

Operations update



International Federation
of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

Zimbabwe: Food Insecurity

Emergency appeal n° MDRZW003
GLIDE JT-2008-000097-ZWE
Issued 26 August 2008

Period covered by this Operations Update No. 1: 6 August – 25 August 2008;
Appeal target (current): CHF 27,727,566 (USD 26,837,020)

Appeal coverage:

Approximately 3%

[click here to go directly to the updated donor response report](#), or [here to link to contact details](#)

Appeal history:

This preliminary emergency appeal was launched on 6 August 2008 for CHF 27,755,314 (USD 26,837,020), to assist 260,100 OVC, HBC clients and their household members within its community home-based care programme across 25 districts in the country's ten administrative provinces for nine months.

Summary: According to the United Nations, up to 5.1

million people – almost half of Zimbabwe's entire population – may be without access to food by the end of 2008. This preliminary emergency appeal, launched at the request of the Zimbabwe Red Cross Society (ZRCS), is therefore intended to provide vital support in responding to the immediate humanitarian needs of 260,100 particularly vulnerable people. However, despite the undeniable urgency of this operation, and the necessity for a quick donor response to enable rapid procurement of food and seeds, this preliminary emergency appeal is only three per cent covered. The only two pledges received so far are from the British Red Cross (CHF 600,000) and the Japanese Red Cross (CHF 200,000).

Nevertheless, work is already underway by the ZRCS and the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) to recruit necessary staff, to source materials in anticipation of donor support and to establish partnerships with other agencies.

This update, issued to sensitise donors and partners of the operational progress and developments, is therefore also a recall to action. The first distributions of food are scheduled for September 2008. Therefore immediate significant support for this appeal is needed at the end of August to allow the provision of meaningful humanitarian assistance to the target population.



Pictured above is a 66-year old grandmother, living in rural Lower Gweru, and her 10-year old grandson. Six of her children have died of AIDS-related illnesses, and she is taking care of two other of her children also. She is unable to continue subsistence farming to support them all due to the recent floods, droughts and lack of agricultural inputs.

Photo: Sitambule Kim, Zimbabwe Red Cross Society

The situation

The 2008 food security situation in Zimbabwe will likely be the worst ever on record. By December, it is expected that approximately 5.1 million people will not have access to food. This dire situation can only be addressed through the joint efforts of all relevant actors, putting resources and effort together in providing immediate humanitarian assistance to the vulnerable population.

An exceptional accumulation of negative factors have created this unprecedented humanitarian situation. Unpredictable weather patterns, drastic socio-economic decline and a deepening humanitarian crisis have left millions of Zimbabweans without access to sufficient food, while the HIV and AIDS pandemic continues to ravage the country. The country's predominantly subsistence agriculture economy is particularly prone to the changing weather patterns induced by climate change. Zimbabwe is also struggling with the world's highest inflation rate (over two million per cent as of end July 2008). Most rural communities are dependent on agricultural production and this financial strain significantly affects food security and livelihoods.

According to the 18 June 2008 Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO) and World Food Programme (WFP) joint crop and food supply assessment (CFSAM), the total number of food insecure persons in rural and urban areas will be 2.04 million people for the period between July and September 2008, rising to 3.8 million people between October and December 2008 and peaking to 5.1 million people between January and March 2009. This is approximately 45 per cent of the total population. The capacity of the government to import food is constrained by soaring food prices, and unavailability of foreign currency in the country. The expected harvest may only reach 40 per cent of the needs for 2008/2009.

This calamitous situation comes on the back of a difficult year; the 2007 rainy season was characterized by inconsistent rainfall, a pattern that lead alternatively to droughts and floods across the country. According to the Zimbabwe Meteorological Department, by January 2008, 95 percent of the country had received 150 percent of average rainfall. These inundations in many areas of the country led to flooding, leaching, erosion, limited farming activities and late planting. This in turn affected national crop production.

