

## ZIMBABWE: DROUGHT

31 October, 2000

appeal no. 06/99

### *The context*

After prolonged periods with very low rains during the 1997-1998 agricultural period, the harvest in the southern part of Zimbabwe was very poor. This resulted in the Zimbabwean Government declaring a state of disaster in the Province of Matabeleland South on 21 August 1998 and appealed to the international community for help. The Zimbabwe Red Cross Society (ZRCS) had already received requests for help from their network through their branches and contact with the local communities in the affected areas, Matabeleland South as well as Masvingo provinces. A needs assessment was carried out by a team made up of Zimbabwe Red Cross officers and a Federation Logistics Consultant. It was quite clear that the most vulnerable in the communities, the “under-‘5’s” and pregnant and lactating mothers were in urgent need of food assistance. The worst affected areas were deemed to be Matobo South district in Matabeleland South Province and Chiredzi and Mwenezi districts in Masvingo Province. Figures obtained from the Ministry of Health and Child Welfare showed that the percentage of under-weighted “under-‘5’s” in those areas were as high as 20%. The drop-out rate at primary schools topped 15% with children fainting in class.

Although the assessment was carried out during September and October, 1998, delays were encountered in finalizing the appeal due to difficulties in obtaining reliable information from especially Government departments and making sure the appeal would have underlying support from the international donor community.

The number of targeted beneficiaries were somewhat different from the actual as the figures received from the Government turned out to be incorrect. It is thought that the figures given to the ZRCS were based on 1991 figures and increased with an average growth percentage per year.

	Government	Actual	Reduced (targeted)
Matobo South	17,500	13,000	4,000
Mwenezi	10,000	8,250	4,000
Chiredzi	10,000		9,780
Chiota			2,000

It was decided to limit the programme to cover for Under '5's only. Other NGOs were covering primary schools and as the Nutrimeal is not that palatable to adults, combined with the fact that to purchase other types of food for the mothers it would be difficult and expensive. There was also severe food shortages in the country, it was decided to concentrate on the children.

## ***Red Cross/Red Crescent action***

### **The Operation •**

With the assistance from the Netherlands Embassy and UNICEF, the Zimbabwe Red Cross Society was able to launch the first part of the feeding programme in Matabeleland South on 9 February 1999; the Federation financed programme in Masvingo Province started on 6 April 1999.

Both programmes closed in late November, 1999.

The objectives were to:

- Supplement the low food quantities currently available locally. A supplementary meal would be provided seven days a week for initially 4 months for approximately 40,000 children of the under-five age group.
- To carry out systematic spot-weighing, monitoring and data-collection.
- To improve the drought mitigation capacity of the ZRCS.
- To provide drought mitigation activities to improve food security and community health.
- To provide capacity building of local branches by training volunteers and the communities in first aid and primary health care.

It was eventually decided to use a 'wet-feeding' system, whereby volunteers from the communities would take turns in cooking and the beneficiaries would eat the meal at feeding points. The food supplies would be taken directly from the suppliers to holding points (Rural Clinics and Schools) from where the feeding point supervisors would collect it. To this end a large number of volunteers (both Red Cross and others) were to be trained and several work shops were held.

A pre-prepared porridge powder (locally manufactured Nutrimeal) was selected and the initial supply was ordered. The suppliers would take the supplies directly to the holding points, thereby eliminating the need for Red Cross warehousing and transport.

Nutrimeal is a maize based porridge powder which has added vitamins, oil and proteins. Each child received 100 g cooked into a porridge each day. This is calculated to cover 1/3 of an under '5's daily needs. A total of 94,000 Kg of Nutrimeal was distributed.

A Watsan programme funded by German Red Cross was already in process when the needs assessment took place, a very fast response to the request for assistance. This programme covered the construction of 10 new boreholes, rehabilitate 25 water points and construction of 25 VIP latrines benefiting some 40,000 persons. The programme commenced on 13th October 1998 and was completed on 14 February 1999.

