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and NGOs in Disaster Relief, were given to Federation staff and Partner National Societies working in the Sahel operation (in Burkina Faso, Mali and Niger). The aim was to reinforce knowledge of Red Cross principles and values among the volunteers involved in the food-crisis operation, especially newcomers.

Coordination
Within the Red Cross/Red Crescent Movement
Coordination and cooperation within logistics, human resources and programme support was established between the Federation and Participating National Societies, in particular the French Red Cross, the Irish Red Cross, the Qatari Red Crescent, the Saudi Arabian Red Crescent and the Spanish Red Cross. As the Sahel operation developed, contact was also established with the Iranian Red Crescent as it has a long-standing and noteworthy presence in Niger.

The Federation regional delegation in Dakar facilitated and coordinated the deployment of Regional Disaster Response Team (RDRT) members from West Africa. Staff provided by the National Societies of Algeria, Benin, Cameroon, Congo, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Guinea, Nigeria and Togo played a crucial role since the earliest stages of the operation. Their involvement was pivotal for the development, implementation and success of various activities. It signalled the reliable expertise available throughout different countries in the region.

The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) provided regular security updates. ICRC also provided training for volunteers from the Red Cross Society of Niger, in Tahoua.
With beneficiaries
At the local and regional-country level, relief and supplementary feeding activities were undertaken in collaboration with local and provincial authorities to facilitate coordination while underlining and ensuring respect for Fundamental Principles of the Red Cross Movement. Heads of villages were, in particular, closely linked to the Red Cross/Red Crescent response due to their pivotal role within communities.

With government agencies
An effective working relationship was established with the main governmental bodies involved in the crisis – such as Cellule de Crise Alimentaire (CCA) and Système d’Alerte Précoces (SAP) – and with key government of Niger ministries, in cooperation with the Red Cross Society of Niger. The ministries included the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Community Development. In Tahoua (Niger), the Red Cross/Red Crescent worked very closely with regional government health staff. This facilitated competency development and the eventual transfer of supplementary feeding centres to the government.

With other agencies
Since the onset of the Sahel operation, the Federation collaborated closely with United Nations agencies (particularly in the organization of transport services and provision of food assistance), and the broader humanitarian community, most notably in the health sector.

The operation had a series of partnerships, which enabled the Red Cross/Red Crescent to draw on other forms of expertise, as well as additional financial resources to support the activities. Collegial support for various Federation activities was received from organizations such as Concern, GOAL, Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF), Oxfam and Save the Children-UK.

Through the Transport Support Unit (TSU), the Federation developed relationships with WFP and its implementing partners. Greater numbers of beneficiaries were assisted on a timely basis through food distribution and food-for-work than would have been possible had the TSU not been established.

The Spanish Red Cross in Maradi had an agreement with MSF-France, where severely malnourished children would be referred to MSF for treatment, and moderately malnourished children seeking assistance at MSF clinics would be referred to Red Cross clinics for treatment.

The British Red Cross contracted the services of the University of Arizona to monitor the impact of the cash distribution project in Tanout. This had the effect of bringing in highly qualified experts who provided objectivity in monitoring data and impact.

Concern referred children (when they have reached 80 per cent of their weight) from its acute malnutrition feed centres to the Red Cross/Red Crescent. Concern invested considerable time to ensure that its supplementary feeding activities did not overlap those of the Red Cross.

National Society Capacity Building
In general, all sectors of the intervention contained elements for training and support of volunteers and staff of Host National Societies. Among the various aspects of the Sahel operation, a network of more than 360 volunteers was trained as part of the initial emergency response in the areas of relief, health care, logistics, administration, telecommunications, reporting and media relations. In a relatively short time, their knowledge of the Red Cross/Red Crescent Movement was greatly enhanced. As key players in an operational partnership, volunteers and staff consistently showed their dedication and skills.

The counterpart system was very successful, especially in supplementary feeding centres, mobile health clinics, community health, water and sanitation, and food-for-work. In all these sectors, activities were implemented using counterparts from local Red Cross branches.

Training of Burkinabe Red Cross Society volunteers in registration and distribution procedures was undertaken in conjunction with its first aid section. In each province of Burkina Faso, a team of 30 volunteers supported by a supervisor, team leader and logistician was established. Volunteers were then deployed to the various target areas or ‘départements’ within the province and the supervisor/team leader continued to work alongside the volunteers.
With support from the operation, the Tahoua branch of the Red Cross Society of Niger rehabilitated its offices, increased its professional competency and strengthened its financial management capability. A number of volunteers were trained and they in turn provided support to local health centres and other key community health activities. The branch also developed its logistics capacity to provide necessary support, when needed, in Tahoua.

**Monitoring and evaluation**

With a variety of Movement actors continuing their presence in Niger following the closure of the operation, a focused evaluation was commissioned by the Federation to review efforts undertaken under the Sahel Operation. The evaluation particularly emphasized on Niger (which was the most affected country, and where the operation really focused on), to help determine how the remaining actors can capitalize on their presence, interests and strengths in reflection of continuing needs in the country.

The evaluation focused on three thematic areas: appropriateness of the disaster response intervention; processes; and relationships. The findings indicate that through the Sahel operation, the Red Cross/Red Crescent contributed to the reduction of the short-term effects of the drought. The Red Cross/Red Crescent intervention helped to reduce food insecurity and addressed the needs of moderately malnourished children, among others.

