

Operations update



International Federation
of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

West Africa: Floods Focus on Ghana

Emergency Appeal No. MDR61002

*GLIDE nos. FL-2007-000153-GHA,
FL-2007-000158-TGO
and FL-2007-000132-BFA*

14 January 2008

Operations Update no. 5

Period covered: 12 November – 13 December 2007.

Appeal target: CHF 3,922,365 (USD 3.2m or EUR 2.3m) for the entire appeal; the Ghana budget component is CHF 2,505,722 (USD 2.1m or EUR 1.4m).

Appeal coverage: fully covered.

Remaining needs for Ghana: none.

[<Click here for the donor response report>](#)

Targeted beneficiaries: 60,000 persons in Ghana.

Appeal history:

- [Preliminary Emergency Appeal](#) for Ghana was launched on 17 September 2007 for CHF 1.47 million for 6 months to assist 60,000 people.
- [Revised Preliminary Emergency Appeal](#) was issued on 18 September 2007 for CHF 2.5 million to assist some 82,000 people in Ghana and Togo for 6 months.
- [Revised Appeal \(focus on Burkina Faso\)](#) was issued on 2 October for CHF 2.9 million (USD 2.5 million or EUR 1.7 million) to assist 94,825 beneficiaries in Burkina Faso, Ghana and Togo for 6 months.
- [Revised Appeal \(focus on Ghana\)](#) was issued on 9 October 2007 for CHF 3,922,365 (USD 3.2m or EUR 2.3m) to assist 94,825 beneficiaries in Burkina Faso, Ghana and Togo for 6 months.



Child survival is a priority project of the GRCS.
Children after receiving Red Cross relief supplies

Summary: With the completion of the assessment phase and the revision of the initial plan of action, the Ghana Red Cross Society (GRCS), with the support of the International Federation, has carried out the relief phase of its operation. Distribution of food and non-food items has been completed in the Northern and Upper East regions of the country. Implementation over the reporting period was delayed due to logistics constraints, but efforts by the GRCS team and volunteers have results in steady progress. Feedback from beneficiaries was highly positive since items distributed by the Red Cross were not among the list of those distributed by other agencies.

With the relief phase complete, the GRCS, with the support from a core Federation team, started mid-term recovery and shelter activities. The Ghana team is supported by the main coordination team based at the Federation's West Coast regional office in Lagos.

Background

Between July and August 2007, torrential rains across West Africa caused considerable destruction and damage in terms of lives, houses, and livelihoods with crops and farmland washed away and food stocks destroyed. In Ghana, particularly in the Northern and Upper East regions, the heavy rains and the release of water from the Bagary dam in neighbouring Burkina Faso caused heavy floods that affected more than 10,000 families. According to government sources, the floods claimed the lives of more than 20 people and affected more than 200,000 persons with 40,000 temporarily displaced in the 2 regions. The situation was compounded by the collapse of bridges and roads washed away, making access to affected areas difficult.



Registration at a Red Cross distribution centre

The Government of Ghana declared a state of emergency for the affected regions, and appealed to the international community to support efforts to deliver assistance to those affected. Urgent steps were immediately implemented to prevent or reduce the outbreak of waterborne diseases such as cholera and malaria. As the floodwaters receded and displaced people gradually returned to their communities to rebuild their homes, the government and other agencies including the Red Cross were also worried about the likelihood of food insecurity in these fragile communities in the near future, as most of their means of livelihood have been destroyed or washed away by floods.

Operational developments

From the beginning of the flood disaster in Ghana, the GRCS responded to the needs of the affected communities by assisting in the evacuation of those affected and in salvaging their belongings from flooded houses. Red Cross volunteers also provided first aid and health education to the affected people. The Red Cross volunteers continue to play a vital role in the disaster response operation. They have been engaged in assessments, distribution of emergency relief and shelter items, health and hygiene education and monitoring.

Though implementation had been delayed due to the need to adjust the implementation plan based on the resources available, the relief operation was well carried out. During the distribution phase, the GRCS, supported by the Federation operation team, distributed food items and non-food items in 53 villages and reached 5,171 households. However, some communities were reached late due to inaccessible roads and a lack of effective transportation.

The food items distributed by the GRCS were donated by the Swiss Red Cross, the Iranian Red Crescent and the Chinese Government. Food items such as rice, beans, vegetable oil, maize and garri were distributed to affected families, while the Federation provided non-food items such as mats, buckets, soap blankets, water jerry cans, and water purification chemicals.