In June 1999 it was apparent that not all the 34,750 beneficiaries were still in need of a supplementary meal every day and an operation to reduce the numbers by targeting areas and beneficiaries was carried out, thereby reducing the total number to 10,000 beneficiaries.

### **Participation of the National Society ●**

The Zimbabwe Red Cross Society managed the programmes, with technical assistance and support from the Federation. The following staff were seconded to the programme for the duration of the operation: a national drought co-ordinator, a finance officer, a provincial programme officer and a co-ordinator from each province as required, local staff and local volunteers. The National Chairman as well as the Secretary General took active roles in especially creating Government contacts, advising and visited the areas of operation on several occasions.

### **Cooperation with authorities and with other agencies ●**

During the assessment close cooperation with the Ministry of Health and Child Welfare was established with the Ministry assisting with information and statistics. On the provincial level, close contact with the local officers of the ministry was maintained. Ministry of Health (MoH) officers played an important role by giving training at the various workshops held during the programme.

The government administrators in each province were very helpful, especially during the assessment, by obtaining information from district levels and by introducing the team to their field personnel.

UNICEF organized a feeding programme in Matabeleland South and a consortium of NGOs were set-up. Several planning meetings were organised, chaired by the Provincial Administrator and in close cooperation between the Red Cross and other NGOs. The close cooperation with UNICEF eventually lead to a long-term agreement between UNICEF and the ZRCS.

### **Analysis of the operation ●**

#### *Needs assessment*

The ZRCS needs assessment was undertaken during the months of September and October, 1998 and the information gathered was analysed during the early part of November by the National Drought Co-ordinator and the Consultant. Data collected from Ministry of Health and Child Welfare was eventually received after assistance from the National Chairman of ZRCS, as the ministry was reluctant to give it.

The assessment compared well with other assessments prepared by UNICEF and other agencies. A revision of the assessment took place in early January when it became clear that some areas would have a reasonable harvest.

Various outside factors had an influence on the beneficiary attendance rate, including weather, harvesting, and school holidays. There were several occasions in both provinces when the weather was very cold (10-15C) with rains and strong winds and as the majority of the feeding points were open-aired, the children did not attend. Leading up to and during the harvest, mothers found it difficult to bring the children as several of the holding and feeding points were at schools. An assessment took place and with the approval of the donors the programme was extended to late July with a further extension to late November.

### **Objectives and Plan of action ●**

#### *Beneficiary selection*

The main factor in electing the beneficiaries was at first to select those most in need. This was done with the assistance of the Provincial Administrator and, as the next step, the

District Administrator. During the first part of the programme, all under '5's in the selected areas were fed. During the targeting in the second phase smaller areas were selected with only under-weight children fed.

The ZRCS carried out a needs assessment in the Chiota area of Mashonaland East Province as requests for assistance had been received and a limited feeding programme covering 2,000 children for 3 months was carried out.

#### *Organization of distributions*

The food supplies came directly from the manufacturers to holding points and few problems were encountered except when the manufacturers had problems producing sufficient Nutrimeal. There were delays between the holding and feeding points, as some feeding points were up to 25 km away and the supervisors had problems finding transport. This was solved by creating sub-holding points.

#### *In-country purchasing*

Nutrimeal is produced from local ingredients but there were cases when the manufacturer was not able to find the necessary supplies. Other NGOs used the same product which meant that the capacity of the manufacturer was at times surpassed.

#### *Role of the National Society*

Considering that hardly any of the staff had previous experience with such programmes their performance was very good, with a high level of motivation. The co-operation from ZRCS Head Quarters was very good with a good understanding of problems experienced in the field.

