

# Operations update



International Federation  
of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

## Zimbabwe: Food Insecurity

Emergency appeal n° MDRZW003  
GLIDE JT-2008-000097-ZWE  
9 October 2008  
Operations Update No.3

Period covered: 3: 9 – 30 September 2008.

Appeal target (current): CHF 27,727,566  
(USD 26m or EUR 17m).

**Appeal coverage:** approximately 20%; please note that the donor response update is being updated to reflect the contributions received to date as well as the indications of support that are forthcoming (in the form of soft pledges and goods in-kind). The updated donor response update will be made available shortly.

[<click here to link to contact details>](#)

**Appeal history:** This preliminary Emergency Appeal was launched on 6 August 2008 for CHF 27,755,314 to support the Zimbabwe Red Cross Society (ZRCS) in delivering vital assistance to some 260,100 people infected or affected by HIV and AIDS for a period of nine months. Drawn from the ZRCS's existing home-based care (HBC) programme, beneficiaries are spread across 26 operational areas in 25 districts throughout the country's ten administrative provinces.



Registration of beneficiaries at a food distribution point in Kadoma; Photo: Zimbabwe Red Cross

**Summary:** The food supply situation in Zimbabwe remains critical, a situation compounded by socio-economic decline, unpredictable climatic conditions, limited agricultural inputs and poor harvests, which have left millions of people with little or no access to food. Despite the urgent needs of this emergency operation, support has been relatively limited and slow in coming, but the Federation and ZRCS are encouraged by recent indications of further contributions. WFP has agreed to contribute the majority of the food component (maize, beans, vegetable oil and corn soya blend or CSB). Because, however, of a break in the CSB pipeline, WFP will reimburse the Federation for CSB purchased for this operation.

Despite numerous logistical challenges experienced, the Red Cross has managed full coverage of the planned food distribution for the month of September, feeding a total of 260,787 beneficiaries (this increased figure is a result of adjustments made after final registrations). Distributions of food aid weighing 3,700 metric tonnes (MT) in total commenced on 17 September and were completed by 30 September. While the total pledges (both hard and soft) fully cover the initial preliminary Emergency Appeal there have been unforeseen and considerable increases in regional food prices that necessitate revising the preliminary appeal budget. Initial indications are that additional funding needs of approximately USD 5 million are needed to procure food rations for the entire nine month period. The livelihood component is already 100 percent covered in the appeal, and will therefore not be revised further.

Media attention on the food security situation in Zimbabwe continues to be high, and the Red Cross response efforts have been favourably covered with news agencies such as Al Jazeera, CNN, BBC, Agence France Press and IRIN News covering the food crisis in the country, as well as Red Cross action in the field. A special section on Zimbabwe has been developed on the Federation's website. Please visit [www.ifrc.org/zimbabwe](http://www.ifrc.org/zimbabwe) for

more information, including photos, audiovisual material and feature stories.

## The situation

According to the Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO) and WFP joint crop and food supply assessment (CFSAM) of June 2008, a total number of 2.04 million persons would be considered food insecure in rural and urban areas 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.

Several factors have contributed to this situation, including the unpredictable weather patterns, internal structural elements, and a general socio-economic decline. The country's predominantly subsistence agriculture economy is particularly prone to the changing weather patterns. Most rural communities are heavily reliant on agricultural production, thus food security and livelihoods are severely affected. Zimbabwe also currently has the world's highest inflation rate (over 11 million per cent by the end of August 2008).

The burden of HIV and AIDS further exacerbates the situation, particularly for affected households. According to the most recent statistics from UNAIDS, approximately 15.6 percent of the country's population is living with HIV and AIDS, with 650,000 children having been orphaned or made vulnerable by the pandemic. It is these communities that are suffering most severely from the food crisis. In Masvingo province for example, health authorities estimate that in some districts, as many as 70 percent of people on anti-retroviral treatment (ART) have defaulted on their treatment as a result of the serious side effects that occur when these drugs are taken without food.

## Coordination and partnerships

The ZRCS was initially targeting 12.5 percent of the estimated 2.04 million vulnerable people from July – September 2008 (a total of some 250,000 persons), expecting that other agencies will also carry some of the caseload. WFP has launched a USD 460 million appeal for food insecurity, making them the largest provider of food during this period. After negotiations with the Federation, WFP agreed to contribute the majority of food supplies needed for the emergency food distribution component (seven out of nine month's food relief). Based on a letter of intent from WFP, it is anticipated that a field level agreement between the Federation and WFP will be signed shortly. The Federation is also working closely with partner national Societies such as the Danish Red Cross and Finnish Red Cross on joint procurement of food.

The table below reflects the total of potential funds available for this appeal (both confirmed and indicative support), with a large component dependent on the conclusion of a signed agreement with WFP related to operational support costs from WFP, including warehousing and transportation (please refer to explanatory footnotes below).

