

FINAL REPORT



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

SOUTH ASIA: DROUGHT

12 June 2002

This Final Report is intended for reporting on emergency appeals

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 178 countries. For more information: www.ifrc.org

Appeal No. 17/2000; Launched on: 6 July 2000 for 6 months for CHF 5,603,930 to assist 80,000 beneficiaries. Period covered: 6 July 2000- April 2002.

IN BRIEF

Appeal coverage: 52.6%

Related Appeals 01.24/2002: South Asia Regional Programmes; 20/01: India Earthquake Rehabilitation; 32/2001: Afghan Crisis; 1.28/2002: Pakistan Annual Appeal

A slow response to the appeal hampered the launch of the operation to assist the drought affected population. Support from among others ECHO, German Red Cross, Norwegian Red Cross, the Gates Foundation provided the necessary impetus for the operation to succeed.

Summary w

This report summarises operations in **India** and **Pakistan**. In **Afghanistan**, a drought relief operation was proceeding in the worst affected areas focusing on provision of food and non-food items, together with deployment of mobile medical teams. In November 2000, a joint agreement was signed with the ICRC relating to the drought operation which is reported on separately in co-operation with the ICRC.

In India, as a result of an assessment conducted by the Indian Red Cross Society (IRCS) and a Federation assessment in December 2000, the operation was extended to cover an additional state, Orissa. During the same month a Federation/IRCS assessment in all three drought affected states (Gujarat, Rajasthan and Orissa) was carried out. As a result, the priorities for the operation compared to those stated in the Appeal, which had been launched seven months earlier, were changed to reflect findings made during the assessment.

The programme was intended to distribute supplementary food thereby improving the nutritional status of the most vulnerable. It was learned, however, that the distributions were often the only food to which they had access during this period. Therefore the operation in India was extended to meet the urgent needs of 20,000 families, with the average family size calculated to four persons. Another change compared to the appeal was that the planned distributions of mixed seeds to 4,000 families and the establishment of a nutritional monitoring system were taken out of the Plan of Action in order to make priority for the mentioned food distributions.

In Pakistan the original objective stated in the appeal was to support 50,000 beneficiaries. Following the response to the appeal, the plan of action was changed to target some 205,000 beneficiaries (or 37,862 families). In summary; the operation came to target more beneficiaries than the expected numbers in the appeal.

Food distributions, in general, in both countries were well organised and carried out successfully. In Pakistan the distributions were finalised by March 2001 while in India they were completed in July.

The reasons for operational delay in India was the major earthquake disaster which hit the State of Gujarat in January 2001 causing a halt in the drought operation. Delays were also caused due to administrative reasons.

The Context

From early 2000 onwards, severe drought affected vast areas of South Asia, including western India, southern and central Pakistan and southern Afghanistan. Although the monsoon rain during the summer of 2000 improved the situation in some parts, drought continued to prevail in many places in the Indian states of Rajasthan and Gujarat, as well as in the Baluchistan province of Pakistan. The drought seriously affected the livelihoods of the population in those areas.

The situation was further compounded by the fact that the water-table had receded dramatically and traditional water catchments had gone dry. As a result, the practise of rain-fed agriculture became increasingly difficult. Rural people faced a real threat to their food security while a distress sale of livestock became rampant - in India a cow that would cost about Rs 12,000 became available for Rs 1,000, a twelfth of the price. A government cattle feeding programme was established in order to ease the existing fodder problem in the area.

In India the drought in most areas was eased by the monsoon rains of the summer 2000. However, the monsoon failed to make any significant difference to the situation in some areas, particularly the district of Kutch in Western *Gujarat* and certain districts in Western *Rajasthan*. The majority of food for work programmes or relief camps established by the state governments of Gujarat and Rajasthan closed at the onset of the monsoon. These sites provided drought victims with some employment on projects such as the construction of roads, entitling them to limited wages in cash and subsidised cereals.

As a result of the large numbers of people affected by the drought, many families could not benefit from the government programme. Some 7,500 villages spread over 145 talukas (blocks) in 15 districts were severely affected during year 2000.

Based upon a report made by the Orissa Red Cross State Branch in December 2000 it became clear that Orissa state was equally in need of assistance as those states initially identified in the appeal.

Like in some areas in India, the drought in **Pakistan** and in neighbouring **Afghanistan** had been developing for some years though awareness of the severity of the situation peaked during the first quarter of 2000. The causes of the drought can be attributed to a combination of natural factors, principally the scarcity of rain for several years, and man-made factors such as deforestation and overgrazing, the erosion of traditional rainwater harvesting systems, the indiscriminate construction of tube wells and the promotion through government subsidies of water-intensive cash crops in arid areas. Consequently, the result was a crisis situation.

Water scarcity affected different areas and groups of people in various ways and to different degrees, but a number of problems were common. In the case of settled farmers, crop production was reduced over the drought years, which adversely affected both income generation and, particularly for subsistence farmers, their domestic food supply. In some areas, the water situation became so bad that families and communities were forced to move to new water sources.

In late May 2000, a Federation assessment team (DREF funded) conducted a vulnerability assessment in the areas. The DREF funds also covered the procurement of food items used during an earlier distribution to the worst affected districts. Based on the findings of the May 2000 assessment, a Federation appeal was launched on 6 July 2000, seeking CHF 5,603,930 to support 80,000 beneficiaries during six months in India and Pakistan and to monitor the situation of 3.5 million people in both countries as well as in Afghanistan.