During the distribution period, a representative of the British Red Cross Society was on mission to monitor the distribution activities and advise accordingly. The representative with the Federation's operations manager met with officials of DFID in Ghana. At the meeting, the operation manager briefed DFID on operation. The operations team (an operations manager, a logistics delegate and an RDRT Watsan specialist) remained in place to support the national society of Ghana in the next phase of the operation. The main coordination team (an overall operations manager and a finance delegate) based at the Federation's West Coast regional office in Lagos continues to coordinate for the three countries affected by the floods. The other teams were positioned in Togo and Burkina Faso.

With the distribution complete and the Watsan plan of action and budget almost complete, the next stage of the operation will be focusing on recovery, rehabilitation and shelter.

Red Cross and Red Crescent action

Health and Care, Water and Sanitation

Objective 1: Contribute to reducing morbidity and mortality rates in the flood affected communities through community-based health education and hygiene promotion activities among at least 10,000 households.

Progress: With training-of-trainers in community-based health education and promotion activities carried out on 13-14 October in the Northern Region and on 15-16 October 2007 in the Upper East Region, further training sessions were planned to be conducted at the district level for the Red Cross volunteers.

The capacity of the GRCS was also being strengthened through recruitment and training of additional volunteers. In addition to training, a focus was placed on the prevention of malaria, diarrhoea, acute respiratory infections and vaccine preventable diseases, which are the leading causes of morbidity and mortality in the flood-affected communities.

In regards to water and sanitation, the Red Cross has provided household water purification sachets and jerry cans to 2,538 households in the Northern Region and 5,171 households in the Upper East region of Ghana. This will ensure that beneficiaries have the appropriate means to rapidly purify contaminated drinking water. Trained Red Cross volunteers have been sensitizing the beneficiaries on the correct use of household water treatment chemicals as well as on safe hygiene practices.

In building the capacity of the communities in treating diarrhoea, mothers' clubs in the communities were provided with Oral Rehydration Solution (ORS). Hygiene promotion has also been provided through the mothers' clubs.

To ensure that 50 low income communities have access to clean water through the rehabilitation of flood-damaged hand dug wells and access to sanitation facilities by 1,000 families through construction of latrines, the Federation's watsan specialist prepared a water and sanitation plan of action.

UNICEF has provided some Insecticide Treated Nets (ITN), water treatment and educational items to the Ghana Health Service (GHS) through the National Disaster Management Organization (NADMO) for distribution to beneficiaries. This had been carried out before the Red Cross began the distribution of its relief items.

Objective 2: Support Ghana Health Services to provide integrated epidemic preparedness, surveillance and reporting of priority diseases.

Progress: Surveillance of priority diseases had been initiated by the Ghana Health Service (GHS) in both regions and was being extended through community health workers, GRCS volunteers and GRCS mothers' clubs network. Any suspected cases of diseases were being reported immediately to health authorities while simple case definitions are being used to improve diagnostic skills. A health team was deployed to the two affected regions to carry out an evaluation of the health situation since the operation started.

Objective 3: Strengthen the capacity of the Ghana Red Cross Society to partner with Ghana Health Services and UNICEF in ensuring effective planning and coordination of the emergency response.

Progress: The GHS established weekly health sector meetings in the Northern and Upper East regions to coordinate the overall health response in flood-affected areas. Sub-committees in health education, disease surveillance and prevention, outbreak preparedness and case management were also formed, of which the Ghana Red Cross Society is a member.

The National Society has an active network of volunteers at regional and district committees, district organizers and community-based youth and mothers' clubs. Furthermore, GRCS is currently implementing a community-based accelerated child survival, nutrition and development project in collaboration with GHS and UNICEF. The project covers the flood-affected Upper East and Northern regions.

Emergency relief and shelter

Objective 1: To provide emergency shelter and essential household non-food items to at least 10,000 vulnerable flood affected households.

Progress: In agreement with the Ghana Government authorities, the GRCS has registered beneficiaries in affected areas and carried out direct distribution in the Northern and Upper East regions of the country. In the Upper East region, a total of 5,171 families of 29,814 beneficiaries received a non-food item ration in the form of jerry cans, soap, sleeping mats, buckets, tarpaulins and blankets in 25 communities. In the Northern region, a total of 2,538 families of 22,145 beneficiaries in 29 communities received these items. A total of 80 Red Cross volunteers actively participated in the distribution exercise. The strategy of registration of target beneficiaries and the need assessment earlier conducted by the Red Cross volunteers facilitated effective distribution of the items in the communities. A number of other NGOs had distributed some relief items to target beneficiaries mostly in communities where they have on going humanitarian projects.



