

OPERATIONS UPDATE



International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies
Fédération internationale des Sociétés de la Croix-Rouge et du Croissant-Rouge
Federación Internacional de Sociedades de la Cruz Roja y de la Media Luna Roja
الاتحاد الدولي لجمعيات الصليب الأحمر والهلال الأحمر

MONGOLIA: SNOWFALLS

02 November 2001

Appeal No. 7/2001

Launched on February 2001 for CHF 2.8 million for 12 months.

Beneficiaries: 7,022 families will receive food aid; 15,000 families will receive first aid kits and radios

Operations Update No.6 - Period covered: August 2001 - Early October 2001 (last Ops Update issued: 27 August 2001, report no: 5)

“At a Glance”

Appeal coverage: 123.5%

Related Appeals: 01.47/01 East Asia regional programmes; 01.49/01 Mongolia

Outstanding needs: Covered

The Disaster/Situation: Participating National Societies and other donors have made considerable contributions, ensuring that the operation is fully funded. Weather forecasts for the winter predict severe weather and the Mongolian Red Cross has been actively involved with herder communities and the authorities in several disaster preparedness activities.

Operational Developments:

Meteorologists are predicting a third Dzud for this coming winter and the government has been urging herders to prepare for the coming months. Excessive heat and shortage of rainfall during the summer has left 30 % of the country experiencing drought and a further 40 % of the territory suffering from extreme dryness. With a general shortage of grass, animals have been unable to fatten up prior to the onset of the coming winter and herders have been unable to collect sufficient quantities of fodder and hay to feed their livestock during the coming long winter months.

Extremely cold temperatures are predicted in January, which can fall to minus 35 degrees celsius or lower. Such temperatures require animals to be kept in corrals with plenty of fodder. The Red Cross will assist over 22,000 herder families in 80 counties with food and other material assistance during the critical preparation period for the winter. Phase 2 distributions commenced in early October and are expected to be completed by mid November. It is essential to minimize any delays in the implementation

of the distributions due to the anticipated onset of snowfalls particularly from early November when the severe winter sets in.

Red Cross Red Crescent action w

The considerable contributions from national societies and other donors have enabled the Red Cross to respond to the present prolonged and complex disaster. The 2001 snowfall relief operation has been divided into two phases: Phase 1 - March to September 2001 and Phase 2 - October to December 2001. The main objectives/status of the current relief operation are as follows:

Objectives	Status
1. Wheat flour distributions to herder households	Phase 1 distributions completed. Phase 2 distributions started in mid October
2. Radios and first aid kit distributions to herder households	First Aid Kit distributions started in mid October along with wheat flour. Decision on radio distribution is pending
3. 11 Van distributions to RC provincial branches	Completed by early August
4. Reinforcement of RC provincial branches' capacity	Ongoing
5. Reinforcement of provinces' storage and disaster preparedness capacity	16 shipping containers are being delivered to 11 provincial branches from mid October

Phase 1: March to September 2001

Phase 1 distributions were completed by the end of July 2001. A total of 1053.3 metric tonnes of wheat flour was distributed to a targeted 80 counties covering 38,621 herder beneficiaries. All distributions were attended and managed by members of Red Cross Distribution Commissions as well as monitoring representatives from the Mongolian Red Cross Society (MRCS) headquarters. Distributions were conducted smoothly without major constraints. The interim months of August and September were used to monitor Phase 1 distributions as well as prepare the tendering and procurement of relief items for Phase 2 distributions.

Phase 2: October to December 2001

Objective 1: To provide a total of 35,000 beneficiaries in the 11 worst-affected provinces with supplementary emergency food assistance.

The Committee On Contracts (COC) composed of the Federation Logistics Delegate, the Federation Finance Officer, the Head of the Disaster Management (MRCS), the Disaster Preparedness Manager (MRCS) and the Relief officer at the International department (MRCS) selected a local factory to supply wheat flour for the Phase 2 distribution. The independent quality test conducted by a professional company in Beijing confirmed that the wheat flour was of satisfactory quality. The Federation Logistics procedures were strictly followed to assure transparency in the Phase 2 tendering and procurement process.

The wheat flour is being shipped by train from the factory in Selenge province to Ulaanbaatar where it will be loaded onto trucks for distribution in targeted counties.

