

DREF Bulletin 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

MALI: DROUGHT

No. MDRML002
Update no. 1
14 September 2006

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 over 185 countries.

In Brief

Period covered by this Update: 2 August to 5 September 2006.

Appeal history:

- CHF 156,400 was allocated from the Federation's DREF on 2 August 2006 to respond to the needs of this operation, or to replenish disaster preparedness stocks distributed to the affected population. Refer to: <http://www.ifrc.org/docs/appeals/06/MDRML002.pdf> for the DREF Bulletin.
- This operation was expected to be implemented for one month and was to be completed by 31 August 2006; Due to some operational constraints, this Update extends the operation's timeframe by two months, until the end of October 2006; a Final Report will be made available three months after the end of the operation.

This operation is aligned with the International Federation's Global Agenda, which sets out four broad goals to meet the Federation's mission to "improve the lives of vulnerable people by mobilizing the power of humanity".

Global Agenda Goals:

- Reduce the numbers of deaths, injuries and impact from disasters.
- Reduce the number of deaths, illnesses and impact from diseases and public health emergencies.
- Increase local community, civil society and Red Cross Red Crescent capacity to address the most urgent situations of vulnerability.
- Reduce intolerance, discrimination and social exclusion and promote respect for diversity and human dignity.

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All International Federation assistance seeks to adhere to the [Code of Conduct](#) for the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and Non-Governmental Organizations (NGO's) in Disaster Relief and is committed to the [Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Disaster Response](#) (Sphere) in delivering assistance to the most vulnerable.

For longer-term programmes in this or other countries or regions, please refer to the Federation's Annual Appeal. For support to or for further information concerning Federation programmes or operations in this or other countries, or for national society profiles, please also access the Federation's website at <http://www.ifrc.org>

Background and current situation

Due to a scarcity of rains which led to drought in the Kidal region, situated in the far Northern part of Mali 1,500 km from the capital city, Bamako, the local authorities launched an appeal in early August to assist members of the 11 affected communities of the region. Apart from being the poorest and most remote region of Mali, Kidal is also the biggest region, covering 21% of the country. It receives an average of less than 200 mm of rain per year and is characterised by arid desert conditions. In addition, the region is threatened by nomadic rebels who from time to time launch insurgency in the main town. One such incident occurred in May this year, when the rebels campaigned for more autonomy in their economically-marginalized region thus raising fears of a full-scale desert rebellion. This led to social unrest, leaving thousands of people internally displaced and creating speculation about an increase in the prices of food stuffs.



Prior to the recent appeal by the local authorities of Kidal, the Red Cross/Red Crescent had been implementing an emergency operation to respond to food insecurity in four Sahel countries, Mali being one of them. The Sahel Operation, which was launched in July 2005, was scheduled to be phased out by the end of September.

Red Cross and Red Crescent action - objectives progress and impact

In response to the local authorities' appeal, the Federation allocated CHF 156,400 to the Mali Red Cross to enable the national society to provide one-month food rations to 25,000 most vulnerable people. Furthermore, the regional delegation in Dakar facilitated the transportation of some 375 metric tonnes (MT) of food, drawn from the Sahel Operation, for one-off distribution in Kidal.



Mali Red Cross volunteers download food in preparation of distributions.

A joint MRC/Federation team was deployed to assess the appropriate logistical and relief possibilities to take the food to the targeted beneficiaries. In collaboration with local branches of the MRC, the teams identified distribution points so as to ensure they reach most of the targeted nomadic populations.

The MRC developed a plan of action focusing on provision of food rations to 25,000 people at identified distribution points. The national society's volunteers would mainly target families with children aged under five years, pregnant women, the elderly and people with disabilities. In addition, they planned to sensitize the local population on the importance of the food rations by disseminating key nutritional messages during distribution activities.

Objective: The Federation has assisted the Mali Red Cross in providing emergency 30-day food rations to 25,000 most affected people in Kidal region.

Achievements

The regional delegation in Dakar deployed a regional food security delegate to Kidal to provide support to the MRC disaster management coordinator, as well as the local Red Cross branch, in food distributions. In collaboration with local road haulers, a plan of distribution was developed and a transport agreement was signed. To date, more than 95% of the food from Niamey, Niger, has arrived in Gao and 70% of this has been transferred to Kidal.

On 6 September 2006, the governor of Kidal officially launched the food distribution exercise. More than 65% of the food that arrived in the region has been distributed, with at least 2,900 most vulnerable households receiving 30-day food rations. The food distribution is ongoing in at least two simultaneous cycles and is projected to end not before 13 September 2006.

Mali: Drought; DREF Bulletin no. MDRML002; Update no. 1

Before the distribution exercise begun, 35 MRC volunteers, 8 members of the local committee and 15 warehouse men were trained on how to conduct emergency food distribution. The trained volunteers, together with some members of the regional committee, undertook beneficiary identification and listing. They also identified distribution points and sensitized beneficiaries to gather at distribution points for food rations. In addition, a further 60 Red Cross and community volunteers were mobilized to assist in distribution activities.



Beneficiaries receive food rations from Red Cross officials and volunteers.

Impact

- Due to the sensitization carried out by Red Cross and community volunteers at distribution points, beneficiaries are now more aware of the nutritional value in the food rations being provided.
- More than 1,400 nomadic people have received food rations through MRC thus enhancing their food security.
- Families with children aged under five years, pregnant women, the elderly and people with disabilities who have received food rations are now assured of their next meals within their deserted villages.
- Beneficiaries who received food rations will now remain in their villages instead of relocating in search of food.
- Mortality among children, due to malnourishment and starvation, has been reduced by increasing their capacity to survive.

Constraints

- Despite all the logistical measures put in place, transport still remains a challenge as there are no tarmac roads in Kidal. This has affected the operation's calendar by delaying the implementation of most activities due to the remoteness of the area and the beginning of the rainy season which is rendering the dirt roads impassable. As a result of the delays, the operation's timeframe has been extended for two months to enable the completion of all planned activities.
- The inhabitants of the wide and deserted region are nomadic hence it is difficult to meet all the beneficiaries in their villages.
- The poor communication system between Kidal and the MRC headquarters, in Bamako, has contributed to delays in transfer of funds.

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