

EMERGENCY APPEAL



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

ERITREA: IMPROVING FOOD SECURITY

Appeal no: 33/02
3 December 2002

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.

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IN BRIEF

THIS APPEAL SEEKS A TOTAL OF CHF 7,865,000 (USD 5,282,274 or EUR 5,322,949) IN CASH, KIND AND SERVICES TO ASSIST 41,500 BENEFICIARIES FOR 9 MONTHS

Summary

The Red Cross Society of Eritrea (RCSE) and the Federation Secretariat plan to start an assistance program in Zoba Anseba in February 2003 as a response to the drought situation in Eritrea. An assessment mission was carried out in November to determine the seriousness of the situation, and to identify more detailed beneficiary requirements. CHF 15,000 was allocated from the Federation's Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF) to facilitate the assessment and start up of the proposed intervention.

This Emergency Appeal aims to implement an operation that will include a package of interventions focusing on general food distribution, water and health activities. The continuous decline of the food security situation will require a close monitoring of the development of the needs. Therefore, the need to extend the operation, including new beneficiaries or regions, will again be assessed early next year.

This Emergency Appeal and the associated activities are specifically designed to complement interventions planned by the Eritrean Relief and Refugee Commission (ERREC), the UN, the ICRC and other humanitarian actors and agencies. Its scope is within the capacity of the RCSE to implement a well-planned and effectively managed operation. The RCSE and the Federation are fully committed to immediately responding to the needs of the people through the activities outlined in this Appeal.

The Situation

Food security

The vast majority of Eritreans live close to subsistence level even in normal agricultural production years and are forced to resort to casual labour, dependence on livestock production, subsistence agriculture, and/or selling of fuel wood in order to support their families. The agricultural crop production in the country is almost entirely rain fed and the yearly production is determined by the amount and distribution of rainfall. Eritrea has so far not managed to raise the production to a level that can support the entire population and is even in normal years forced to cover nearly 50% of their yearly cereal requirements through imports either as food aid or commercially.

Rainfall has been very poor in Eritrea since October, 2001. The near total failure of the “Azmera” 2002 rainy season (March-June) in the major agricultural areas seriously affected land preparation and the replenishment of pastureland. The main “Kremti” 2002 rainy season (June-September) arrived late in most of the country, resulting in delays in planting of several weeks. In addition to the late arrival of these rains, the cumulative amount of rainfall in all regions of the country was below 50%, with most places 25% below the historic average.

The limited amount of rainfall has also affected the availability of drinking water for both people and animals. Losses of livestock from starvation has been reported to be at around 15% in most areas, and up to 20% percent in others. The livestock situation has improved over the last couple of months due to the regeneration of pastures after the second rainy season in July-August.

The current poor agricultural season could not have come at a worse time. Eritrea has just started the recovery from a devastating border war and a large number of people, including farmers, are still displaced and thousand of soldiers are still to be demobilised. The road to recovery will, due to the current drought situation, be seriously hampered now, and the Government will be hard pressed to secure the livelihood of an additional 1.4 million people directly affected by the drought.

In response to this alarming situation, the Government of Eritrea issued an advanced appeal in August requesting the international community urgent assistance to prevent the situation from deteriorating into a major catastrophe. The consequences of the drought situation are already evident with cereal prices having doubled (compared with the same period last year) prompting the distress sale of livestock resulting in a substantial drop in prices.

The country’s cereal production, according to the FAO/WFP Crop and Food Supply Assessment to Eritrea, at the end of September was estimated at 74,000 MT, the lowest level since the country’s independence. However, this production estimate has since been adjusted downwards. As a result, Eritrea will require approximately 433,000 MT of cereals to be imported in 2003 to cover the immediate relief needs. The 2003 Consolidated Inter-Agency Appeal (CAP) for Eritrea aims to provide assistance to sustain the lives of more than 2.3 million people, who are in need of humanitarian assistance due to the combined effects of drought and the aftermath of war. Of these, 1.4 million are directly affected by drought due to cereal and water shortages caused by the failure of the last two seasonal rains. The 2003 CAP underlines that the drought is creating health, water and sanitation problems for most of the country’s population.