A total of 1053.3 MT of wheat flour will be distributed to the same 7,022 herder families that received food relief in phase 1. Each family will receive six month rations of 150 kgs (6 sacks x 25kgs = 150kgs), which represents the equivalent of a daily ration of 155 grams (considering the average household size as 5.5). Targeting the same beneficiaries gives more impact of food aid in order to assist them with the recovery process over the critical winter season.

Deliveries of wheat flour commenced on 10 October. The first consignment of 330 metric tonnes has been delivered to Hovsgul and Gobi-Altai provinces, which are considered the most difficult areas to travel due to high mountains.

Wheat flour distribution plan for Phase 2

Aimags (provinces)	No of soums (counties)	No of beneficiary households to receive assistance	Wheat flour amount (mt) to be delivered to soums	Expected date of delivery from Ulaanbaatar	Expected distribution date
Arkhangai	8	805	120.75	14 October	17-22 October
Bulgan	9	770	115.5	21 October	24-27 October
Huvsgul	12	1'225	183.75	11 October	18-20 October
Gobi-Sumber	3	245	36.75	14 October	16-17 October
Dornogobi	7	617	92.55	14 October	17-20 October
Bayan-Olgii	3	280	42	21 October	31Oct -7 Nov
Gobi-Altai	10	980	147	11 October	18-20 October
Hovd	6	420	63	21 October	31Oct -10 Nov
Umnogobi	6	490	73.5	28 October	5-14 November
Khentii	8	595	89.25	28 October	2-10 November
Sukhbaatar	8	595	89.25	28 October	3-10 November
Total	80	7'022	1'053.3		

A major constraint foreseen for the forthcoming distributions during Phase 2 is the onset of snowfalls. Some provinces in the country have already received the first snowfalls in early October and the night temperatures have already dropped to minus 10 degrees celsius. Deliveries to mountainous regions in the west and the north could be hampered by heavy snowfalls, freezing temperatures and icy road conditions. Good transport planning with a backup system is essential in minimizing delays in deliveries and implementation of distributions.

Objective 2: To provide a total of 15,000 radios and first aid kits to herder families

Testing of the wind-up radios has been inconclusive. The Federation technical department has advised to distribute according to an issued map of reception, and this is now under consideration. An initial 3,000 radios will be given out.

The procurement of 15,000 first aid kits with revised contents was completed in early September. The medications removed from the original contents were donated to the Ministry of Health who will be responsible for distributing the donated medications to needy hospitals. Two local TV stations were present for the handing over ceremony.

First aid kits, wheat flour and shipping containers will be distributed during Phase 2.

Distribution plan for first aid kits

Aimags (provinces)	No of soums (counties) receiving first aid kits	No of beneficiary households to receive kits	First aid kit quantity to be delivered to soums	Expected date of delivery from Ulaanbaatar	Expected distribution date
Arkhangai	8	2'000	2'000	14 October	17-22 October
Bulgan	9	2'000	2'000	21 October	24-27 October
Huvsgul	12	2'500	2'500	11 October	18-20 October
Gobi-Sumber	3	200	200	14 October	16-17 October
Dornogobi	7	1'200	1'200	14 October	17-20 October
Bayan-Olgii	3	600	600	21 October	31Oct -7 Nov
Gobi-Altai	10	1'800	1'800	11 October	18-20 October
Hovd	6	1'250	1'250	21 October	31Oct -10 Nov
Umnogobi	6	1'000	1'000	28 October	5-14 November
Khentii	8	1'050	1'050	28 October	2-10 November
Sukhbaatar	8	1'400	1'400	28 October	3-10 November

Total	80	15'000	15'000		
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Objective 3: To provide 11 vans to assist the MRCS with local monitoring and micro-distributions

The 11 vans distributed to the provincial Red Cross branches have assisted the branches work in monitoring and preparation for Phase 2. Lack of reliable vehicles was previously the major constraint for the provincial branches in visiting counties, which are often hundreds of kilometers away. The provision of vans has also enabled them to visit county Red Cross branches more frequently. The vans will be fully utilized to conduct micro-distributions as well - delivering aid items directly to those beneficiaries who, for any reason (such as sickness or lack of transportation), are unable to attend distributions.

