

# 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

## ***ETHIOPIA: IMPROVING FOOD SECURITY***

*17 May, 2001*

*This Ops Update is intended for reporting on emergency appeals.*

*Appeal No. 08/01*

*Launched on 19 February, 2001 for CHF 1,932,510 for 5 months.*

*DREF Allocated: None.*

*Beneficiaries: 40,258*

*Operations Update No. 1; Period covered: February to April, 2001.*

### ***“At a Glance”***

***Appeal coverage: 66%***

***Related Appeals: Annual Appeal for Ethiopia (01.13/2001)***

***Outstanding needs: CHF 657,780***

***Update: This appeal was launched on 19 February, 2001, requesting CHF 1,932,510 to support the Ethiopian Red Cross Society (ERCS) in providing assistance to some 40,258 beneficiaries for a period of 5 months. With timely and generous donor contributions, the operation has been implemented according to the planned objectives, and there are few outstanding needs.***

### ***Operational Developments:***

After four years of successive failure of early season rains in Ethiopia, the belg rains have been reasonably good, if erratic, this year. Due in February, they started a month late in South Wollo and then stopped abruptly at the beginning of April for two weeks, only to resume again in late April and early May. While this is abnormal, early expectations are that there will be a good harvest in the belg producing areas of the Amharan region. However, in Ambassel woreda in South Wollo, the location of the Red Cross operation, there is likely to be a delay in the harvesting of the belg crop by up to two months as a result of the late rains. There is some concern that this will coincide with the onset of the main season rains which would cause damage to the crop.

Prices of cereals have fallen considerably over the last few months reaching their lowest level in April for 7 years. The main causes of this are the good main season harvest last year, a poor coffee crop in 2000 and farmers flooding the market with cereals in an attempt to repay debts which include taxes and credit for the purchase of seeds and fertilizer. Both farmers and many small scale traders are unable to hang onto supplies because this remains their only source of income. Normally by this time of the year between 70 to 80% of farmers have repaid debts. This is not the case this year and many farmers are under strong pressure to sell more assets which may well reduce their productivity and increase vulnerability.

## ***Red Cross Red Crescent action w***

The Red Cross response continues to be based around cash transfers to the affected populations in Ambassel in South Wollo which remains particularly appropriate in these deflationary times. Given that a good proportion of relief food is monetized by beneficiaries, cash is preferred since it is more valuable and gives the recipient more flexibility in purchasing a variety of food and non food items.

An assessment of the last year's cash for work programme carried out by the ERCS and the Federation last year was generally very positive about this innovative approach and noted that it did not have the inflationary impact on prices that was feared. The assessment team was favourably impressed with the quality of many of the employment generation schemes carried out, although it noted that the standard varied and the lack of non-labour inputs in some construction works such as bridges and road maintenance would undermine their effectiveness. Due regard is being made of this recommendation and non-labour inputs such as steel, wire and cement will be included in the present schemes.

In addition to this extra input, the ERCS and the Federation will provide an additional two month's distribution in return for continued work on the employment generation schemes in recognition of the likely delay in the belg harvest as a result of the late rains. This response has been discussed by agencies in the WFP co-ordination meetings.

### **Relief distributions w**

The programme is a continuation of last year's intervention by the ERCS/Federation with a reduced target population and a focus on one woreda, Ambassel. Delays were encountered in the start of the programme for a number of reasons. Inter alia, there was a late finish of the previous 2000 drought programme with the last distribution taking place in early February, agreement on the reduction in the number of beneficiaries and their identities which took several weeks to organize, and a delay in the reporting from the branches. This meant that the distribution that was due to take place at the end of February was delayed until the beginning of April and the March distribution will now take place at the beginning of May. Beneficiaries are continuing to work but payments have been delayed by over a month.

Actions to be taken to rectify this situation are as follows: the branch will increase the number of sites and the cashiers for the cash distributions; the next distribution will include two months' allocation; assistance will be given to the branch to speed up reporting. Funds are more than adequate for the completion of the programme. As a result of the low cost of cereals, the food component of the programme was over budgeted and, in addition, some funds were left over from the 2000 Appeal. This has released extra resources which allows the ERCS and the Federation to add non-labour inputs to the employment generation schemes and to include an extra two months' distribution in response to the delay in the belg harvest.

### ***Objective 1: To provide 12,077 at risk individuals with blended, fortified cereal as a nutritional supplement to the staple food from February to June.***

The purchase of famix was undertaken in two lots through the factory in Addis Ababa, one in February for 105 tons which has been transported to Wuchalie and the second lot in April for 159 tons which will be transported in May. The total required for the five months is 271.7 tons with the difference of 8 tons coming from the balance left over from the 2000 operation. The ration of 4.5 kg of famix per month is intended for pregnant women, lactating mothers, the elderly and the handicapped, representing 30% of the total population targeted by the operation. The first distribution of 53.745 tons to 11,943 took place in Wuchalie in Ambassel between April 4 and 12 and was run at the same time as the cash and grain distribution. Some 134 people did not claim the ration, an element which is being assessed by the branch.

