

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

Appeal no: 05/03
13 February, 2003

MAURITANIA: DROUGHT AND FOOD SECURITY

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

IN BRIEF

**THIS APPEAL SEEKS CHF 1,056,000
(USD 773,934 or EUR 718,672)
IN CASH, KIND AND SERVICES
TO ASSIST 18,000 BENEFICIARIES FOR 3 MONTHS¹**

The Situation

The general food security and drought situation in Mauritania is characterized by²:

- poor agro-climatic conditions provoked by the late onset of the rainy season, and insufficient rains which have undermined Mauritania's cereal harvest for the second consecutive year.
- a decrease in cereal production for 2002/2003 (estimated at 99,705 tonnes), down 18 percent from 2001/2002 (which was itself down 32 percent from 2000/2001).
- rising market prices and overall short supply of local grains (millet, sorghum and maize) have been rising since November 2001, with the price of sorghum increasing 59 percent between January and September 2002.
- the plummeting price of livestock (40 to 60 percent depending on the region), with agro-pastoralists obliged to partly de-stock because of insufficient pasture and to purchase cereals.
- pasture lands which will not cover more than 3 months of livestock consumption, with a resulting reduction in milk and meat production in 2003, and indications that migratory grazing will start earlier and will be more intense.
- the anticipated need to import 322,534 tonnes of cereals to meet the country's requirements. The anticipated volume of imports of 228,030 tonnes, made up of 217,030 tonnes of commercial imports and 11,000 tonnes of pledged food assistance, leaves a deficit of 94,504 tonnes to be covered by additional food assistance.
- thousands of people who have been seriously affected by the succession of poor harvests, and some 411,000 persons throughout the country who now require emergency food aid. The situation is particularly worrying in

¹ Plans entail a revision of this appeal after the Food Security Commission vulnerability mapping (end February).

² UN Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO), December 2002.

Aftout, in the south of the two Hodhs, in southeast Konkossa, on the plateau strip between Tagant and Affolé and in east Trarza.

This situation is expected to further deteriorate before the next harvest in October 2003. A revised vulnerability mapping will be compiled by the Mauritanian authorities' Food Security Commission (CSA) at the end of February (the CSA is the Mauritanian governmental body responsible for overseeing the food situation in the country, and the CSA fulfills a coordinating role on behalf of humanitarian agencies). The mapping is expected to indicate increased vulnerability within communities which will require wider support mechanisms. Given the situation, families have exhausted their grain reserves and the surviving animals have been seriously affected by the lack of grazing areas. Unless rapid intervention occurs, the food situation is expected to deteriorate dramatically. Anecdotal, a recent nutritional evaluation of children carried out in the region of Aftout by UNICEF, WFP and NGOs (September, 2002) indicated severe malnutrition amongst 15% of the survey sample.

Two components of this provisional appeal are particularly important:

- the Federation and the MRCS have wide experience implementing food security, drought response, and health operations in Mauritania. Between 1973 and 1992, 14 drought/food security, health, or population movement appeals were launched. The Federation intends to focus on identifying the residual capacity of the MRCS formed during these operations, and to reinforce the existing experience with well targeted organizational development support. The provisional nature of this appeal implies that the approach of the Federation and the MRCS will be to flexibly assess the situation and revise the operation based on the evolving nature of the needs.
- Due to the extremely isolated areas selected for this operation and the relatively high costs associated with the transportation of supplies in Mauritania, the related transportation costs reflected in the attached provisional appeal budget are considerably high, in comparison to similar types of food assistance operations.

The Needs

Immediate Needs w

The immediate needs are for:

- the procurement of supplementary food for wet feeding centres for children under 5, pregnant women and lactating mothers.
- transport of food for distributions in difficult to access or very isolated areas.
- nutritional and hygiene education, focusing on women.
- strengthening the food security capacity and projects of the Mauritanian Red Crescent Society (MRCS).

Coordination w

The MRCS is an active member of the CSA, the Mauritanian governmental body responsible for overseeing the food situation in the country. The CSA fulfills a coordinating role on behalf of humanitarian agencies. The size of Mauritania and, by association, the operation, necessitates a collaborative multi-agency approach to the operational response. WFP, the lead UN agency for food assistance, have, in consultation with the Government and its operational partners, allocated areas or locations for food distribution interventions. While the MRCS is not currently a partner of WFP, it has indicated that it would favourably consider playing a role, in co-ordination with WFP and the CSA.