Food and Non Food items donated and distributed by the Red Cross

Districts	ORS (carton)	Buckets	Water makers	Jerry cans	Number of Families reached	Number of beneficiaries reached
West Mamprisi	3	773	27,265	773	773	5,624
Saboba/ Chreponi	3	767	26,845	767	767	9,788
Savelungu /Naton	3	319	11,165	319	319	2,324
West Gonja	3	679	23,765	679	679	4,409
Bongo	2	1,879	46,282	2,089	1,879	11,274
Garu/Tempane	2	502	12,894	921	921	5,520
Bawku East	2	807	13,048	1,182	932	4,386
Builsa	2	1,127	24,682	1,619	1,439	8,634
TOTAL	20	6,853	185,946	8,349	7,709	51'959

Districts	Tarpaulins	Sleeping mats	Blankets	Soap (bar)	Number of Families reached	Number of beneficiaries reached
West Mamprisi	70	2,319	2,319	5,411	773	5,624
Saboba/ Chreponi	99	2,301	2,301	5,369	767	9,788
Savelungu /Naton	69	957	957	2,233	319	2,324
West Gonja	80	2,037	2,037	4,753	679	4,409
Bongo	720	5,637	4,967	13,213	1,879	11,274
Garu/Tempane	510	460	3,645	6,864	921	5,520
Bawku East	740	2,421	2,981	7,196	932	4,386
Builsa	657	3,090	4,551	14,079	1,439	8,634
TOTAL	2,945	19,222	23,758	59,118	7,709	51'959

Non-food items provided and distributed by Red Cross in the 2 affected regions

Items	Quantity	Donor
Tarpaulin	4,984 pieces	Finish Red Cross
Sleeping mats	5,000 pieces	Norwegian Red Cross

	15,000 pieces	IFRC
Jerry can Taps	10,000 pieces	Canadian Red Cross
Jerry cans	10,000 pieces	Canadian Red Cross
Water maker	96,000 sachets	IFRC
U can	10,000 pieces	IFRC
ORS	20 cartons	IFRC
Plastic buckets	7,000 pieces	Swiss Red Cross
Soap	7,000 pieces	Swiss Red Cross
	64,800 bars	IFRC
Blankets	30,000 pieces	IFRC
Rice	2,500 bags/25 kg	Iranian Red Crescent
Garri	100 bags	Ghana Red Cross
Groundnut oil	7,000 bottles	Swiss Red Cross
maize	1,000 bags/50kg	Chinese Government
Beans	200 bags/50kg	Chinese Government

Recovery and rehabilitation

Objective 3: To assess, plan and implement early recovery activities together with the affected communities and key local, national and international stakeholders.

Progress: Food insecurity remains a major concern and is likely to worsen. Up to 50 per cent of staple crops in the flood-affected areas were destroyed leaving households with hardly any food reserves. Additionally, prices of basic food commodities such as maize, millet and corn are reported to have doubled in the local markets. Because of this situation, the distribution of food items was done hand-in-hand with the non-food items. The food items

donated mostly by PNS such as the Swiss Red Cross (Vegetable oil and rice), the Iranian Red Crescent (Rice), Chinese Red Cross (Maize, beans and garri) were distributed to the beneficiaries by the Red Cross staff and volunteers based on the registration list available.



As regards shelter, the GRCS and the Federation operations team had started the process of procuring building materials and tools to assist the affected families in the reconstruction of their homes. Building items such as nails, hammers, saw, hoes and roofing sheets have been procured while delivery of cement to the Red Cross was expected to be carried out in the 2nd week of December 2007.

A consultant from the Federation planned to be in Ghana to train the Red Cross staff and volunteers on recovery and rehabilitation as well as better building techniques. This approach would complement the multi-use tools provided for rebuilding and agricultural purposes. Meanwhile, the GRCS is developing a plan for the reconstruction phase for communities affected in the Northern and Upper East regions. The plan will also include training of volunteers in construction techniques. A week of preparation after the secondary phase is necessary before the commencement of reconstruction.

Capacity Building

Objective 1: To prepare for effective, timely and appropriate monitoring and response to emergencies and vulnerabilities.

Progress: The training-of-trainers who will conduct community-based health education and promotion activities was carried out on 13-14 October in the Northern Region, and on 15-16 October 2007 in the Upper East Region. Additionally, 32 Red Cross volunteers have been trained on beneficiary registration and non

food item (NFI) distribution techniques. The capacity of the GRCS is also being strengthened through recruitment and training of additional volunteers in the coming weeks.

Logistics

The logistics team has been supporting the operation in the procurement of locally purchased items and providing technical support as regards transport, clearing of items and warehousing. The team received logistics support from UNHCR during the distribution period. To ease the transportation problem during this phase, UNHCR hired a truck to the logistic team for a week. The team also engaged the services of local transporters during this period. The logistics arrangement showed that delivery of items was orderly carried out.

For logistics reason, a temporary base was established in Tamale with long term office and residential facilities such as internet access. In order to ease its transportation problem, the operation took delivery of a new vehicle from the Federation's Dubai Fleet Base.