### ***Objective 2: To provide 8,052 vulnerable belg farmers with a general ration of 12.5 kg per person per month from February to June.***

Following Disaster Prevention and Preparedness Commission (DPPC) guidelines on employment generation schemes, 20% of the target population should not be involved in work because of their

extreme vulnerability and should receive gratuitous food relief as an alternative. To this end, the ERCS purchased 194 tons in February and a further 311 Metric Tons in April on the open market. The first lot was transported to Wuchalie and stored in the DPPC warehouse and the ERCS warehouse. The second lot is in the process of being transported now. The first distribution of 100.65 tons was carried out as above between April 4 and 12 and 8,052 people received 12.5 kg each. 100% of the intended beneficiaries collected their ration. The ERCS Dessie branch staff and 20 volunteers organized and ran the distribution.

***Objective 3: To continue employment generation schemes that would provide employment for approximately 10,000 household representatives to support a population of 32,206 who would be paid in cash for their work.***

This operation is a continuation of the employment generation schemes undertaken in Ambassel last year. The systems and personnel for the planning, designing and implementing of the schemes are, therefore, already in place. The woreda authorities and the technical departments are motivated to making the cash for work schemes successful. The ERCS branch has a full time employment generation scheme co-ordinator whose role is to ensure that the work schemes are well managed with the full participation of the communities, agricultural line ministry and the woreda authorities. The coordinator is involved in all aspects of planning, implementing and monitoring of the work along with 28 volunteers.

The main thrust of the works continues to be in the area of road construction and maintenance, and soil and water conservation such as terracing, bund construction, establishment of check dams and cut off drains. The assessment that was conducted in March concluded that the soil and water conservation activities has probably had the most useful long-term impact, with a significant overall impact of these works. The electronic version of this assessment document has been made available to partners.

Some 10,469 representatives of households have been involved in these works. The distribution which coincided with the food distributions between 4 and 12 April distributed 804,525 birr (approximately 100,000 USD) to 32,181 people. There was a shortfall of 625 birr (approximately 80 USD) which was not claimed.

### **National Society Capacity Building w**

The ERCS has gained considerable experience from running this operation over the last year. It has developed its capacity and knowledge in the areas of planning and implementing a complex intervention which has required considerable logistical and organizational capabilities at the headquarters and branch levels. It has also built up experience and expertise about food security issues and, particularly, in the area of cash for work which remains a relatively untried approach in emergency food insecurity situations.

### **Federation Delegation w**

The Federation continues to provide technical and co-ordination support through the Head of Delegation.

## ***Coordination***

Comparisons have to be made with the situation last year in Ethiopia when great swathes of the country were facing drought. By June 2000, over 10 million people were in need of emergency food assistance, according to the DPPC. A co-ordinated response by international donors and agencies with a favourable main season harvest provided the critical means to recover the situation. This year the situation is considerably better but the cumulative impact of years of poor harvest and asset depletion means that millions remain very vulnerable. Agencies work and coordinate within this context of chronic food insecurity where many households are unable to subsist even in years of bumper harvests.

## ***Outstanding needs***

There are no outstanding needs at this stage within the parameters of this operation. Donor support has been timely and funding is adequate even with the implementation of the additional two months of cash distribution.

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*Donors providing in-kind relief in response to large-scale emergencies are urged to contact the Federation's Logistics and Resource Mobilization Department to avoid any unnecessary delays in the clearance and delivery of emergency relief assistance.*

*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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<b>Ethiopia Drought</b>						ANNEX 1
<b>APPEAL No. 08/2001</b>		<b>PLEDGES RECEIVED</b>				14.05.2001
DONOR	CATEGORY	QUANTITY	UNIT	VALUE CHF	DATE	COMMENT
<b>CASH</b>						
REQUESTED IN APPEAL CHF ----->				<b>1'932'510</b>		<b>TOTAL COVERAGE 66.0%</b>
CASH CARRIED FORWARD						
BRITISH - RC		200'000	GBP	482'000	22.02.01	EGS SECTION OF RELIEF PROGRAMME
DANISH - GOVT		2'610'000	DKK	537'660	12.03.01	FOOD SECURITY
JAPANESE - RC				64'000	01.03.01	FOOD SECURITY
SWEDISH - GOVT/RC		1'100'000	SEK	191'070	26.02.01	FOOD SECURITY
SUB/TOTAL RECEIVED IN CASH				1'274'730	CHF	66.0%
<b>KIND AND SERVICES (INCLUDING PERSONNEL)</b>						
DONOR	CATEGORY	QUANTITY	UNIT	VALUE CHF	DATE	COMMENT
SUB/TOTAL RECEIVED IN KIND/SERVICES				0	CHF	0.0%
<b>ADDITIONAL TO APPEAL BUDGET</b>						
DONOR	CATEGORY	QUANTITY	UNIT	VALUE CHF	DATE	COMMENT
SUB/TOTAL RECEIVED				0	CHF	
<b>THE FOLLOWING PROJECTS ARE LINKED TO THIS APPEAL:</b>						