A slow response to the 6 July appeal hampered the launch of the operation to assist the drought affected population. However substantial contributions during late 2000 provided the necessary impetus for the operation to proceed.

INDIA

Red Cross action, achievements and constraints

Appeal objectives for India:

- Provide appropriate relief in the form of food rations to around 30,000 of the most vulnerable who have little or no access to government and other agencies' relief efforts. Each person will receive 10 kg of rice, 2 kg of lentils, 0,5 litres of oil per month. This ration is intended to complement the existing diet of beneficiaries.
- Distribute 18 kg of mixed seeds to approximately 4,000 families in the two worst affected States. Monitor relief activities to ensure that vulnerable people are not overlooked.
- Set indicators and monitor the situation so that the severity of the drought can be accurately assessed.
- Establish a simple nutritional monitoring system, in order to gain a scientifically based picture of the nutritional situation in targeted areas.
- Build the capacity of local Red Cross branches to ensure that, if the situation does worsen due to rain failure, the branches are capable of responding rapidly and effectively.

During the months immediately following the launch of the appeal, the IRCS undertook limited relief activities in the Kutch and Churu districts of Gujarat and Rajasthan. The IRCS national headquarters coordinated its relief operation work with the Rajasthan and Gujarat state branches, primarily targeting drought affected populations working at relief sites mostly run by the government.

Relief efforts were directly facilitated through the district Red Cross branches in Churu (Rajasthan) and Kutch (Gujarat). In Kutch, food distributions were carried out through the Kutch branch to 2,000 beneficiaries who were identified in the following administrative blocks; Abadasa, Bhachau, Bhuj,

Rapar and Lakhpat. Besides food distribution, it was also thought to be appropriate to undertake some degree of infrastructure development at the sites of the food-for-work programmes. These sites were not equipped to cater for the needs of women and children as there was no place for families to rest and drinking water is scarce. As a result, the Federation provided the Kutch branch with funding for 400 tents and ten water tanks for the food-for-work sites.

Although fodder for cattle was not included in the initial appeal, the need to provide fodder was felt appropriate in Churu where cattle often represent the sole source of income for people. Accordingly, the Federation provided funding for fodder distributions in Churu. The section of the population dependent upon animals also needed some relief assistance in order to reduce vulnerability. As the drought continued to unfold in areas such as Kutch, the Federation and IRCS operation was not limited to providing targeted relief assistance but also concentrated on strengthening the existing capacity of local state and district branches, especially with regard to disaster preparedness.

Through the local IRCS branches, the Federation proposed to continue monitoring the food security and nutritional status of the drought affected populace in those areas where the monsoon had little or no impact. This while the government and local authorities concentrated on provision of drinking water supplied by tankers.

A Federation relief delegate was assigned to the operation in November. In December a report from the Orissa state branch showed that many people were also affected in this state. Orissa is one of the states of India which is chronically affected by drought, especially in its western part. The same month, a second Federation and IRCS team carried out a follow-up assessment in the three drought affected states; *Gujarat, Rajasthan* and *Orissa*.

The team confirmed the threat to food security and recommended an extension of the operation until 30 April 2001. Most farmers were exhausting their resources and it was estimated that the situation would become critical in 4-6 weeks' time. A medical doctor in the team identified slight malnutrition and vitamin D deficiency, especially amongst children.

The extended programme in India focused on 20,000 beneficiary families in the above mentioned states. Out of the total number of targeted beneficiary families, ECHO funded assistance to 15,500 families in Rajasthan and Gujarat. The 4,500 families in Orissa were supported by funds from the Norwegian Red Cross.

Three districts in Rajasthan namely, Jodhpur, Barmer and Jaisalmer and one district in Gujarat: Kutch, were identified by the assessment team as highly affected areas. These areas were suffering from a scarcity of food, water and fodder, occurring simultaneously.

Tendering, procurement and distribution •

The tendering and procurement was arranged by the IRCS during the period February to April 2001.

Drought relief distributions commenced March 2001. Whilst distributions in the states of Orissa and Rajasthan were largely finalised over the following two months, final distributions in Gujarat were only completed the second week of June.

The tendering process for Rajasthan commenced in January and procurement was completed in February. The distribution of food aid began early March in three districts in Rajasthan: Jodhpur, Barmer and Jaisalmer and was largely completed for all 10,000 beneficiary families by May 2001 (see difficulties encountered below).

In Gujarat, the tendering and procurement process were finalised in April. The first round of distributions commenced 7 May 2001. The final round of distributions to 5,500 beneficiary families were completed 15 June 2001.

In Orissa, the tendering and procurement process were finalised in March and the first phase of the relief distributions commenced on 16 March 2001. The final round of distributions to 4,500 beneficiary families were completed on 22 April.

