

Operations update



International Federation
of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

Tajikistan: Cold Wave

Emergency appeal n° MDRTJ004
GLIDE n° CW-2008-000015-TJK
Operations update n° 2
16 May 2008

Period covered by this Ops Update: 8 April to 30 April, 2008

Appeal target (current): CHF 572,678 (USD 545,408 or EUR 357,924)

Appeal coverage: 78 per cent with a DREF allocation of CHF 172,062

Appeal history:

- This **Emergency Appeal** was initially launched on 6 March 2008 seeking an amount of CHF 572,678 (USD 545,408 or EUR 357,924) to assist some 2,003 families or 5,097 beneficiaries during a period of six months.
- **Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF):** CHF 172,062 was initially allocated from the International Federation's DREF to support the National Society in delivering immediate assistance to 2,149 beneficiaries through the distribution of non-food items and around 3,000 families through hygiene promotion.

Summary:

With support from the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies the Red Crescent Society of Tajikistan continued to provide assistance to the most vulnerable groups affected by the cold wave that hit the country in January and February 2008. The relief distributions under the emergency appeal continued, the remaining 540 families in 6 village administrative centres of Rudaki district have been covered during the last month. To date, the National Society has reached 1,547 female-headed households in Wahdat and Rudaki districts with seeds, fertilizers and food. The procurement of non-food items to be distributed among the targeted female-headed households is ongoing within the limits of funds available for the operation.

So far, the operation has received financial and in-kind contributions from the Red Cross Societies of Sweden, Finland, Canada, Japan and Belgium, and the Red Crescent Society of the United Arab Emirates. However, further contributions are encouraged in order to meet the appeal target and carry out the entire intended operation.

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A further 540 families in 6 villages of Rudaki district have received support during the past month.

Photo: Red Crescent Society of Tajikistan

The situation

The extremely cold weather during January-February 2008 resulted in economic and social shocks worsening the already precarious food security situation in the country. Even though the cold wave has passed, its effects are still present. As the country is recovering from the exceptionally harsh winter, a locust infestation has arisen in the past few weeks further threatening the food supply of the population. The current outbreak of locusts across 18 provinces is significantly larger than previous locust infestations due to the favorable weather and incomplete spraying last year and could pose a serious blow to the food security of households in Tajikistan. Locust control in central Asia is also a regional issue, as locust infestations come from Afghanistan, Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan, and locusts from Tajikistan infect these countries.

The government of Tajikistan is putting its efforts into preventing the spread of the infestation by using pesticides to clear the affected areas. On 24 April, nearly half a million dollars from the United Nations' Central Emergency Response Fund were allocated to provide urgent assistance to the government of Tajikistan to monitor and control the current outbreak of locusts. According to the UN Resident Coordinator for Tajikistan, the food security of over two million people in Tajikistan has already been affected by the harsh winter and developing drought, increasing food prices. Further destruction of crops by locusts would be devastating.

Further exacerbating the situation, as a result of heavy rains on 14 April 2008, mudflow caused damages to two village administrative centres of Jomi district in Khatlon province. The Red Cross disaster response team members of Kulyab region took part in the assessments. There were no human casualties reported and none of the buildings were destroyed. The agricultural land plots and the house territory of 6 households in 3 villages of Iftikhor village administrative centre and of 15 households in 1 village of Aral village administrative centre were covered by mud. The internal roads of the village were covered by mudstones. Over 20,000 of the inhabitants of Yakkatut village administrative centre are now under the risk of flood as the bank of the river Yavan-su (120 meters height) was destroyed as a result of heavy rains, and water from the river is flowing to the silted drainage system of village administrative centres Aral and Yakkatut. As the drainage system is full, the water is going over the banks to the houses of the local population.

Coordination and partnerships

Following the cluster approach arrangements the International Federation has been providing shelter and non-food items (S/NFI) cluster coordination through the deployment of specialist cluster coordinators. The shelter coordinators meetings as well as the heads of clusters meetings have continued in April.

The cluster approach is intended to be in place for at least another six months. The shelter and non-food items cluster, convened by the International Federation, prepared a Household Emergency Assistance Package (HEAP) specification and put in a submission for funding for UNDP pre-positioning of stock and for standard use by other responding agencies.

All the indicators showed that it was no longer the mandate of the International Federation to be the emergency shelter coordinator and UNHCR has agreed to take this role on from 28 April in a transitional capacity, recognizing that if there is a large emergency response required within the International Federation's mandate, it will take back the role of emergency shelter coordinator.

National Society Capacity Building:

Three-day trainings were organized on 20 to 23 April for 20 members of two community level newly established local disaster committees (LDCs) (ten members in each district) from targeted areas activated in the disaster response operation under the emergency appeal. They were trained in situation assessment, monitoring, first-aid techniques and the distribution of non-food items. The teams are now equipped with disaster response basic tools such as first-aid kits, medical stretchers, shovels, hoes and flashlights and vests with Red Crescent Society of Tajikistan and International Federation emblems.

Red Cross and Red Crescent action

Overview

Following the initial relief distributions of basic non-food items among elderly people living alone in the capital city of Dushanbe and the towns of Kurgan-Tube, Wahdat and Somoniyon at the beginning of the response operation to address the consequences of cold wave and energy crisis, the National Society continued with the distributions of food, seeds and fertilizers to 1,547 female-headed households in Rudaki and Wahdat districts. To date all planned 1,547 households have received food, seeds and fertilizers. The procurement of non-food and water and sanitation items is ongoing and distributions will continue in the second half of May.