Health Situation

Eritrea has a well-developed health system in comparison to standards in other African countries. Health stations, health centres and referral hospitals are well equipped. The drug supply (Ministry of Health (MoH) / UNICEF) is secured on a regular basis, and only seasonal shortages of medications occurs. The main problem in the country, according to partners working in the health sector, is in the source of manpower in the health facilities. According to the MoH, the training facilities for nurses and health assistants will be doubled within the next year to overcome this situation.

The most dominant health problem in the country is malnutrition and diseases related to it. Apart from malnutrition, malaria, diarrhoea and acute respiratory infections (ARI) are the most frequent diseases especially in the under five years of age group of children. In a recent demographic and health survey conducted by the National Statistics and Evaluation Office (DHS+), the infant mortality rate (0-12 month) is 48 deaths per 1,000 live births and the under five-mortality is 93 per 1,000 live births. The highest figures have been reported from the Northern Red Sea and the Southern Red Sea district. Immunisation rates among 12 – 23 months old children are very high, reaching 84,2% for measles, 82,8% for DPT 3, and 91,4% for BCG. This means an increase in the coverage rate of approximately 30% since the similar survey in 1995.

Water/Sanitation Situation

Over 75% of the water resources are from underground sources. However, the potential for groundwater is varied across the country -- highest along the central highlands and western lowlands, and poor along the Eastern escarpment and the Northeastern Coastal plains.

Being one of the poorest countries in the world, Eritrea has a very low national water and sanitation coverage (22% for the water supply and 18% for sanitation). The figures are even more dramatic for the rural areas (8% and 1% coverage for water and sanitation respectively), with resulting high incidence of water borne and water related diseases across the country. These circumstances, combined with other contemporary post-conflict and socio-economic problems, further increases the vulnerability of the population.

It is crucial to address these water and sanitation problems and to increase significantly the national coverage. The Government and key partners will need to put in place an implementation framework that will appropriately address long term programmes in both water and soil conservation programmes. The current drought, reported as the worst since independence, has thus created a serious challenge to both Government and other actors engaged in the provision of water and sanitation services to a predominantly rural population.

The Response so far

Government Action and other Agencies' action w

In response to the ongoing food insecurity, the ERREC, together with WFP, is distributing general food rations to 300,000 beneficiaries in drought-affected areas of the country. The ration comprises 60% of the standard WFP food ration (500g of cereals, 40g of pulses, 30g of oil), which are distributed on a monthly basis. The present program will last until January 2003. Additionally, Dutch Interchurch Aid (DIA) covers 300,000 beneficiaries in the three Zobas of Northern Red Sea, Southern Red Sea and Anseba with general food rations funded by the European Union. Mercy Corps and International Rescue Committee (IMC) are serving smaller numbers of beneficiaries (up to 15,000 persons).

For 2003 the ERREC and WFP are planning to supply 900,000 beneficiaries in drought-affected areas through the CAP. Catholic Relief Services (CRS) is in the process of supplying general food rations to over 500,000 beneficiaries in Debub Zoba, and the DIA has applied to the European Union to continue to cover 300,000 people in Northern and Southern Red Sea and Anseba Zoba. The Lutheran World Federation (LWF) is appealing to distribute emergency food to 66,000 beneficiaries in Maakel Zoba. OXFAM will undertake a nutritional assessment in Ghash Barka but currently has no plans for food distribution. The ongoing general food rations programmes are likely to be finished by the end of January 2003. As the Government and humanitarian actors have so far not received any hard pledges from donors, it is most likely that there will be a gap between February and April until general food rations can be distributed in the country.

Red Cross and Red Crescent Action w

The RCSE has been monitoring the drought situation through its branch offices and through attendance in NGO and Government organised meetings and technical working groups in Asmara. As the outlook for the food shortage became evident, the RCSE requested the Federation Secretariat to deploy a drought assessment mission to assist the RCSE in formulating an appropriate Red Cross response to the upcoming crises. The assessment team coordinated its mission with the Federation Regional Delegation in Nairobi and the ICRC in Asmara. It may be recalled that the ICRC supported a drought relief operation in Anseba in 2000. For the current drought the ICRC is focusing its actions on the Temporary Security Zone and on the internally displaced.