Difficulties encountered in implementation •

- While Rajasthan has continued to endure the drought, the population of Gujarat was affected by yet another humanitarian disaster during the project period. At 08.50 hours on Friday, 26 January 2001, a series of powerful earthquakes struck Gujarat state, peaking at a massive 7.9 on the Richter scale. The epicentre of the quake was 30 km north of the town of Bhuj, in Gujarat's Kutch district. The devastation caused by the earthquake resulted in the drought relief operation in Gujarat coming to a halt until April 2001.
- The need for food relief in Gujarat increased substantially after the earthquake and impacted on the original distribution plans to drought affected beneficiaries. When Indian Red Cross carried out distributions, some community leaders demanded that food be given to everyone in need, or not be distributed at all.
- The beneficiary villages in both states were widely scattered across the region, some difficult to access. Each distribution centre served only two to three villages, (an average of 300 families) so the distribution implementation was time consuming and the resulting distribution costs were high.
- In Rajasthan, the last distribution was suspended because of extreme weather conditions with heat and sand storms causing the closure of roads to the more remote villages. Distributions were resumed and completed by 2 July 2001.
- In Gujarat the final distribution was interrupted by the fear of a cyclone from 23 - 28 May 2001. People were advised to remain in their homes during the this period. Immediately following the cyclone threat, very heavy rainfall fell on the region lasting four days. As a result, the final distribution was delayed to 3 June 2001.
- In Orissa, transport and communication were problematic in the most remote interiors of Western Orissa where the roads were very rough and narrow.

Changes of an operational nature •

During the assessment at the beginning of December 2000, the joint Federation and IRCS team found that the preferred staple food was millet (a local cereal) rather than rice. The rural population in the drought affected areas cooked bread (chapati) and did not have the cooking utensils to boil rice, rendering the original plan inappropriate. It was then agreed that the operation was to be modified accordingly.

As already mentioned, a report made in December 2000 by the Orissa State Branch on the drought situation in Orissa led the IRCS in collaboration with the Federation to undertake an assessment. The outcome led to a distribution programme in the state.

State of implementation compared with objectives to be achieved •

Nutritional Survey:

In March 2001, the Federation health delegate in Gujarat worked together with the World Food Programme, Save the Children and Oxfam to conduct a nutritional survey to determine the prevalence of acute malnutrition in the district of Kutch. The focus of the survey was to determine the effects of the drought and the earthquake on the nutritional status of the population and plan assistance accordingly. Though the district of Kutch was also recovering from the large scale earthquake that devastated much of the area, many nutrition-related issues were the result of the drought. As the target population in Rajasthan had experienced similar drought conditions and were of the same economic status, some of the findings could be extrapolated to drought-affected regions of neighbouring Rajasthan.

Distribution of Relief Items:

The programme was designed to distribute supplementary food and thereby improve the nutritional status of the most vulnerable in the severe drought affected regions. However during distributions, it was learned from both local authorities as well as the beneficiaries themselves that the distributions were often the only food to which they had access during this period. Two changes were made to the original plan of distribution in Gujarat and Rajasthan:

- There was a change to the original distribution plan which was supposed to have one month intervals between each distribution.
- The schedule was changed to every two weeks after a request from the local authorities because the beneficiaries had no other access to food. The final distribution was also a double ration in most cases.

Procurement •

Procurement was completed based on the IRCS's tendering procedures. Quotations were collected by the respective state branches and forwarded to the national HQ, which carried out the review and approval process on 23 January 2001 for *Gujarat* and *Rajasthan* and beginning March for *Orissa*.

Distribution •

The supplementary food basket consisted of 20 kg of millet (badzra), 5 kg of lentil (moong dal) and 2 litres of cooking oil per family per month in Gujarat and Rajasthan. In Orissa, the food basket was the same as above with the exception that rice remained being the main commodity (i.e. was not replaced with badzra).

The distributions were carried out in the three designated districts of *Rajasthan*. The first round of distributions took place from 13 March to 2 April, the second from 3 April to 2 July.

The first round of distributions in *Gujarat*, in Kutch district was carried out from 7 -16 June 2001 when the final distributions were completed.

Distributed food was intended to supplement the existing meagre diet of the beneficiaries. However, according to both local authorities and beneficiaries themselves, the Red Cross rations was the only food which they had.

Total food distributed during the operation (including IRCS food stocks) in Gujarat and Rajasthan was 98'578 litres of oil, 246'445 kg of lentils and 979'870 kg of millet.

In *Orissa*, food packages were provided to the 4,500 most vulnerable families affected in the Bolangir district (2,000 families) and Baragarh district (2,500 families). The first phase of the relief operation commenced on 16 March and ended 20 March. The second phase began on 18 April and ended 22 April. The total food distribution during the operation in Orissa was 1,8 MT of rice, 45,000 kgs of dal (lentils) and 18,000 litres of cooking oil.

Transportation •

Gujarat and Rajasthan: Volunteers and relief staff used different modes of transportation for relief distribution. They hired a vehicle, used their own vehicle and charged the cost of fuel, or rented a vehicle from other organisations. In *Orissa*, smaller transport vehicles were hired after obtaining competitive rates by receiving three quotations.

Recipients: characteristics and number •

Gujarat and Rajasthan: The IRCS consulted with village leaders to identify the most vulnerable families in drought based on the per capita income of each family. As well, many beneficiaries living below the poverty line had a government ration card so were identifiable as potential beneficiaries. Though the ration card holders were among the most vulnerable, some did not have to access to regular, reliable food ration from government authorities.