The French and Italian Red Cross are currently operational in Mauritania, responding to the drought and food security needs in the south east and northern parts of the country, and collaborating with respective MRCS branches. More specifically:

- The French Red Cross has 2 delegates in the country - 1 in Nouakchott and 1 in Keefah - running a joint clinical treatment programme for HIV/AIDS and STI. The French Red Cross is planning support with up to 3,700 metric tonnes of food aid in the south east of Mauritania.
- The Italian Red Cross is represented by a delegate managing a relief food assistance programme financed by ECHO. This food security project is implemented primarily in the north of the country (Adrar).

Efforts to increase and improve coordination between the Federation, the MRCS, and the French and Italian Red Cross will be undertaken as a priority. While the ICRC is not present in the country, support is provided by the ICRC's Tunis office, with a focus on activities related to the dissemination of International Humanitarian Law.

Furthermore, the Federation's support for the MRCS is provided through the 2003 Annual Appeal for the Sahel sub-regional programmes (no. 01.41/2003), covering the areas of health, relief, disaster management, and organizational development. The MRCS has 58 registered branches with approximately 4,117 volunteers. Of these 855 have received training from the Spanish, Italian or French Red Cross's or the Federation during the last 3 years.

The Proposed Operation

This Appeal proposes to target communes identified as vulnerable by the CSA, but not being covered for food distribution by WFP (through its operational partners) or by other agencies. The MRCS proposes to undertake a targeted relief operation, health activities, and capacity building for its branches within the 2 Wilaya (regions) of Adrar and Trarza, specifically in the Moughataa of Aoujeft, Chinguitti, Ouadane, Atar and R'Kiz (see table below).

Planned distribution areas:

Moughataa	Commune	Population	Beneficiaries	CSA ranking ³	No. Volunteers
Aoujeft	Awjeft	5,945	1'385	97	93
Aoujeft	El Meddah	2,610	608	95	
Aoujeft	Maedan	6,923	1'613	129	
Aoujeft	N'teirguent	1,978	461	99	
Chinguitti	Ain Savra	692	161	73	38
Chinguitti	Chinguitti	4,205	980	128	38
Ouadane	Ouadane	3,119	727	127	43
Atar	Choum	2,514	586	64	46
R'Kiz	R'Kiz	58,813	11'116	N/A	65
TOTAL		86,799	17,637		

The beneficiary criteria established by the MRCS focuses primarily on children under 5 years of age, the disabled, the sick, pregnant and nursing women and elderly people in charge of households. Supplementary (wet) feeding assures more fully accurate targetting of the specific at-risk group of children and pregnant and lactating women, and will therefore be provided to children and pregnant and lactating women in the targetted communes. This amounts to around 15% of the population in the targetted communes - or around 2,800 persons. Dry rations, enabling an intake of around 1,600 k/cal/person/day, will be provided for the remaining severely vulnerable groups identified by the authorities in conjunction with the MRCS.

Relief distribution: food and basic non-food items w

Objective 1: Create Community Feeding Centres (CAC) for children under 5 years and pregnant and nursing women in the target zones.

Activities planned to reach this objective are:

³ The Food Security Observatory (on behalf of CSA) ranked 155 Moughataa (localities) in September 2002 according to vulnerability due to food insecurity (Bulletin no. 4 / December 2002). The ranking shown in the table therefore corresponds to the position of the given commune out of the 155 ranked. Alert indicators suggested by OSA/CSA are no. meals/day; debt level of households, use of replacement foodstuffs; outflux of income earners and sale of productive livestock. Indicators of malnutrition are given as extreme fatigue; weight loss; 'cécité nocturne'; 'scorbut'; dehydration and diarrhoea. OSA/CSA data is generally held by partners to be reliable.

- Procurement of the required food supplies, including wheat soya blend, sugar and vegetable oil, to formulate a daily meal for the children.
- Procurement of the necessary cooking equipment for the preparation of food (pots, utensils, etc.).
- Identification of children in a state of primary or advanced malnutrition, in collaboration with the local MRCS committee volunteers, the MRCS nutritionist team, and the local health authorities in the target regions.
- Training in implementing CAC's in the villages. The creation of the CAC will be based on the malnutrition data recorded in the target regions. The women of the village community will be trained by the volunteers and the nutrition auxiliaries in line with the content of the basic health, nutrition and hygiene. training programme.
- Regular deliveries of the ingredients for a daily meal for the target beneficiaries. The food preparations and direct feeding of the targeted population will be monitored on a regular basis.
- Follow-up of nutritional status through monthly evaluation missions by the nutritionist teams.

