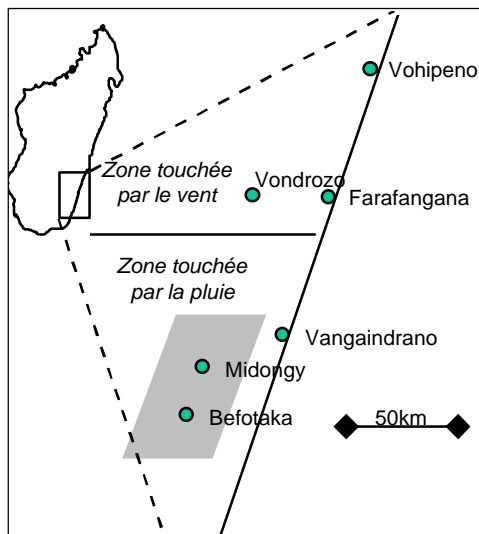


MADAGASCAR CYCLONE GRETELLE

appel no: 03/97
7 February 1997

**THIS APPEAL SEEKS CHF 885,000
IN CASH, KIND AND SERVICES TO PROVIDE
ASSISTANCE TO 42,000 VICTIMS FOR 3 MONTHS**

Summary



Diagram

North section : wind-affected area

South section : rain-affected area

Population of the Fivondronana (administrative regions) affected :

Vohipeno	114777
Farafangana	228932
Vangaindrano	179089
Vondrozo	77542
Midongy	21478
Befotaka	19931
Total	641749

On 24 and 25 January 1997, Cyclone Gretelle, unleashed unprecedented violence on south-east Madagascar, bringing death and destruction to an area which has never before experienced this type of disaster. Much of the damage was caused by wind in the north and rain in the south. Staff and volunteers of the Malagasy Red Cross Society (MRCS) were quickly into action, rendering first aid and distributing emergency relief items. More than 520,000 people were affected and many of the victims still remain cut off; difficulties with telecommunications, infrastructure and topography have presented significant challenges in data gathering, particularly in the south. As a key member of Madagascar's disaster Committee for Disaster Response, the MRCS has assumed responsibility for 42,000 victims currently seeking to restore their lives

in two of the worst affected

districts. This appeal for CHF 885,000 seeks to provide, inter alia, food, nutritional rehabilitation, temporary shelter, agricultural support and water treatment over a three month period.

The Intended Operation

In terms of relief and aid, the action envisaged includes:

- * Evaluation phase: currently underway;
- * Phase 1: first aid, basic foodstuffs, temporary shelter, the supply of drinking water, the establishment of a telecommunications network and information;
- * Phase 2: nutritional rehabilitation, the treatment of the water, reconstruction, restarting the cultivation of subsistence crops.

All of these operations will be accompanied by training activities and evaluation, and will result in the development of national response capacities.

The Cyclone

The cyclone reached the coasts of Madagascar during the course of 24 January 1997 at 13h00 in Farafangana. Winds were registered locally at over 220 km an hour. The area was affected for over six days. As the meteorological station in Farafangana was destroyed, as yet there is no data on rainfall. The cyclone is the most violent to have hit this area of Madagascar in living memory.

A coordinated disaster relief system, established Cyclone Bonita in 1996, permitted a rapid reaction initially. Unfortunately, subsequent operational deployment and evaluation work suffered due to weaknesses in infrastructure and telecommunications.

It only became possible to fly over the whole of the area on 28 January and as a result of this aerial inspection a preliminary evaluation of the damage to the area to the south of Vangaindrano was made.

At present, the development of the situation is difficult to foresee due to uncertainty over the rate at which the water levels are falling.

Current reports show that the damage is considerable, including towns which are between 70 and 90% destroyed, paddy fields submerged in mud, buildings carried away and landslides. The winds destroyed nearly 90% of administrative and health-care buildings, as well as churches and prisons. Flood-waters are estimated to have reached between 11 and 16m. Moreover, the flooding resulting from the cyclone destroyed most crops and most of the available stocks.

With a more precise evaluation to come, it is already apparent that some 280,000 inhabitants have been cut off by the cyclone, with the number of dead or disappeared provisionally put at 200 and more than 520,000

people affected in total.

This situation is worsened by endemic malnutrition in the South of Madagascar and limited/nil disaster preparedness activities in an area, which is only exceptionally at risk from cyclones, and the custom of consuming surface water, thus increasing the risk of epidemics.

The Response so far

Government Action •

The Government's response was rapid and organized. The National Relief Council (CNS) is responsible for coordinating the work of the Committee for Disaster Responses (CRIC), whose principal members include: the Malagasy Red Cross (MRCS), UNDP, UNICEF, USAid, Care and Médecins sans Frontières. Organisations represented on the Committee, including the MRCS, have assumed responsibility for specific geographical areas in the wake of the disaster.

A high level of national mobilization led to the raising of around CHF 35,000, following a televised broadcast on 27 January. An official appeal for international aid was launched on 28 January by the Madagascan Government during a meeting at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs with all the diplomatic missions and international organizations represented in Madagascar.

Subsequent to this appeal, the French Government provided a Transal aeroplane for the transport of emergency relief (much of which was donated by the Departmental Committee for La Réunion of the French Red Cross), as well as a helicopter to survey the area.