Orissa: As the Baragarh and Bolangir districts had already been declared by the Orissa Government as drought affected and relief measures had been initiated, the Special Relief Commissioner for Orissa was consulted to help in identification of the most vulnerable families. This in order to avoid duplication of effort. The Honorary Secretary of the Orissa State Red Cross Branch visited these two districts in February 2001 and requested the Block Authorities to prepare lists of beneficiaries out of the identified beneficiaries, special care being taken so that were not already covered by any relief programme launched by the Government or any social security scheme such as Old Age Pension. On receipt of the list of beneficiaries, the ration cards were prepared and filled in.

The number of beneficiaries as per geographical location

State	Districts	Number of families
Gujarat	Kutch	5'500
	Sub - total	5'500
Rajasthan	Jodhpur	3'000
	Barmer	3'500
	Jaisalmer	3'500
	Sub-total	10'000
Orissa	Baragarh	2'500
	Bolangir	2'000
	Sub- total	4'500
	Grand total	20'000

Monitoring •

Gujarat and Rajasthan: Each district branch had a list of those with government ration cards indicating that they were living below the poverty line. Red Cross ration cards were then issued to accordingly. All food rations were issued to beneficiaries at earlier identified distribution centres upon presentation of their Red Cross ration cards.

The relief delegate, an IRCS headquarters representative and a local IRCS branch representatives together visited the distribution centres on a regular basis to monitor the distributions.

Each distribution centre was manned by one or two Youth Red Cross Volunteers, and an officer from the Block Development Office, B.D.O (local administration official for a group of villages) to act as the nodal officer. The local Panchayat (village leaders) Officials were present. Banners inscribed “Drought Relief Distribution Centre” with Red Cross emblem were put up in each centre. On production of ration cards earlier distributed, it was signed by the Red Cross officer/volunteer present at the distribution centre and signature/thumb impression of the beneficiary was taken on the Master Roll. Whenever beneficiaries earlier identified had passed away or had left the village, alternative beneficiaries were identified with the help of B.D.O fulfilling the above criteria to receive the relief goods. Throughout the relief operation, the Red Cross honorary Secretary, under secretary and programme administrator were present to supervise the distribution.

Link with rehabilitation and National Society Capacity Building •

The programme served to strengthen the IRCS local branch capacity to assess and respond to drought related issues in the region. Similarly some key HQ staff received good on the job training.

The massive earthquake in Gujarat resulted in a large scale rehabilitation operation in the state. A major component for the rehabilitation programme is construction of water containment sites including 190 dams in the region of Kutch. As a result of the region’s heaviest rain fall in 10 years the dams were at August 2001 full, Larger dams now contain a sufficient amount of water to supply communities for up to three years.

Another key component of the India Earthquake reconstruction and rehabilitation programme is disaster preparedness. The capacity building initiative has begun to strengthen the IRCS’s ability to respond to disaster in any area of the country, including the other states addressed by the drought relief programme - Rajasthan and Orissa.

Contributions

See Annex 1 for details.

Conclusion

Gujarat and Rajasthan: In general, food distributions were carried out in a satisfactory manner at all distribution centres in Rajasthan. No violence or looting was reported. As the Red Cross rations represent the only food beneficiaries have had access to, the received quantities would usually not last for more than 30 days in total. Therefore, the food relief items distributed in this operation should not be considered supplementary food as per the initial plan.

The situation improved significantly in Gujarat state. Heavy rainfall throughout the monsoon season as well as the large scale rehabilitation programme has made a strong impact on improving the situation for the most vulnerable.

Though Rajasthan experienced rainfall in early June, the state is was still during the summer of 2001 experiencing drought conditions. Food security issues continued to be a problem in the region. Future programming to address were being explored at the time of the final narrative report in August.

Knowledge within the area of disaster management, supplies management or logistics was very limited within the IRCS. Training within this area both for Head quarter and branch staffs and volunteers, especially in disaster prone areas, has been recommended. The experience gained through this drought operation has provided good on the job training. The lessons learnt from this operation have benefited

recent drought operations, primarily the Sri Lanka drought in 2001. The Sri Lankan Red Cross did not only manage to target assistance within a limited time frame but through networking and advocacy managed to put that somewhat forgotten disaster on GOs and NGOs agenda.

Orissa: The drought affected most acutely the people below the poverty line. The support package was appreciated, also from the local administration, and enabled the affected families to tide over the difficult months of April and May 2001 when the need for food was felt acutely.

The Youth Red Cross volunteers played a significant role in the distribution and in keeping a watchful eye over the relief materials. In some remote areas the presence of the Youth Red Cross was an introduction of the Red Cross Red Crescent movement.

Transport and communication were major problems in the most remote interior areas of Western Orissa with very rough and narrow roads. Owners of transport vehicles were not willing to lend their vehicles on hire on these roads and had to be persuaded.

Drought affected individuals were recognised for their strength with coping with the situation. Distributions were arranged at central village level thus many people had to walk between two to five kilometres in a fierce sun to receive the assistance.

PAKISTAN

Red Crescent action, achievements and constraints

Appeal Objectives for Pakistan •

- To reach 50,000 beneficiaries through some 30 distribution points by enhancing the existing Pakistan Red Crescent food distributions in the affected areas in the provinces of Balochistan and Sindh.
- Build a basic health surveillance and monitoring system and provide limited health care assistance.
- Build a Pakistan Red Crescent drought monitoring system, as well as a branch drought response capacity. Capacity building includes training of staff and providing the resources required to monitor and provide a scaled up response to the drought.