The logistics team also continued to give support in the next phase of the operation by collaborating with the GRCS logistics team in clearing the newly arrived tarpaulin and putting in order the temporary warehouse to stock the tarpaulin and other items procured for the recovery and rehabilitation phase of the operation.

Challenges/constraints

The delay in the distribution of relief items due to the government centralization of the coordination process and the need to revise the appeal were some of the initial challenges to the operation. The revision of the appeal was however necessary as it has provided the opportunity to prioritize the immediate needs of the communities affected by the floods. It also allowed the Red Cross volunteers to carry out the registration of the target beneficiaries and their needs.

Transportation was a major challenge during the distribution phase. Though the flood waters had receded, the difficult state of roads leading to many of the affected communities convinced some locally hired transporters to refuse to transport relief items to these communities. With the logistic support in form of a truck from UNHCR and the efforts from the Red Cross volunteers, the operation team was able to reach these communities. It is expected that lessons learnt from these transportation challenges will assist in developing a better transportation strategy in the next phase of the operation. The logistics team is receiving a new vehicle in the coming days to enhance its activities.

Coordination and partnerships

Movement partners continue to work in close cooperation to ensure that activities undertaken as part of the emergency response are complementary and well coordinated. With the departure of FACT and RDRT members, the Federation field operations team and GRCS operations staff members have assumed the responsibility of ensuring Red Cross participation in the various coordination meetings. A weekly strategic coordination meeting is held between NADMO, the Red Cross, UN agencies such as UNICEF, WHO, UNHCR, WFP and other NGOs involved in the floods operations at the UNDP office in Accra.

The GRCS continued to work with the National Disaster Management Organization (NADMO) in registering beneficiaries in affected areas and carrying out direct distributions. It should be noted that all agencies' activities in the flood operation are being coordinated by the NADMO while UNHCR-donated items worth USD 240,000 are expected to be distributed to beneficiaries by the GRCS.

With technical support from the West Coast office in Lagos, the main coordination team based in Lagos is working in collaboration with the operation teams in Togo and Ghana to ensure better central coordination of the regional operation.

Communications- Advocacy and public information

With the field operations team complete, media relations established from the beginning of the Red Cross intervention has been enhanced. The team in collaboration with the GRCS has been working closely with the main coordination team based in Lagos and the communications team at the Federation's West and Central Africa Zone office in Dakar in ensuring regular profiling of the Red Cross and sharing of information on progress.

The Secretary General of the GRCS had an interview session with the media team in Geneva. During the interview, progress, challenges and constraints of the operation were highlighted. In Ghana, the Minister of

the Upper East region after meeting the Red Cross personnel in the field visited one of the communities to assess the distribution exercise. He commended the Red Cross for its gesture to the affected people.

With good working relationship with the national media and press, the distribution phase was well covered by the Ghana National Television. The GRCS will actively continue meeting with private sector entities and others – such as embassies – to share information and to fundraise. Visibility is being ensured in the field with distributed items bearing Ghana Red Cross and Federation emblems.

How we work

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 support to or for further information concerning Federation programmes or operations in this or other countries, or for a full description of the National Society profile, please access the Federation's website at <http://www.ifrc.org>

The International Federation's activities are carried out under its 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.

Contact information

For further information specifically related to this operation please contact:

- **In Ghana:** Andrews Frimpong, Secretary General, Ghana Red Cross Society, Accra; email: redcrossghana@yahoo.co.uk; telephone: +233.244.690.187
- **In Nigeria:** Andreas Koumo Gopina, Coordinator - West Africa Flood Operation, Lagos; email: xxxx@ifrc.org; telephone: +234.703.232.389 / +234.807.30.16.66.65 / 708.406.36.30
- **In Nigeria:** Stephen Omollo, Head of Federation West Coast Sub-Zone Office, Lagos; email: stephen.omollo@ifrc.org; telephone: +234.12.695.228; Fax: +234.12.695.229
- **In Senegal:** Alasan Senghore, Federation Head of Zone for West and Central Africa, Dakar; email: alasan.senghore@ifrc.org; telephone: +221.869.3641; Fax: +221.860.2002
- **In Senegal:** Youcef Ait-Chellouche, Disaster Management Coordinator, West and Central Africa Zone, Dakar; email: youcef.aitchellouche@ifrc.org; telephone: +221.638.9861
- **In Dubai (for mobilization of relief items):** Amina Shaikh, Logistics Officer, Regional Logistics Unit; email: amina.shaikh@ifrc.org; telephone: +971.50.458.4872
- **In Geneva:** Niels Scott, Federation Operations Coordinator (Africa); email: niels.scott@ifrc.org; telephone +41.22.730.4527; fax + 41.22.733.0395

[<Click here to return to the title page>](#)