Co-ordination w

All relief activities at the national level are co-ordinated by the ERREC, which ensures that efforts are not duplicated. In addition, monthly theme groups meetings for the various technical areas such as water intervention, supplementary feeding, and emergency agricultural interventions are held between the interested agencies and representatives.

At the Zoba level, ERREC officials coordinate the relief activities together with village councils. The village councils are formed with representatives from women groups, youth representatives and formal and informal community leaders. This Council plays a vital role in the final targeting of beneficiaries and activities will only be allowed after final endorsement from these community authorities.

This system is well established and more or less accepted by the humanitarian actors. However, the general feeling is that the technical and administrative capacity needs to be supplemented if all the people in need are to be reached during the upcoming nine months. CARE and WFP are planning to conduct nation-wide training workshops with the aim of introducing a targeting system based on a livelihood approach. All stakeholders in Eritrea welcome this training initiative, as there is a general consensus about the needs to strengthen this targeting system.

The Red Cross plans to participate in the CARE/WFP workshops. It will also discuss with the Village Councils in the intervention areas the monitoring system to measure the impact of its distribution. Furthermore, the Red Cross will continue to participate in both the general and the specific coordination meetings at the Asmara and Zoba levels.

The Intended Operation and Plan of Action

Assessment of Needs •

Red Cross field assessments were carried out in November in the Anseba Region of Eritrea. The information gathered during the assessment, including first and secondary data collection, has guided the RCSE and the Federation Secretariat in formulating the scope of the emergency operation.

Immediate Needs w

Information collected and observations made by the assessment team regarding the food security situation and related water/health/nutrition issues clearly warrant a Red Cross response. The present level of relief assistance is not capable of ensuring the complete needs of the population. The Red Cross as an auxiliary to the Government is obliged to ensure that the needs of the most vulnerable are covered.

The recommended Red Cross response in Zoba Anseba has been designed carefully, taking into consideration the needs of the affected population, the RCSE relief experience in Zoba Anseba, the level of assistance provided by other actors including the ERREC, and the capacity of the Red Cross movement to mobilise the necessary resources. Considerations have been made to develop a comprehensive programme, ensuring a gender sensitive approach.

The importance of securing a relief and development continuum has been regarded throughout the design of the programme. Immediate needs are often addressed by short-term, practical interventions (such as relief food) whereas addressing vulnerabilities, in contrast, requires long-term strategic solutions. Although embarking on a relief intervention, sustainability will be ensured through a clear emphasis on capacity building of Red Cross staff, volunteers and community members, building on the strengths of both men and women, as well as securing the sustainability of hardware components of the programme.

Intervention Strategy

A three-phase intervention is being planned, and this appeal represents phase one of the proposed strategy.

- **Phase 1:** start an integrated relief operation in **Hagaz** sub-Zoba of the Anseba Region providing basic food and water relief plus health promotion to an average target population of 41,500 beneficiaries for a period up to nine months (February – October 2003).
- **Phase 2:** allow the RCSE to expand its water relief and health promotion activities to more sub-Zobas in the Anseba Zoba should it become evident that the Government and its traditional partners are not in a position to cover these areas as part of their relief efforts. Furthermore, the possibilities of setting up additional supplementary feeding programmes, either in collaboration with ERREC/WFP under a tripartite agreement allowing the RCSE to set-up these activities using WFP resourced supplementary food items or through utilising Red Cross mobilised resources, should be explored.
- **Phase 3:** initiated when the pledging level of the traditional food aid donors has become clearer in the beginning of 2003. The third phase response should determine the need for additional Red Cross general food aid distributions in one or several of the areas in focus of the RCSE. Should the situation deteriorate

further, an increase in the number of beneficiaries and/or additional supplementary dry rations could be necessary.

All Red Cross partners should consider the seriousness of the precarious drought situation in Eritrea. Considering the CAP 2002 response and the pledge level for 2003 from the international community, the RCSE feels that it is important to start the mobilization of resources as early as possible and not wait until it has become evident that the ERREC structure is not capable of reaching all the people in need.

A revised Federation emergency appeal might be issued if the ERREC and the other humanitarian agencies are facing difficulties resourcing their appeals during the first months of 2003 and additional funding sources are needed for phase two and three of the Red Cross intervention.

Red Cross Objectives and Related Activities •

Food component

Objective 1: To provide general food rations for 9 months for an average of 41,500 people to ensure their livelihood until the next harvest (November 2003).