One of the most important aims of the appeal was to build the local capacity to monitor the course of this disaster and in particular its effects on nutrition, health and the general economic livelihood of the affected population. An important function of the monitoring system is to provide early warning of a disaster, particularly regarding displacement of communities, the spread of communicable diseases and an increase in malnutrition or the approach of famine. A significant part of the appeal funds were to be allocated to building up Red Cross and Red Crescent branch capacity in the affected areas to enable them to respond effectively if the drought worsens. This was to entail rapid training in disaster preparedness and disaster response, and establishing participatory links with the most-affected communities.

After an initially slow response many generous pledges were received against this appeal including pledges from a number of different national societies, the German government, The Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation and ECHO. The donation in the second half of year 2000, from the German government and the Gates Foundation respectively, marked the scaling up of the operation in both provinces. A donation from ECHO financed the health component and a later donation from the Norwegian Red Cross also gave a significant boost to the operation.

The appeal document outlined proposals to place a relief delegate in Islamabad to advise and support the PRCS with the procurement of supplies, beneficiary identification, distribution, reporting and

strengthening branch monitoring capacity. To support the achievement of the second objective a health nutritionist delegate was located in Balochistan to manage ECHO funded mobile health teams. The Federation regional health delegate acted as overall Federation Representative, ensuring compliance with longer term regional objectives.

All procurement was to be undertaken by Pakistan Red Crescent Society (PRCS) National HQ in Islamabad, with the support of the Federation Relief Delegate. In addition an operations room was to be established at the national society's headquarters to act as point of information and reporting management.

30,000 food packs were to be distributed in Balochistan province. The provincial branch rented a warehouse from the army to store the supplies. The Italian Red Cross had already provided some assistance in the province on a bilateral basis, and had liaised closely with the branch in the process.

It was known from the outset that Balochistan branch did not have the capacity to conduct the planned operation without significant support. A relief team would have to be hired and trained and beneficiary identification would require the close co-operation of local government authorities and local NGOs.

The PRCS branch in Quetta planned to assist many different districts rather than concentrating on a smaller area. Seven districts were initially targeted. Another important point taken into account at planning stage was the wish of local government authorities and the Relief Commissioner (provincial government co-ordinator of drought relief activities), to conduct distributions on an outreach basis. In other words distributions would be conducted at village or 'union council' level. The main reason for this was to discourage unnecessary migration or formation of more relief camps. This had significant logistical implications for the operation, instead of identifying one or two distribution points within a district, rations were to be distributed to individual villages or union councils. With a poor road network, difficult terrain, the approaching winter and unpredictable security risks, this posed quite a challenge to the Balochistan branch.

The logistics challenge was eased somewhat by an early decision to distribute three food packs to each family. This was a very important decision. One food pack lasts a family of between six to ten members, seven to ten days. It was decided that providing food rations that would last up to one month would provide a smaller no. of families with more significant assistance. Rather than supplying nearly 30,000 families with just enough food for seven days, 9,000 families would receive a four-week supply and therefore a more realistic chance of recovering, at least part of their lost livelihood.

The Sindh branch is considerably more developed than Balochistan. It was anticipated that while support would be needed, it would be on a much smaller scale. In Sindh province, just one district was targeted for assistance, Tharparker district, described in the last section. Approximately 27,000 packs were to be distributed from distribution points throughout this district. One (or maximum two) packs were to be distributed to each family.

The Sindh branch in Karachi was to play a monitoring role during the operation. Two district officials, one located in Badin, the site of the branch warehouse, and the second based in Mithi, the district headquarters of Tharparker would coordinate the distributions.

In order to maximise on the opportunity of building active relief/monitoring cells in the branches and national headquarters, all staff hired for the operation were hired with this longer term objective in mind. As the operation moved from a relief phase to a monitoring and reporting phase, relief teams would undergo training to continue monitoring the course of the drought.

Procurement •

Initial pledges from PNSs facilitated the procurement of 3,000 food packs by the PRCS which were distributed immediately mostly to IDPs in temporary camps in both provinces.

Apart from that initial smaller order, two large procurements were made during the operation. The Federation's procedures were complied with throughout both. Tendering and procurement stages were fair and transparent. The first procurement of 34,000 food packs took place in November and the second (20,400 packs) in January. Tender notices were first published in three daily news papers. Tender opening ceremonies were held to open the sealed bids in the presence of contending suppliers. Testing was conducted by an accredited testing centre in Islamabad (The National Institute of Health). The Federation's logistics department in Geneva was consulted during every stage of the process to ensure that the best quality food stuffs were procured. A board appointed by the Secretary General of PRCS established selection criteria, for e.g. price, quality etc. A contract was prepared and signed by the winning bidder, the PRCS Secretary General and the Federation Relief Delegate. The quality assurance process was authenticated by a second round of testing just prior to packing. In order to facilitate this, the suppliers made the entire bulk consignments available for inspection at their warehouses. PRCS bonded the warehouses and took several samples which were sent to the same testing centre to confirm the quality was consistent with the samples submitted during tendering. It should be noted that the Pakistan Red Crescent Society conducted the entire process with the Federation Relief Delegate providing support concerning Federation requirements particularly with regard to testing.