Objective 4: To reinforce the capacity of the local aimag (provincial) branches involved in the operation by providing fax machines

11 fax machines were procured in mid September and will be distributed to the provincial branches. Fax machines will help facilitate communication capacity and enhance more speedy, reliable and regular contacts and reporting between the branches and the headquarters.

Objective 5: To reinforce the storage and disaster preparedness capacity of the provinces

The 16 shipping containers were purchased in early September and will be used to transport the wheat flour and first aid kits to the 11 provinces. On arrival at the provincial MRC branches, these containers will be utilized as storage facilities to enable the MRC to stock emergency items for disaster preparedness purposes. As many provinces lack proper storage facilities, the containers will enable Red Cross branches to securely store items for times of emergency.

Distribution plan for containers

Aimag (Province)	No. of container(s) to be delivered	Expected date of delivery
Arkhangai	2	14 October
Bulgan	1	21 October
Huvsdul	2	11 October
Gobi-Sumber	1	14 October
Dornogobi	1	14 October
Bayan-Olgii	2	21 October
Gobi-Altai	2	11 October
Hovd	2	21 October
Umnogobi	1	28 October
Khentii	1	28 October
Sukhbaatar	1	28 October
Total	16	

Objective 6: To reinforce the staffing situation at both headquarters and aimag levels during the course of the operation

During the current relief operation, a total of 80 county Red Cross Distribution Commissions were established with the responsibility of managing the distributions. The staffing at the county level was then greatly reinforced having on average 5-6 volunteer members in each distribution commission. Although no additional staff at the headquarters and provincial levels was employed for the operation, the experienced staff at the headquarters and other provincial branches have constantly been involved in managing and overseeing the distributions, complementing the understaffed Disaster Preparedness department.

Phase 2 relief distribution process

The existing Red Cross distribution system in all 80 counties will continue to be responsible in conducting Phase 2 distributions. The diversity in the make-up of the Commission members (which include both professional MRC staff as well as representatives from the herder communities) has ensured a fairer and more transparent decision making process in the selection of beneficiaries and the implementation of distributions.

Beneficiary Selection for 15,000 first aid kits and radios

The same beneficiary selection criteria as for Phase 1 was applied to select the most vulnerable beneficiaries to receive first aid kits and radios. Those beneficiaries who are being covered with food assistance are excluded from the first aid kit and radio distributions. A set of first aid kits and radios was initially planned to be distributed together to a total of 15,000 herder households. However, due to the delayed procurement process of radios, distributions of first aid kits will be carried out together with the wheat flour.

As in Phase 1 beneficiary selection, initial lists of beneficiaries were drafted during bagh (sub-county) meetings. These lists were then submitted to county distribution commissions for finalization. The criteria to identify target households is outlined below.

- suffered the highest livestock loss;
- been most affected by recurring natural disasters such as drought, snowfall, steppe and forest fires, strong wind and rodent infestation;
- more than five members;
- single head households; and
- many children, disabled member of the family and who support elderly persons.

Distribution announcement to herder beneficiaries

The MRCS weekly five-minute programme on the national radio called “Eight Eleven Information Time” will broadcast up-to-date information on the upcoming distributions. Other communication mediums include:

- broadcasts on the local county radio station, including the reading of beneficiary names;
- beneficiary names posted at the county center;
- local county Red Cross Distribution members or the head of Bagh (sub-county) informing identified Red Cross beneficiaries;
- word of mouth among herder families.

Review of monitoring for Phase 1 distributions

Interviews with the Red Cross monitors who oversaw Phase 1 distributions confirmed that the quality of the wheat flour was good. No major complaints were received by beneficiaries during distributions. Monitors randomly visited between 10-30 beneficiary households in each province to assess the living conditions of herder families. Any unsuitable beneficiaries were replaced with more appropriate ones when checking the beneficiary lists against the set criteria. During the meeting with the local Red Cross Distribution Commissions, efforts were made to avoid duplication of beneficiaries with other NGO lists.

The attendance of beneficiaries during distributions varied. For those beneficiaries who were unable to attend due to sickness or lack of transportation, the Red Cross distribution commissions, with the cooperation from the local authorities, carried out micro-distributions.