Activity 1: Targeting of beneficiaries - the RCSE and its volunteers will undertake screening of beneficiaries in collaboration with the village councils, register them and monitor the distribution process. In principle, each head of household will be given a distribution card against which they receive their monthly ration. The process will consider the status of men and women respectively, ensuring that needs are being met on an equal basis.

Activity 2: Purchase, transport, storage and distribute 6,387 MT of grain, pulses, oil.

Activity 3: Monitor the impact of food distribution on market behavior and household economy.

Activity 4: Monitor the nutritional status of the severely affected population who benefit from general food distribution by growth monitoring through trained outreach RCSE volunteers.

Health, water and sanitation

Health

Objective 1: To strengthen the provision of health services through outreach programs, volunteer mobilisation and training, and provision of an integrated health sanitation education.

Activity 1: Volunteer training will be carried out through organising refresher courses for the existing, earlier trained volunteers. For remote areas, where there may be a lack of trained volunteers, volunteer mobilisation and core training courses will be organized. This will facilitate the implementation of the health program in the targeted areas and will strengthen the Red Cross presence in the area. The presence of volunteers will also ensure sustainability provided that the Red Cross branch is able to maintain regular support and follow up. At least five volunteers will be deployed at each of the five distribution points.

Activity 2: Coaching volunteers. Particularly active and capable volunteers will be trained on the coaching techniques to assist their peers to deliver their responsibilities effectively and efficiently. The African Red Cross and Red Crescent Health Initiative (ARCHI) and PHAST toolkits will be used to guide the volunteers and their coaches to deliver a better health education and promotion to the community.

Water and Sanitation

Objective 1: To reduce water stress by provision of safe water supply through water trucking.

Activity 1: Improve the access to potable water through water trucking for initial six months for a population of 10,000 persons. Amount of water trucked per day is 150,000 litres (in line with Sphere standards of 15 liters per person per day). In the second phase, the supply of water will improve through the rehabilitation of water points and improving the quality of existing water sources.

Objective 2: Improving the sanitation behavior of the population.

Activity 1: Carry out and promote hygiene and sanitation tasks through trained volunteers using the PHAST methodology in emergencies, through the utilisation of adapted PHAST tool kits and through health and sanitation education, including generating the need for latrines, in the community.

Activity 2: Carry out water quality monitoring to assess effectiveness of hygiene and sanitation education and promotion.

Advocacy

Objective 1: Ensure that the needs and rights of the most vulnerable in relation to the drought situation are secured.

Activity 1: Advocate on behalf of the most vulnerable to influence policy, commitment and allocation of resources by government, donors and other agencies.

Activity 2: Monitor closely the development of the food security situation in the country.

Activity 3: Collect primary data in the areas of health, nutrition and water/sanitation from high-risk areas in order to monitor and ensure that the most needy will be attended timely.

RCSE Capacity Building

Objective 1: To strengthen the capacity of the RCSE headquarters and the Anseba branch in disaster preparedness and disaster management operations. Although several RCSE staff and volunteers have previous disaster response experience, the scope of this proposed relief operation requires the building of further knowledge and skills. Particularly before the start up of the action, RCSE staff and volunteers will receive extensive training and coaching.

Activity 1: Undertake dissemination sessions on Red Cross principles and relief policies for involved staff and volunteers. The need to improve the knowledge of Red Cross policies and capacities to fully implement a relief operation according to Red Cross standards has to be ensured, particularly with the employment of temporary staff and the involvement of additional volunteers.

Activity 2: Increase the capacity of RCSE staff and volunteers in areas of relief and logistics.

Activity 3: Increase the capacity of RCSE staff and volunteers in areas of finance and narrative reporting.

Activity 4: Increase the capacity of RCSE staff and volunteers in participatory community activities in the areas of PHAST/ARCHI, support the development of the water and sanitation unit and their emergency response capacity.

Activity 5: Support networking with relevant Government, UN and humanitarian partners.