Warehousing and Transport •

Food packs were stored in PRCS warehouses in Quetta for Balochistan and in Badin for Sindh. In both cases the warehouses were hired for the operation and inspection proved them to be amply spaced, dry and well ventilated. Federation systems of stock keeping including the use of bin cards, stock cards and waybills were established to ensure transparency and accuracy.

Transport of the supplies in Sindh province was handled by contracting out both transport and loading/unloading to one company.

Transport in Balochistan was less streamlined and also less dependable. However despite threatened industrial action by truck drivers and a patch of very cold weather in January the operation proceeded without any significant delays.

Beneficiary Identification •

Beneficiary identification was conducted by the PRCS in close collaboration with provincial and district authorities. Priority was given to the most vulnerable; those that experienced the heaviest livestock or crop losses, female headed households, households with handicapped or aged occupants etc.

Sindh province had the advantage of having two district officials located permanently in Tharparker. Identification of beneficiaries had therefore commenced and was ongoing by the time the first large consignment of 18,000 packs were delivered for distribution in December.

In Balochistan however the branch was much more reliant on second hand research to establish lists of beneficiaries. A lack of a PRCS district network meant that field research on beneficiary identification was not possible. The branch therefore relied on close collaboration with district ACs and the relief commissioner. Local NGOs also provided lists of needy beneficiaries.

When this process of beneficiary identification began in January 2001, in Balochistan province, it became clear that professional follow up was necessary to investigate the authenticity of lists.

Furthermore it was obvious from an early stage that both A.C.s and the Relief Commissioner's office in Quetta were only able to provide names of villages. Lists of actual needy families with identity card numbers etc. were not readily available. Under the pressure of donor deadlines to complete the first round of distributions (over 15,000 food packs) by the end of February, this posed a serious challenge. It was decided for this reason (amongst others) that a second delegate would be placed in Balochistan province for a period of two months to assist the PRCS branch with beneficiary identification and with post distribution monitoring. The 'support- monitoring' delegate started at the end of January.

The result of close collaboration with the relief commissioner, through out the entire operation, resulted in detailed lists supplied for 9,000 needy families spread over all targeted districts. This process is discussed further in the analysis section.

Distributions •

Distributions in both provinces proceeded on time. They were generally very well organised. Chits were distributed to beneficiary families prior to the distributions and each beneficiary gave thumbprint impressions on PRCS beneficiary receipts. Consolidated reports were drawn up for each distribution and forwarded to the operations room in PRCS in Islamabad.

In Sindh, distributions were conducted by PRCS district representatives both of whom lead their district volunteers to conduct the distribution. In addition to the food distributions, 51 hand pumps were purchased for installation in those villages in Tharparker where the water table was less than 200 feet from the surface.

In Balochistan, the Federation relief delegate supported the Branch Secretary with the recruitment of three relief officers and three relief assistants to conduct the distributions. As the entire distribution team were new, not just to RC/RC movement, but also to relief work, a second reason for bringing in extra professional support presented itself. The support monitoring delegate, posted to Balochistan for the first two month period was able to work closely with the provincial programme officer to train and co-ordinate the team as they proceeded with their work. This took considerable pressure off the branch secretary who was also overseeing the health project described below.

The Balochistan relief team transpired to be a spirited group of extremely hard workers who did an excellent job, often under very difficult conditions. All distributions were completed on time.

Monitoring the distributions •

Distribution monitoring was co-ordinated by the PRCS branch secretaries in both provinces and by the relief delegate and monitoring support delegate. In Sindh provincial branch, a well experienced relief officer visited Tharparker district twice a month to monitor distributions and collect reports. He was accompanied once a month by the branch secretary, the relief delegate and, on occasions by the branch chairman.

For reasons mentioned earlier extra effort was put into monitoring distributions in Balochistan. The monitoring support delegate conducted follow-up visits to gather information in the following areas:

- At village level - how had beneficiaries been selected by the A.C.s.
- At village level - how badly the village had been affected by drought.
- At household level - whether or not the food was good quality.
- At household level - how long the food had lasted.
- At household level - whether or not there were any longer term benefits from having received a month's supply of food e.g. new goat purchased from money which would otherwise have been spent on food etc.

- At household level - whether or not the composition of the food pack was satisfactory, e.g. should the tea have been omitted and the quantity of the staple increased etc.

This information not only ensured that food was reaching the intended beneficiaries but also provided valuable information which could be used in the event that further relief would be required in the future. The findings are discussed in the Analysis section.

Building capacities in the branches to handle the distribution •

PRCS was the implementing organisation for every stage of the process. As mentioned above, all procurements were carried out by the PRCS with support from the relief delegate. Similarly at branch level, the operation of beneficiary identification and planning of distributions was co-ordinated by the provincial branch secretaries. The Federation relief delegates supported by establishing reporting systems and a proper paper trail for supplies from supplier to beneficiary. This was especially needed in the case of Balochistan though improvements to the existing system in Sindh were also made.

So in both provincial branches, experience was gained in all stages of the operation from warehousing and transport of supplies, beneficiary identification, post distribution monitoring and reporting. In addition a car, a computer and a photocopier were purchased for Balochistan branch.