## ***Conclusion***

The objectives of the appeal were fulfilled with an estimated 31,000 children fed. Reports from clinics in the areas where feeding took place showed that the health level of the children improved. Workshops were held and volunteers from the communities were trained in primary health care, water and sanitation, first aid and the importance of food security. The capacity of the ZRCS branches improved considerably and staff both at ZRCS headquarters and in the field received effective training in dealing with water, sanitation and feeding programmes. ZRCS' credibility has been enhanced by the close working relationship with not only the various governmental departments but also with UNICEF and other agencies. The operation was carried out as originally planned with only a few modifications of minor importance.

When organizing an operation like this, access to a large number of volunteers is important. When comparing the Red Cross operation to that of other NGOs (as pointed out by UNICEF in an evaluation report) it is clear that the Red Cross volunteers made a very significant contribution to the efficiency of the operation.

Communication between Red Cross and the community, MoH officials and teachers in the field was very high, due largely to the fact that not only is Red Cross very well known but that a large number of the community and others are Red Cross members.

The two workshops where training of some 65 volunteers took place was highly successful and feed-back from participants show that they in turn have been able to pass their new knowledge on to some 10 persons each already (i.e. so far some 650 people have directly and

indirectly benefited from the workshops). The part of the workshop dealing with food security was much praised. Further mitigation will take place when funds are available. The importance of sanitation and the knowledge of water-borne diseases was part of the workshop as well.

On the negative side, obtaining reliable information from various governmental departments proved very difficult, sometimes because up-to-date information was not available or because although the information was available it was not for publication. In some districts the District Nursing Officers were very cooperative, in others not. Some rural clinics had fairly up-to-date statistics, others had none. With very few district offices operating with computers and non of the clinics operating with electricity, data-collection was very difficult.

There is no doubt that the training of volunteers at feeding points was not sufficient. Their understanding of the monitoring forms was very low with hardly any forms completed correctly. This was not due to lack of willingness but to lack of knowledge. Motivation at some feeding points was high, others low with the result that attendance at those were in turn low. Motivation should come first from Red Cross to the holding and feeding point supervisors through workshops and continuous monitoring.

The question of monitoring was a serious matter. With 350 feeding points in the two provinces it is impossible for a few monitors to visit each feeding point even once during a fairly short programme. Lack of transport and staff and for that matter, finance meant that only week-long monthly visits from the National Headquarters and Federation were possible. In the cases of Matobo and Mwenezi Red Cross personnel were living within the areas and were able to do extensive monitoring. However, in Chiredzi there was no permanent representative and although a proposal was made to use a Chiredzi based NGO well known to the Red Cross to assist with monitoring, this was eventually not done with the result that in spite of monthly visits by provincial and Federation staff, the programme suffered.

The technical issue of dry versus wet feeding (with maize, beans and cooking oil) versus pre-mixed porridge was a cause for many discussions. It was decided to use wet feeding, which had been used during the 1992-1994 drought and had been widely used by the MoH over the past years. It is easier to monitor, as the beneficiaries consume the meal at the feeding point, but it involves a large number of volunteers.

The experiences gained during this programme will reflect positively on the ZRCS' preparedness for a future drought disaster.

## ***Contributions***

See Annex 1 for details as well as the final financial report. The operation had an opening balance of CHF 43,029 and closed with a remaining balance of CHF 5,391 which will be used to further reinforce disaster preparedness activities.

Peter Rees-Gildea  
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## INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION OF RED CROSS AND RED CRESCENT SOCIETIES