Objective 2: Distribute dry rations to vulnerable populations according to the criteria set by the MRCS (elderly, disabled and sick people), in accordance with WFP distribution norms and the CSA.

Activities planned to reach this objective are:

- Purchase of rations of wheat, beans and oil from local commercial suppliers in Mauritania.
- Transportation of the food supplies to extended delivery points (EDP's). Due to the areas selected for this operation and the relatively high costs associated with transportation in Mauritania, the related transportation costs reflected in the attached provisional appeal budget are abnormally high.
- A survey of vulnerable populations in collaboration with the local health authorities and visits to these families to draw up reliable lists of beneficiaries.
- Delivery of food from the primary to the secondary warehouses of the departmental or local committee. Distributions are carried out on a regular basis dependant on the availability of food. This process will be regularly monitored and reported on.
- Distribution reports on the basis of the survey lists.

Total food needs for the Mauritania food insecurity and drought operation

Moughataa	Commune	Vulnerable population	Wheat	Beans	Veg oil	Wheat Soya Blend	Supp't Veg Oil	Sugar	Total
Aoujeft	Awjeft	1'385	49.9	7.48	2.49	1.99	0.10	0.40	62.33
Aoujeft	Al Meddah	608	21.9	3.28	1.09	0.88	0.04	0.18	27.36
Aoujeft	Maedan	1'613	58.1	8.71	2.90	2.32	0.12	0.46	72.59
Aoujeft	N'teirguent	461	16.6	2.49	0.83	0.66	0.03	0.13	20.75
Chinguitti	Ain Savra	161	5.8	0.87	0.29	0.23	0.01	0.05	7.25
Chinguitti	Chinguitti	980	35.3	5.29	1.76	1.41	0.07	0.28	44.10
Ouadane	Ouadane	727	26.2	3.93	1.31	1.05	0.05	0.21	32.72
Atar	Choum	586	21.1	3.16	1.05	0.84	0.04	0.17	26.37
R'Kiz	R'Kiz	11'116	400.2	60.03	20.01	16.01	0.80	3.20	500.22
Total (in MT)			635	95	32	25	1.3	5.1	794

Health and care

Objective 1: Carry out nutrition and hygiene information and awareness-raising sessions for women in communities of the intervention zones, with a view to improving their basic knowledge and to counter the effects of unhealthy eating practices (consumption of toxic leaves when food is scarce).

Activities planned to reach this objective:

- Updating and distribution of existing educational material.

See Annex 1 for details.

For further details please contact:

- *Andrea Wojnar-Diagne, Head of Dakar Office; Phone: 00 221 842 23 41; email: ifrcsn03ifrc.org.*
- *Mark Willis; Federation Desk Officer, Phone: 41 22 730 4260; Fax: 41 22 733 0395; email: willis@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>

Abbas Gullet
Director
Disaster Management and Coordination

Didier J. Cherpitel
Secretary General

		ANNEX 1
<u>BUDGET SUMMARY</u>	APPEAL No. 05/2003	
Mauritania: food security		
TYPE	VALUE	
RELIEF NEEDS	IN CHF	
Food & seeds: wheat, wheat soya blend, sugar, oil, beans	245'000	
Other relief supplies	5'000	
TOTAL RELIEF NEEDS		250'000
<u>CAPITAL EQUIPMENT</u>		
Cars for NS	50'000	
Computers	18'000	
Telecom. equipment	26'000	
Office furniture & equipment	11'000	
Generators & lighting	12'000	
<u>PROGRAMME SUPPORT</u>		
Programme support (6.5% of total)	69'000	
<u>TRANSPORT STORAGE & VEHICLE COSTS</u>		
Transport and storage	235'000	
Vehicle costs	51'000	
<u>PERSONNEL</u>		
Expatriate staff (4 delegates, 4 months)	192'000	
National staff	98'000	
<u>ADMINISTRATIVE & GENERAL SERVICES</u>		
Travel & related expenses	12'000	
Administrative & general expenses	32'000	
TOTAL OPERATIONAL NEEDS		806'000
TOTAL APPEAL CASH, KIND, SERVICES		1'056'000
LESS AVAILABLE RESOURCES (-)		0
NET REQUEST		1'056'000