Health •

Following discussions with the government, other organisations working in Balochistan and drought affected community members indicating that a large proportion of common diseases in Balochistan were preventable it was decided that a health component should be included in the appeal. These diseases include diarrhoea, malaria, skin infections, measles and health problems arising from malnutrition. It is also clear that the general health knowledge of nomadic and village people in the area is limited, even relating to basic hygiene practices. In order to address this need a plan was developed to set up four mobile health teams, having the following objectives:

- To provide health and nutritional monitoring of selected outreach communities in Balochistan.
- To provide preventative, promotive and basic curative health care in the same locations.

The programme was designed to link with the overall health programme and capacity development of the PRCS Provincial Headquarters in Balochistan, developing basic health services throughout the province.

It was planned that each team would consist of a female doctor, a male health motivator, a female health motivator and a dispenser. Recruitment began for these teams in mid January with the intention of recruiting local people from the teams operational areas. By the end of January suitable staff members were recruited to form teams for Mastung and Quetta and training was underway. All medical supplies and equipment needed for the project have been procured and data collection tools were finalised, translated and printed ready for use and training materials, designed to reflect the people and culture of Balochistan, had been developed.

The health component was funded by an ECHO grant and continued after the end of this appeal. The work has since the appeal been successful. The project had at the end of the year recruited over 300 new volunteers in village communities and was reaching around 8,500 beneficiaries each month with preventive health education and basic curative care. Relevant topics within the CBFA volunteers manual were being taught in the 40 villages for the programme. The programme has been integrated into the ongoing work of the National Society.

Post Relief Monitoring •

By the end of January, the distributions had reached a half way point. It was clear that while some rain had been received in both provinces the situation was still serious and tinkering at the edge of a more serious disaster. Villagers in both provinces were coping but with much fewer resources than in the previous twelve month period. A large proportion of the affected population was relying on social capital to survive. On the other hand, there were few signs of starvation or acute malnutrition. Further food distributions would have been inappropriate without first reviewing the current appeal and considering other forms of intervention.

It was decided therefore to finish the distributions according to the planned schedule by the end of the appeal period but to continue to monitor the situation. This was also the third objective of the appeal and had been considered an important issue by the joint assessment team.

In Sindh, one monitoring team of two people were being hired for a six month period starting from May 2001.

In Balochistan the six member relief team that were hired to carry out the distributions were kept on for six months to monitor the ongoing drought. Each team comprised one monitoring officer and one monitoring assistant. Terms of reference were drafted for the role of the monitoring teams.

Analysis

Appeal Process •

The needs assessment report and appeal document were well presented and comprehensive. However, there is a question on whether or not a FACT or JAM (joint assessment mission) team should always include either a Federation delegate /officer from the country or, where this is not possible, from the region.

Procurements, warehousing, transport •

The procurement process was very successful although also very time consuming. A two way learning process, between the Federation and PRCS, made the task interesting and rewarding. Terms and conditions for procurement contracts and tender letters turned out to be an optimum mix that complied with Federation requirements as well as Pakistani regulations.

Warehousing and transport systems had been in place in both provinces prior to the appeal period but the operation certainly improved and streamlined existing systems.

Beneficiary identification, Distributions and Distribution monitoring •

Beneficiary identification systems should have been better established (especially in Balochistan) and would have been but for a number of limiting factors. Delays in finalising the recruitment of the relief delegate coupled with approaching donor disbursement deadlines dictated the critical path of the operation making procurements a number one priority. As it transpired, the extra monitoring and support in Balochistan concluded that beneficiary identification was quite satisfactory, that lists produced by local officials and NGOs (and then authenticated by the relief commissioner) were reliable and did identify the most needy. Ideally however, this research should have been done at the beginning of the operation, before the distributions started, rather than with them. Again this was not possible because of time constraints. The distributions had to begin in early January, before the second procurement was complete. The success of the operation in Balochistan seemed at times, to be too reliant on the relief commissioner. The presence of the monitoring support delegate and the commitment of the relief team and the provincial programme officer certainly mitigated these risks and resulted in the timely achievement of all logistical goals and high quality distributions.

In the case of Sindh, the distributions took place a gruelling nine to twelve hour road journey east of Karachi. While the provincial branch in Karachi is well resourced, the district branches are much less so. The functioning of the district branches in the drought affected district of Tharparker is totally reliant on the good work of a small number of committed volunteers. This situation has also many attendant risks. However monitoring - conducted by the provincial branch relief officer, the branch secretary and the relief delegate - showed that distributions reached the remotest areas of the Thar desert, and that beneficiaries were chosen at grass roots level.

As mentioned above the support monitoring delegate conducted follow up monitoring visits to a number of villages that had received food packs. The information collected can be summarised as follows:

- *At village level - how had beneficiaries been selected by the A.C.s*
It proved difficult to get clear information on this process, however it could be concluded that all in all, beneficiaries had suffered considerable losses as a result of the drought and were in need of food assistance.
- *At village level - how badly the village had been affected by drought*
Response to this question varied of course, from village to village. However the most common effect seemed to be loss of livestock
- *At household level - whether or not the food was good quality*
Almost all beneficiary families interviewed commented on the good quality of food distributed.
- *At household level - how long the food had lasted*
Most beneficiary families interviewed said that the wheat flour (staple food in Balochistan) was consumed first. Sixty kilos lasted a family of ten approximately two weeks. The other items in the packs lasted for a month or more.
- *At household level - whether or not the composition of the food pack was satisfactory, e.g. should the tea have been omitted and the quantity of the staple increased etc.*
Most beneficiary families said they would have preferred more wheat flour and less of the other items.
- *At household level - whether or not there were any longer term benefits from having received a month's supply of food e.g. new goat purchased from money which would otherwise have been spent on food etc.*
This was an important question which was designed to review how appropriate food distributions were, in a chronic drought situation. Most of the beneficiary families interviewed said that they had not recovered any of their lost livelihood as a result of the food distributions. There were suggestions that in fact, a certain amount of food aid dependency was setting in. Generally this type of assistance was viewed as a 'short term solution to a longer term problem.' This view was shared not only by the beneficiaries but also by most of the A.C.s and D.C.s interviewed.