**For further information specifically related to this operation please contact:**

- **In Dakar:** Alasan Senghore, Federation Head of Zone for West and Central Africa, Dakar; email: alasan.senghore@ifrc.org; telephone +221.869.36.41; fax +221.860.20.02.

All International Federation assistance seeks to adhere to the Code of Conduct for the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and Non-Governmental Organizations (NGO's) in Disaster Relief and is committed to the Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Disaster Response (Sphere) in delivering assistance to the most vulnerable.

For longer-term programmes in this or other countries or regions, please refer to the Federation’s Annual Appeal. For support to or for further information concerning Federation programmes or operations in this or other countries, or for national society profiles, please also access the Federation’s website at http://www.ifrc.org
Final Financial Report

I. Consolidated Response to Appeal

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Health &amp; Care</th>
<th>Disaster Management</th>
<th>Humanitarian Values</th>
<th>Organisational Development</th>
<th>Coordination &amp; Implementation</th>
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### Income

**Cash contributions**

- American Red Cross: 47,439
- Andorra Red Cross: 18,936
- Australian Red Cross: 405,684
- Austrian Red Cross: 23,250
- Belgian Red Cross (French): 972
- Belgian Red Cross (Flanders): 411
- British Red Cross: 3,990,634
- Canada - Private Donors: 1,332
- Canadian Red Cross: 36,574
- Croatian Red Cross: 12,783
- Danish Red Cross: 909,598
- Fiji Private Donors: 3,760
- Finnish Red Cross: 622,569
- French Red Cross: 1,828
- German Red Cross: 30,828
- Great Britain - Private Donors: 1,130
- Greek Government: 310,890
- Hong Kong Red Cross: 6,421
- Icelandic Red Cross: 66,277
- IFRC: 1,222
- Irish Red Cross: 752,283
- Italian Government: 775,000
- Japanese Red Cross: 329,662
- Liechtenstein Red Cross: 21,020
- Monaco Red Cross: 46,500
- Netherlands Red Cross: 558,157
- New Zealand Red Cross: 19,860
- Norwegian Red Cross: 891,171
- On Line donations: 69,911
- Other: 4,514
- Philip Morris Int.: 66,017
- Spain - Private Donors: 1,548
- Spanish Red Cross: 4,581
- Swedish Red Cross: 1,647,174
- Switzerland - Private Donors: 27,529
- United States - Private Donors: 3,701

**C1. Cash contributions**: 11,710,165

### Reallocations (within appeal or from/to another appeal)

- Australian Red Cross: 0
- British Red Cross: 0
- Danish Red Cross: 0
- Icelandic Red Cross: 0
- Japanese Red Cross: 0
- Netherlands Red Cross: 0
- Norwegian Red Cross: -11,505
- Swedish Red Cross: 0

### C3. Reallocations (within appeal or from/to another appeal)

- -11,505

### Inkind Goods & Transport

- Other: 12,569,589

**C4. Inkind Goods & Transport**: 12,569,589

Prepared on 25/Sep/2007
**Inkind Personnel**

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<td>Icelandic Red Cross</td>
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**Other Income**

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<th>Source</th>
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<td><strong>C6. Other Income</strong></td>
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C. Total Income = SUM(C1..C6)

\[25,440,758\]

D. Total Funding = B + C

\[25,440,758\]

## II. Balance of Funds

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Health &amp; Care</th>
<th>Disaster Management</th>
<th>Humanitarian Values</th>
<th>Organisational Development</th>
<th>Coordination &amp; Implementation</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>F. Closing Balance</td>
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Prepared on 25/Sep/2007
III. Budget Analysis / Breakdown of Expenditure

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<tr>
<th>Account Groups</th>
<th>Budget</th>
<th>Expenditure</th>
<th>Variances</th>
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<td><strong>Transport &amp; Storage</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Depreciation</td>
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<td><strong>Program Support</strong></td>
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<td>Program Support</td>
<td>1,700,126</td>
<td>1,343,557</td>
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<td><strong>Total Program Support</strong></td>
<td>1,700,126</td>
<td>1,343,557</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL EXPENDITURE (D)</strong></td>
<td>31,563,799</td>
<td>25,879,592</td>
<td>25,879,592</td>
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### III. Budget Analysis / Breakdown of Expenditure

<table>
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<th>Account Groups</th>
<th>Budget</th>
<th>Expenditure</th>
<th>Variance</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
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<td>Health &amp; Care</td>
<td>Disaster Management</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>A</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>A - B</td>
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<td>BUDGET (C)</td>
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<td>31,563,799</td>
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<tr>
<td>VARIANCE (C - D)</td>
<td>5,684,207</td>
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### IV. Project Details

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<th>Project</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Opening Balance</th>
<th>Income</th>
<th>Expenditure</th>
<th>Closing Balance</th>
<th>Budget</th>
<th>Variance</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>A</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>A + B + C</td>
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<td>Disaster Management</td>
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<td>31,563,799</td>
<td>5,684,207</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>BURKINA FASO, MALI, MAU</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>25,440,758</td>
<td>-25,879,592</td>
<td>-438,834</td>
<td>31,563,799</td>
<td>5,684,207</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

All figures are in Swiss Francs (CHF)

Prepared on 25/Sep/2007