Federation Delegation

The Federation Office has been strengthened with the appointment of a Programme Coordinator, who is responsible for coordination and development of the National Society's programmes. The Logistics Delegate, assisted by the Finance Officer, continues to update the current funding and expenditure status of the operation to effectively utilize the donor funding.

Government Action

Following the prediction of the Hydro-Meteorology Institute for the coming winter, the Mongolian government has taken preventative measures to protect 30 million livestock, the mainstay of the economy. The importance of moving 13 million livestock in six provinces affected by drought and poor pasture conditions to the state protected areas has been regularly stressed. The number of state reserve warehouses has been increased from nine to 21 for stocking fodder and hay. 251 water wells in 130 counties of 19 provinces are being repaired by the government to increase water supplies to stock. Provincial governors have been instructed to take preventative measures at the local level by building animal pens and preparing fodder and hay.

Coordination

The Federation and the Mongolian Red Cross Society will continue their coordination efforts with the government and international partners at both local and central levels. Regular contacts and updates with other partners are essential to monitor the current disaster situation.

For further details please contact: Aurelia balpe, Phone : 41 22 730 4352; Fax: 41 22 733 03 95; email: balpe@ifrc.org

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.

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

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

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Mongolia: Snowfalls						ANNEX 1
APPEAL No. AP07/2001		PLEDGES RECEIVED				01.11.2001
DONOR	CATEGORY	QUANTITY	UNIT	VALUE CHF	DATE	COMMENT
CASH						
REQUESTED IN APPEAL CHF ----->				2'864'472		TOTAL COVERAGE 123.5%
CASH CARRIED FORWARD						
AUSTRALIAN - GOVT		250'000	AUD	216'275	26.02.2001	WHEAT FLOUR
AUSTRIAN - GOVT		72'673	EUR	110'412	09.05.01	
BRITISH - GOVT/DFID		245'098	GBP	590'686	13.03.01	RELIEF GOODS & OPERATIONAL NEEDS
CANADIAN - RC		20'000	CAD	21'650	20.02.01	
CANADIAN - GOVT/CIDA		108'900	CAD	122'676	17.04.2001	NOT TO BE USED FOR PURCHASE AND/OR TRANSPORT OF ANY FOOD ITEMS
DANISH - RC		231'250	DKK	47'638	20.02.01	
ECHO (01001)		370'000	EUR	562'141	17.04.01	FOOD, FIRST AID, RADIOS, VEHICLES
FINNISH - GOVT		84'094	EUR	129'370	07.03.01	
GERMAN - GOVT		500'000	DEM	393'300	22.02.01	850 MT WHEAT FLOUR, INCL TRANSPORT
GERMAN - GOVT		235'000	DEM	184'851	22.02.01	10'000 FIRST AID KITS, INCL TRANSPORT
JAPANESE - RC				143'000	01.03.01	
KOREA, REPUBLIC - RC				20'000	20.03.01	
LIECHTENSTEIN - RC				50'000	30.03.01	
NETHERLANDS - RC		112'360	NLG	77'224	07.03.01	
NORWEGIAN - GOVT/RC		700'000	NOK	130'964	09.04.01	
OPEC		100'000	USD	162'800	02.04.01	PROCUREMENT OF RELIEF ITEMS
SWEDISH - GOVT/RC		1'000'000	SEK	173'700	20.02.01	RELIEF (60%) AND OPERATIONAL NEEDS
SWISS - GOVT				250'000	14.02.01	WHEAT FLOUR, RADIOS
SWISS - PRIVATE				1'250	07.03.01	
SWISS - PRIVATE (CHAINE DU BONHEUR)				26'240	19.09.2001	
PRIVATES ON LINE				2'387	10.04.01	
SUB/TOTAL RECEIVED IN CASH				3'416'564	CHF	119.3%

KIND AND SERVICES (INCLUDING PERSONNEL)						
DONOR	CATEGORY	QUANTITY	UNIT	VALUE CHF	DATE	COMMENT
Japan	Delegate(s)			30'226		
Australia	Delegate(s)			29'733		AB
New Zealand	Delegate(s)			60'000		AB
SUB/TOTAL RECEIVED IN KIND/SERVICES				119'959	CHF	4.2%