There is continued contraction of economic activity in all sectors, infrastructural degradation (particularly in the agricultural sector including capital asset depletion -irrigation structures and equipment) and the loss of productivity and the higher social and medical care burden caused by the HIV and AIDS pandemic. Although economic decline and food insecurity impacts across all sections of Zimbabwean society, the sharpest impact will be felt by the most vulnerable communities, including those households affected by HIV and AIDS.

The government suspension of food security field operations is still in place. This suspension excludes the Red Cross Red Crescent – because of the ZRCS' status as independent auxiliary to public authorities and as such does not come under NGO rules and regulations - and the United Nations. However the IFRC is monitoring developments

Coordination and partnerships

The ZRCS is initially targeting 12.5 percent of the estimated total of vulnerable people from July – September 2008. It is understood that other agencies will also carry some of the caseload. The World Food Programme (WFP) still plans to launch a USD 205 million food security appeal and they will probably, after the government, be the single largest provider of food in Zimbabwe during this project period. Negotiations are underway with WFP on joint partnership for this operation. There are also indications that the Food and Agricultural Organisation (FAO) could possibly support the livelihoods component of the appeal by providing seeds in the areas where they are not operational

National Society Capacity Building:

The ZRCS is preparing for the recruitment of staff at field and national headquarters level for this operation. Technical support for throughout the operation will be provided by the IFRC Country representation and the Zone office as required.

Red Cross and Red Crescent action

Progress:

- The recruitment of two delegates (operations coordinator and relief and logistics coordinator) has been announced. Recruitment is in process for a food security assistant and a finance officer. Preparations have also been made for engaging a logistics officer, water and sanitation officer and three drivers for the operation. However, these positions will depend on the level of funding for the appeal.
- Tendering has been done for seeds and fertilizers and support is being given to the Danish and Finnish Red Cross who are planning to support the same operation bilaterally.
- The tendering for transportation and warehousing is underway. This is very important as 140 truckloads of food are expected to be distributed each month and a total of 144 truckloads of seed and fertilizer will also be distributed. Warehouses are to be sourced in Bulawayo, Masvingo and Harare for food and agricultural inputs. The purchasing of items and services tendered for is pending urgent donor pledges.
- Vehicles have been ordered from Dubai from the IFRC's regional logistics unit for the operation and these are already in transit.
- The IFRC together with the Danish and Finnish Red Cross Societies are discussing a coordinated application for funding from ECHO.

If everything goes according to plan, the first distribution of food aid will be done in September. The government suspension of food security field operations is still in place. This suspension excludes the Red Cross Red Crescent – because of the ZRCS' status as independent auxiliary to public authorities and as such does not come under NGO rules and regulations – and the United Nations.

Challenges:

- A muted response to this emergency appeal would be a major hindrance to the operation as timely procurement is dependent on availability of funding.

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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[<Updated donor response report attached below; click here to return to the title page>](#)

Donor response to MDRZW003 - Zimbabwe - Food Insecurity

TIMEFRAME: 06 Aug 08 to 06 May 09

LOCATION: Zimbabwe

TOTAL AMOUNT SOUGHT:	27,755,314
TOTAL RECEIVED TO DATE:	814,800
APPEAL COVERAGE TO DATE:	3%

Updated on: 26 Aug 2008

Currency	Amount	Goal 1: Disaster Management CHF	Goal 2: Health and Care CHF	Goal 3: Capacity Building CHF	Goal 4: Principles and Values CHF	Coordination CHF	Total CHF
BUDGET							27,755,314
FUNDING							
<u>Opening Balance</u>							
Income							
Cash contributions (received and pledged)							
British Red Cross	GBP	300,000	621,000				621,000
Japanese Red Cross	JPY	20,000,000	193,800				193,800
Total Cash contributions			814,800				814,800
Total Income			814,800				814,800
TOTAL FUNDING			814,800	0	0	0	814,800
COVERAGE							3%