Red Cross/Red Crescent Action - Malagasy Red Cross •

The Malagasy Red Cross Society (MRCS), participated in the preliminary evaluations by assigning 15 volunteers (five sent from Antananarivo and 10 members of local committees) and the Red Cross Committee at Fianarantsoa immediately began distributing warm drinks, through its volunteers.

The Society is administering bilateral assistance and donations as follows:

- * Seychelles Red Cross: clothing (1 tonne), foodstuffs (20 tonnes of tuna)
- * French Red Cross: water treatment (14,000 tablets, disinfectant), medicaments
- * ICRC: six hospital tents and five stretchers.

These donations are currently being distributed in the Fivondronanas of Vohipeno, Farafangana and Vangaindrano, which are the only ones accessible by road.

During the evaluation phase, the MRCS activities were financed by an immediate subsidy from the French Cooperation Mission in Madagascar.

A bilateral Development Delegate of the French Red Cross, who has been based in Antananarivo for five months, assisted the MRCS in carrying out

its first action. Meanwhile, the Federation's Regional Development Delegate, who is responsible for relations with French-speaking societies, has been dispatched from Nairobi to support the Society.

In addition, the President of the MRCS Relief Operations Commission has been dispatched to the disaster area to:

- * coordinate the action of the Red Cross local committees;
- * oversee the work of the MRCS team;
- * represent the Society at the CRIC operational centre in Farafangana;
- * ensure the distribution of donations and the installation of materials;
- * provide liaison between the provincial and national levels.

The MRCS has a key role in the operational and evaluation work being undertaken in cooperation with sister humanitarian organizations.

The needs to be met

The evaluation phase of operation, initially planned for the first ten days following the disaster, has been delayed by problems of land transport caused by the topography, flooding and weaknesses in telecommunications.

The principal needs can therefore be summarised as follows:

- * Phase 1 (first aid): basic foodstuffs, temporary accommodation, the provision of drinking water, the establishment of a telecommunications network and health/disaster prevention information.
- * Phase 2 (consolidation): nutritional rehabilitation measures, the treatment of water, reconstruction and restarting the cultivation of subsistence crops.

Currently, it is necessary to utilise air transport in order to carry out evaluations and provide first aid to the most isolated populations. However, air transport is rare both locally and in the region. In the medium term, basic foodstuffs will be in short supply. The implementation of food aid programmes therefore has to be envisaged straightaway.

Red Cross Objectives

The MRCS intends to be involved at each level of the delivery of relief, both as a humanitarian organization and as an active member of the Committee for Disaster Response. In this respect, the Society will focus its action on the Fivondronanas of Midongy and Befotaka, two of the most affected districts where there are 42,000 disaster victims.

In particular, the Society is targeting the following activities:

- * identification and coverage of target populations by a programme of food distribution (17,000 beneficiaries), nutritional rehabilitation

- (for 2,600 individuals), the distribution of 2,500 blankets and restarting agricultural production,
- * information dissemination programme;
 - * sanitation (water treatment unit);
 - * consolidation of the information network and the dissemination of information through mobile and other appropriate telephone links (VHF);
 - * training;
 - * assistance in the reconstruction and rehabilitation of housing, including preventive measures for cyclones.

In order to be able to carry out its mission fully, the MRCS will need to be strengthened by an Administration/Finance Delegate and by two Relief Delegates (one national and one expatriate). Office equipment (two computers with a printer and a modem) and telecommunications (VHF network) will be needed to complement evaluation and operational activities.

The hire of two 4X4 vehicles to support the two old and rather unreliable vehicles currently available to the Society, is also envisaged.

Malagasy Red Cross/Federation Plan of Action

For the management of these programmes, the MRCS is requesting an Administration/Finance Delegate and two Relief Delegates from the International Federation.

For its part, the Society will use its own means for the programme, including:

- * 120 relief workers in the two Fivondronanas
- * administrative support
- * two 4X4 vehicles and light equipment

The implementation of a programme to supply food to the affected populations in Befotaka and Midongy is currently being organized under the direction of the Red Cross, in cooperation with the armed forces and the national police. As soon as access is possible by land or by helicopter, this personnel will immediately and progressively be replaced by civilian workers. At this stage of the evaluation, only an estimate of the cost is possible, based on the data that is currently available.

Provisional Budget

See Annex 1.

Conclusion

Faced with this new natural disaster in an area of Madagascar unused to this type of catastrophe, the Malagasy Red Cross was very rapidly able to deliver emergency first aid and relief through the deployment of substantial human and material resources. Financial support is now more

necessary than ever, to continue this essential action and establish a much need rehabilitation programme .

Margareta Wahlström
Under Secretary General,
Disaster Response & Operations
Co-ordination Division

George Weber
Secretary General

BUDGET SUMMARY

**APPEAL No. 03/97
IN CHF**

ANNEX 1

IN-KIND NEEDS

Basic foodstuffs for 17,000 victims	148'000
Nutrition rehabilitation for 2,600 children and adolescents	144'000
Blankets : 2,500 units	15'000

S/TOTAL **307'000**

CASH

Miscellaneous supplies	35'000
Transport, storage, vehicle costs	112'000
Personnel	202'000
Transport & communications	128'000
Information/reporting	13'000
General and administrative expenditures	53'000
operational support	35'000

S/TOTAL **578'000**

APPEAL TOTAL **885'000**

Note: Food and supplies can be purchased locally