### Summary of confirmed and indicative contributions (cash and in-kind; all figures in CHF)

Donor	Confirmed	Indicative	Bilateral	Goods in-kind	Total
British Red Cross	621,000				
Belgium Red Cross		1,200,000 <sup>1</sup>			
Danish Red Cross		2,354,000	110,000 <sup>2</sup>		
Finnish Red Cross		1,057,000	571,000 <sup>3</sup>		
German Red Cross		602,000 <sup>4</sup>			
Japanese Red Cross	193,800				
Monaco Red Cross	39,250				
New Zealand Gvt		851,000			
Swedish Red Cross	3,184,320				
French Government		1,358,000			
Paarl Media SA		37,200			
WFP		5,367,400 <sup>5</sup>		14,404,652 <sup>7</sup>	
<b>Total</b>	<b>4,038,370</b>	<b>12,826,600</b>	<b>681,000</b>	<b>14,404,652</b>	<b>31,950,622*</b>

<sup>1</sup> Soft pledge to buy food.

<sup>2</sup> Part of the Livelihood component covering seeds and fertilizers and transportation costs.

<sup>3</sup> Part of the Livelihood component covering seeds and transportation costs.

<sup>4</sup> Soft pledge earmarked to buy CSB only.

<sup>5</sup> Soft pledge unearmarked.

<sup>6</sup> Operational support costs from WFP including costs for three warehouses and transportation of food.

<sup>7</sup> Food given in-kind from WFP, consisting of maize meal, oil, beans and CSB.

## National Society capacity building

The Federation together with the ZRCS is currently recruiting for three warehouse officers, six commodity tracking officers, a food security assistant, finance officer and reporting officer. To support the ZRCS structure, the Federation has so far recruited a logistics coordinator, food security assistant; finance officer, logistics officer and two drivers for the food security operation.

## Red Cross and Red Crescent action

### Relief distributions (food items)

**Objective: To meet immediate food needs of some 260,100 vulnerable people (52,020 households) for nine months through monthly food distributions in targeted areas until the next harvesting season.**

#### Progress:

- Distribution of food items commenced on 17 September, with Harare and Mutare completing the distribution by 30 September. In Bulawayo, the distribution was finalized on 1 October 2008. Despite numerous challenges, the Red Cross has managed to reach 260,787 beneficiaries in September (a slight increase from the target due to adjustments in beneficiary registration). A total of 3,129.44 MT of maize, 469.42 MT of beans and 156.48 MT of oil have been distributed so far.
- The food and agricultural tools warehousing tender has also been completed, and warehouses have been identified in Harare, Bulawayo, and Masvingo. These are expected to be operational in early October.
- The purchase order for food (maize, oil and beans) has been approved, with delivery expected to begin in mid-October.
- Vehicles ordered for this operation have arrived from Dubai, and are now registered.
- The distribution plan for October has been finalized, and the preparation of a draft plan for November is underway.

#### September food distributions<sup>8</sup>

Province	Beneficiaries	Cereal (MT)	Pulses (MT)	Oil (MT)
Masvingo	23,855	286.26	42.94	14.32
Matebeleleland North	44,305	531.66	79.75	26.58
Matebeleleland South	51,273	615	92.00	31.00
Midlands	14,963	179.56	26.93	8.98
Manicaland	52,899	634.79	95.22	31.74
Mashonaland Central	19,822	237.86	35.68	11.89
Mashonaland East	16,232	194.78	29.22	9.74
Mashonaland West	37,438	449.26	67.39	22.46
<b>Total</b>	<b>260,785</b>	<b>3129.44</b>	<b>469.42</b>	<b>156.48</b>

#### Challenges:

- Concerns have been raised on operational field coordination with other stakeholders seeking to avoid duplication of efforts. In order to address this, the ZRCS list of beneficiaries will be compared with those of other stakeholders.
- Transporters provided insufficient trucks, which created a significant backlog of deliveries to the field. The agreed distribution plan was also not followed, resulting in instances where incomplete loads of commodities were delivered, thus delaying distributions. In some cases, loading was done late, resulting in late dispatches and arrivals at the food distribution points. The Federation is currently re-tendering for transportation and looking for other possible back-up solutions (buying or hiring trucks to support the operation etc).
- The poor telecommunication network in the country delayed communication with those in the field.

### Agricultural production and livelihoods recovery

#### Objectives:

- **To build agricultural recovery and stabilise household food production of 100,930**

<sup>8</sup> Due to non-availability of CSB at WFP in September, this commodity is not included in the table of distributions.

people (20,186 households) through distribution of agricultural inputs, strengthening community seed banks and supporting agricultural management for nine months.

- To establish sustainable systems that protect livelihoods through diverse interventions to improve household income, food security, nutrition status and self sufficiency of 128,500 people (25,700 households) for nine months.

**Progress:** The tender for the purchase of seeds has been approved. Orders (equivalent to 100 percent coverage of the planned quantity in the preliminary appeal) have been placed and full delivery is expected in October 2008 for final distributions during the coming months.

## Water, sanitation, and hygiene promotion

**Objective:** To improve access of households to safe water and health and hygiene promotion for 3,000 vulnerable households (15,000 people) in 26 project sites.

**Progress:** Due to the operational focus and prioritization on the vital food and seed component and the existing human resources, there has been limited watsan activities progress to date. It is anticipated that this will change in late November/or early December when operational priorities shift to less time-bound activities. This will be addressed in greater detail in the next operations update.

[<contact details below; click here to return to the title page>](#)

## 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

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