Progress towards objectives

Relief distributions (food and basic non-food items)	
Objective: To provide 1,547 female-headed households with children under 15 years of age with essential food for one month and non-food items and to provide 456 elderly people living alone with basic non-food items	
Expected results	Activities planned
<p>i) 1,547 female-headed households in Rudaki and Wahdat districts of Direct Rule Districts (DRD) are provided with non-food items including blankets, thermos flasks, candles, plastic sheeting, gas stoves, disaster preparedness and response awareness materials.</p> <p>ii) 1,547 female-headed households in Rudaki and Wahdat districts of DRD are provided with seeds and fertilisers including onion seeds 2.5 kg; potato 100 kg; carrots 1.5 kg; beans 2 kg; sodium nitrate 10kg; carbomide 10 kg; and food to sustain people as they work including wheat flour 36 kg; sunflower oil 3 litres; beans 5 kg; salt 250 gm.</p> <p>iii) The Red Crescent Society of Tajikistan contingency disaster preparedness stock for 200 families in ten Red Crescent Society of Tajikistan centres are replaced including mattresses, pillows, blankets, bed linen, water cans, kitchen utensils, hygiene kits, kerosene stoves, winter and summer tents, water reservoirs 5 m³.</p> <p>iv) The response capacity of the Red Crescent Society of Tajikistan disaster preparedness centres has been enhanced through the standardization of response equipments for ten Red Crescent Society of Tajikistan disaster management centres, and through conducting refresher courses for disaster response teams</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prepare lists of beneficiaries together with the social welfare authorities • Conduct monitoring of beneficiary lists • Procure selected items and store in warehouses • Develop beneficiary coupons (talons) and distribute them to selected beneficiaries • Support the National Society technically and financially in logistics, warehousing, distribution and control supply movements • Transport the goods to the distribution sites • Prepare distribution sites • Distribute relief supplies and control supply movements from point of dispatch to end user • Monitor and evaluate the relief activities and provide reporting on distributions

Progress:

The distribution of food, seeds and fertilizer previously procured continued in April. The remaining 540 targeted families in Rudaki district were notified 3 days prior to the distribution by coupons with information about the relief items and the date of distribution. The distributions reached 540 families in 6 *Jamoats* of Rudaki district during 8-13 April and were conducted in close co-operation between the social welfare authorities, the Red Crescent Society of Tajikistan and the International Federation representatives. With this final distribution, the planned provision of seeds, fertilizers and food in Rudaki and Wahdat districts completed.

Table: below shows the number of beneficiary families and the amount of distributed relief items

#	District	No. of Families served	Wheat Flour (MT)	V. Oil (Ltr)	Bean (MT)	Potato Seeds (MT)	Carrot Seeds (MT)	Onion Seeds (MT)	Bean Seeds (MT)	Carbomide (MT)	Sodium Nitrate (MT)
1	Wahdat	680	24.480	2,040	3.400	23.800	0.102	0.170	1.360	6.800	6.800
2	Rudaki	867	31.212	2,601	4.335	30.345	0.130	0.217	1.734	8.670	8.670
Total		1,547	55.692	4,641	7.735	54.145	0.232	0.387	3.094	15.470	15.470

Weekly monitoring visits by the Red Crescent Society of Tajikistan showed that the distributed items reached the target population and improved their situation by meeting their needs in food and planting materials that are expected to sustain their livelihood in the short-term. All beneficiaries are from the rural areas and have limited financial and other resources to cope with the consequences of the cold weather and energy crisis.

The procurement of non-food items, i.e. mattresses, blankets, bed linen, pillows, candles to be distributed among the targeted 1,547 female-headed households and 456 elderly people living alone under this objective is ongoing and the distributions will continue in the second half of May. The impact of the operation will continue to be observed and the results will be reported through further updates.

Challenges: Due to the lack of funds, the original amount of items for the disaster preparedness stock has been decreased from 200 families to 100 families and gas stoves have been excluded from the disaster preparedness stock list.

Water, sanitation, and hygiene promotion

Objective: The risk of waterborne and water-related diseases has been reduced through providing water filters, water purification tablets and hygiene promotion information materials to elderly people living alone and female-headed households in Wahdat and Rudaki districts.	
Expected results	Activities planned
The health status of the population is improved through distributing hygiene kits, water purification tables and water filters to 1,547 female-headed households and 456 elderly people living alone.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Distribute water purification tablets and hygiene kits • Distribute water storage (i.e. jerry cans and water filters) • Reprint and distribute hygiene promotion information materials

Progress:

The procured 456 water filters and 10 water tanks (for the disaster preparedness stock), and the water purification tablets (240,000 pieces) received from the Belgium Red Cross are being stocked at the warehouse at the moment and are planned to be distributed to 456 elderly people living alone mid May.

Challenges:

The procurement of the remaining 1,547 water filters and the re-printing of hygiene promotion materials are still pending due to the emergency appeal coverage. The distribution of filters originally scheduled for the end of April and early May has been postponed till the second half of May until all non-food items are procured.

Logistics

Progress:

Logistics support was provided by the International Federation’s country representation in the procurement, delivery and distribution of relief items in the course of the operation. All relief items were procured locally and in accordance with the International Federation’s purchasing procedures. The support encompassed coordinating the mobilization of relief goods, reception of all incoming goods, warehousing, centralized provision of standard vehicles as required and coordination and efficient dispatch of goods to the final distribution points.

Communications – Advocacy and Public Information

The Red Crescent response operation has been highlighted by national and local television channels and by printed media. Press-releases were distributed among national media services and placed at the National Society’s web site (<http://www.rcst.tj>) and other news sites covering Tajikistan and the central Asian region.

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.

The International Federation's activities are aligned with 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:

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