Logistics w

The procurement of relief items will be co-ordinated by the Federation's Regional Logistics Unit in Nairobi. The in-country transportation of relief items will be undertaken by utilising the existing RCSE trucking fleet or through tendering, if necessary, to supplement existing capacity. The related transportation costs are relatively high due to the nature of the operation and the planned procurement. The storage of emergency items will be coordinated with the ERREC, possibly organised through renting of existing warehouses. The telecommunications between the RCSE headquarters and Keren branch is satisfactory. However, radio communication is considered necessary to secure adequate communication between branch and distribution sides.

Monitoring and Evaluation w

A task force will be constituted at the RCSE headquarters level, ensuring proper monitoring, evaluation and reporting of the emergency intervention. Close co-ordination with affected branches to ensure the proper delivery of humanitarian assistance to drought-affected people will be ensured. The RCSE, supported by the Federation Secretariat, will assume overall accountability for a timely and quality response.

Capacity of the National Society w

The RCSE already possess a trucking fleet that could accommodate the logistical requirements for bulk food needs of a target population of approximately 100,000 people. However, the majority of the trucks will require some additional maintenance before the whole capacity can be utilised. Furthermore, the availability of trained staff and volunteers, at both the Asmara and branch levels, will have to be reinforced to smoothly implement each of the three phases of the operation. In Anseba the operation will also benefit from the experience gained during the drought relief operation implemented in cooperation with the ICRC in 2000. Therefore, the current set-up of the society should be able to accommodate the anticipated implementation strategy if the necessary capacity building components are introduced in a timely manner.

Capacity of the Federation Secretariat in the region w

The Federation will reinforce its delegation in Asmara. The Head of Delegation (the former Federation Representative) will be the overall coordinator of the operation for the Federation, and will manage a team of three delegates:

- a relief and logistics co-ordinator to support the RCSE with the proposed relief operation.
- a water & sanitation delegate to support the RCSE with the proposed wat/san intervention.
- a reporting & finance delegate to support RCSE with the financial and narrative reporting.

The Nairobi Regional Delegation will support the operation through a task force created for this emergency operation, chaired by the disaster management unit of the delegation. Technical assistance in health, water and sanitation will be provided by the regional Health Unit, and the regional Working Group on Food Security (WGFS) as necessary.

All expatriate delegates are working in close collaboration with RCSE staff and volunteers. They have a general responsibility to understand the local context, to demonstrate a positive learning attitude, to share their expertise, to strengthen their counterparts capacity, and to coach staff and volunteers, if and where appropriate.

Budget summary

See Annex 1 for details.

For further details please contact: Josse Gillijns, Federation Desk Officer, Phone: 41 22 730 4224; Fax: 41 22 733 0395; email: josse.gillijns@ifrc.org.

All International Federation Assistance 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.

In line with the Minimum Reporting Standards, the first operations update on this appeal will be issued within 30-days of the launch and the second will be issued over the course of the operation; a final narrative and financial report will be issued no later than 90 days after the end of the operation.

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 website.

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>

Jean Ayoub
Director
Disaster Management and Coordination

Didier J. Cherpitel
Secretary General

		ANNEX 1
<u>BUDGET SUMMARY</u>		APPEAL No. 33/2002
Eritrea food security		
TYPE		VALUE
<u>RELIEF NEEDS</u>		IN CHF
Wheat: 5,600 mts		2'020'000
Lentils: 448 mts		353'000
Oil: 336 mts		580'000
Water and sanitation		350'000
Teaching materials		10'000
TOTAL RELIEF NEEDS		3'313'000
<u>CAPITAL EQUIPMENT</u>		
Vehicles		95'000
Computers		21'000
Telecom. equipment		56'000
Office furniture & equipment		22'000
Medical equipment		5'000
<u>PROGRAMME SUPPORT</u>		
Programme management		530'000
Technical support		159'000
Professional services		176'000
<u>TRANSPORT STORAGE & VEHICLE COSTS</u>		2'580'000
<u>PERSONNEL</u>		
Expatriate staff		308'000
National staff		354'000
Personnel (support costs)		67'000
<u>ADMINISTRATIVE & GENERAL SERVICES</u>		
Travel & related expenses		32'000
Information expenses		10'000
Administrative & general expenses		137'000
TOTAL OPERATIONAL NEEDS		4'552'000
TOTAL APPEAL CASH, KIND, SERVICES		7'865'000
LESS AVAILABLE RESOURCES (-)		0
NET REQUEST		7'865'000