					Interim report
					Annual report
					Final report
					X

Appeal No: AP 06/99

Period: February - October 2000

Currency: CHF

**I - CONSOLIDATED RESPONSE TO APPEAL 06/99: Zimbabwe: Drought Relief**

FUNDING	CASH		KIND		TOTAL INCOME
	Contributions	Reallocations	Goods/Services	Personnel	
Appeal budget	480,000.00				
less					
Cash carry forward 1998	0.00				
<b>TOTAL ASSISTANCE SOUGHT</b>	<b>480,000.00</b>				
<u>Pledges announced by Donors</u>					
Canada - RC	3,069.00				3,069.00
Denmark - RC	21,522.04				21,522.04
Finland - RC	39,671.35				39,671.35
Iceland - RC	3,979.24				3,979.24
Japan - RC	16,146.00				16,146.00
Monaco - RC	4,874.00				4,874.00
Netherlands - Govt.			89,500.00		89,500.00
Norway - RC	28,650.00				28,650.00
Sweden - RC	18,010.00				18,010.00
UNICEF			31,800.00		31,800.00
United States - RC	74,075.00				74,075.00
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>209,996.63</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>121,300.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>331,296.63</b>
<b>Coverage</b>	43.75%	0.00%	25.27%	0.00%	69.02%

**II - Balance of funds**

		Opening balance	43,029.22
		INCOME Rcv'd	209,996.63
		EXPENDITURE	247,634.81
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		BALANCE	5,391.04

Appeal No: AP 06/99						
Period: February - October 2000						
Currency: CHF						
<b>III - Budget analysis / Breakdown of expenditures</b>						
Description	Appeal Budget	CASH Expenditures	KIND		TOTAL Expenditures	Variance
			Goods/services	Personnel		
<b>SUPPLIES</b>						
Shelter & Construction		5,676.67			5,676.67	(5,676.67)
Clothing & Textiles					0.00	0.00
Food/Seeds/Water	306,100.00	82,226.63			82,226.63	223,873.37
Medical & First Aid					0.00	0.00
Teaching materials					0.00	0.00
Utensils & Tools		251.13			251.13	(251.13)
Other relief supplies			121,300.00		121,300.00	(121,300.00)
<b>Sub-Total</b>	<b>306,100.00</b>	<b>88,154.43</b>	<b>121,300.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>209,454.43</b>	<b>96,645.57</b>
<b>CAPITAL EXPENSES</b>						
Land & Buildings					0.00	0.00
Vehicles	31,000.00	17,084.00			17,084.00	13,916.00
Computers & Telecom equip.	4,500.00	2,138.00			2,138.00	2,362.00
Medical equipment					0.00	0.00
Other capital expenditures					0.00	0.00
<b>Sub-Total</b>	<b>35,500.00</b>	<b>19,222.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>19,222.00</b>	<b>16,278.00</b>
<b>TRANSPORT &amp; STORAGE</b>	<b>23,500.00</b>	<b>25,951.28</b>				
<b>Sub-Total</b>	<b>23,500.00</b>	<b>25,951.28</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>25,951.28</b>	<b>(2,451.28)</b>
<b>PERSONNEL</b>						
Personnel (delegates)	20,000.00	1,480.00			1,480.00	18,520.00
Personnel (local staff)	30,000.00	41,341.74			41,341.74	(11,341.74)
Training		7,267.78			7,267.78	(7,267.78)
<b>Sub-Total</b>	<b>50,000.00</b>	<b>50,089.52</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>50,089.52</b>	<b>(89.52)</b>
<b>GENERAL &amp; ADMINISTRATION</b>						
Assessment/Monitoring	1,900.00				0.00	1,900.00
Travel & related expenses		3,399.73			3,399.73	(3,399.73)
Information expenses		5,148.04			5,148.04	(5,148.04)
Administrative expenses	40,500.00	3,668.17			3,668.17	36,831.83
Professional services & Financial charges		30,264.60			30,264.60	(30,264.60)
<b>Sub-Total</b>	<b>42,400.00</b>	<b>42,480.54</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>42,480.54</b>	<b>(80.54)</b>
<b>SECRETARIAT SUPPORT</b>	<b>22,500.00</b>	<b>21,737.04</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>21,737.04</b>	<b>762.96</b>
<b>TOTAL BUDGET</b>	<b>480,000.00</b>	<b>247,634.81</b>	<b>121,300.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>368,934.81</b>	<b>111,065.19</b>
<b>Consumption rate:</b>	Total Expenditures versus total income		111.36%			
<b>Execution rate:</b>	Total Expenditures versus budget		76.86%			