Post Relief Monitoring •

The opportunity to link this short term relief operation with a longer term monitoring programme was very welcome indeed. It was obvious that these teams, themselves, would not be able to offer beneficiaries an immediate longer term solution to the drought. They would however, be able to keep a close eye on the course of the drought in village communities. In so doing the information gathered by these teams and how it would be compiled could prove to be critically important in designing a more appropriate and speedy response in the future.

Health project •

One comment that could be made in this section is that difficulties with identifying beneficiaries in Balochistan could have been overcome had the health project started even two months before distributions began. However the timeline (and associated deadlines) of the various pledges would have made this impossible.

Capacity building in PRCS as a result of the operation •

Amongst the many spin-offs associated with conducting the operation, two stand out. The first was the obvious experience gained by PRCS in actually procuring, distributing, monitoring and reporting. This has already been discussed in previous sections. Probably the most significant is the presence of monitoring teams that will provide a link to longer term programmes.

Raising the public awareness of PRCS through networking and media attention•

The second spin off, was the increased public profile that the operation brought to both PRCS national headquarters and both branches.

At every stage this was apparent. Firstly through the procurements. Each tender notice had to be published in three national daily newspapers. Secondly through the identification of beneficiaries and through the distributions themselves. This created publicity for the PRCS not only at village level but also amongst the international and local donor communities working in both provinces.

The operation also raised the profile of the organisation regionally within the RC/RC movement. Two articles appeared in the Federations regional Focus magazine as well as one on the Federation web site about the work of PRCS on the drought. In January, a visit from the Federation South Asia emergency desk officer culminated in a press conference that gave some good national and international coverage to the national society. In all media events, the donors were mentioned.

Success of the operation in terms of meeting the appeals objectives •

In the final stages of the appeal period, in mid April an internal drought review meeting was held in the PRCS HQ. It was attended by branch secretaries, provincial programme and health officers, National HQ counterparts, the acting Secretary General and Federation delegates. It had two goals. The first was to establish whether or not the operation had met the objectives of the appeal. All present felt that the objectives of the appeal had certainly been met.

The second objective of the meeting was to perform a SWOT analysis on the drought operation in an effort to make recommendations for future programmes. This exercise resulted in recommendations for future similar interventions which were *inter alia*:

- a. The response time frame and the PRCS provincial capacity were areas in need of improvement.
- b. An active volunteer corps should be established in every province
- c. DP/DR planning should be streamlined into all other PRCS development programmes
- d. Vulnerability and Capacity Assessments and Hazard mapping should be carried out for each province
- e. FACT/JAM (joint assessment mission) system should be reviewed

Contributions

The initial phase of food distributions in Pakistan was implemented thanks to a significant contribution from the German Red Cross and other contributions from several PNS. The second phase of distributions to provide additional food packs was carried out thanks to a donation from the Gates Foundation. The reinforced health component of the relief operation in Pakistan was funded through an ECHO grant.

Conclusion

The initial PRCS response to the drought in Pakistan was immediate, however constrained in size by a lack of resources. The Federation response to assist - while slow to get off the ground - proceeded well once it did. Procurements, beneficiary identification and distributions were all conducted by the PRCS with Federation support. Well in excess of the intended number of beneficiaries received food rations, three health monitoring and surveillance systems are established in Balochistan province and a fourth is currently being set up. Fifty one hand pumps were purchased for villages in Sindh province and drought monitoring teams are being established in both provinces. The operation received good media coverage.

Operational difficulties centred around low provincial and district capacity to implement certain parts of the operation - especially in the case of Balochistan, where beneficiary identification proved to be problematic. However operational difficulties in both provinces were overcome with solutions which should bring longer term capacity building benefits to the PRCS.

Follow up monitoring confirmed that intended beneficiaries received rations and that distributions were well organised. The monitoring also raised questions about approaches to future assistance.

The Appeal was well supported by donors and implementation was successful. The operation concluded with a small balance corresponding to 8 % of the total income (CHF 234,232). These funds will be used for the Federation support to the South Asia regional programmes as per the Annual Appeal 01.24/02. If any donor would like to see remaining funds used for other purposes please notify us before the end of June 2002.

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All International Federation Operations seek to adhere to the Code of Conduct and are committed to the Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Disaster Response (SPHERE Project) in delivering assistance to the most vulnerable. The procurement for this operation was carried out in full compliance and conformity with the Federation's standard for international and local procurement.

For support to or for further information concerning Federation operations in this or other countries, please access the Federation website at <http://www.ifrc.org>.

This operation sought to administer to the immediate requirements of the victims of this disaster. Subsequent operations to promote sustainable development or long-term capacity building will require additional support, and these programmes are outlined on the Federation's website.

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