

SUDAN: FLOODS

*Wednesday,
December 29,
1999*

appeal no. 21/99

situation report no. 03

period covered: 6 October - 1 December 1999

The SRCS, with support from the Federation, has ensured a successfully managed and implemented operation. An important lesson gained is the need to develop independent structures as well as to increase inter-agency coordination to strengthen future preparedness and response.

The context

Unusually early and heavy rains in July caused severe flooding in a number of states in Sudan. On 2 August, rains in Khartoum state flooded the area of Umbada (west Omdurman), damaging and destroying thousands of houses in an area that had not suffered a flood of this magnitude in 60 years. Two days later the Commissioner for Umbada announced that the disaster was beyond the capacity of the government. Reports for River Nile, Sinner and Northern Kordofan states indicated significant damage to a number of areas and the consequent homelessness and lack of shelter for hundreds of families. Moreover, the recent flooding in Southern Kordofan and White Nile states has added to the already dire situation.

The above average rainfalls in most parts of the country and the Ethiopian highlands, coupled with the critically high Nile levels, were the major cause of the disaster.

The scale of the disaster was noteworthy as it came so early in the season. Many of those affected not only lost their homes and livelihoods, but were threatened with exposure to the elements and potential water borne diseases. Traditional coping mechanisms were stretched to capacity.

Latest events

Heavy rains on the night of October 16 destroyed large parts of Kadugli town in the Southern Kordofan state, affecting 18,841 individuals. The SRCS provided immediate support by distributing medicines, blankets and jerrycans.

Flash floods also hit the localities of Goda and Al Rawat as well as Diweim (province) in the White Nile state, affecting 1,650 families. Crop storehouses were flooded, destroying 500 sacks of sorghum. 80% of the agricultural land in the state was submerged in water.

As a result of the rains, the Millit area of Northern Darfur state experienced serious outbreaks of diarrhoea and other water borne diseases. This was due mainly to breaks in the sewage system, and pools of stagnant water.

Red Cross/Red Crescent action

Medical and relief items, including blankets, jerrycans, cholera kits, New Emergency Health Kits (NEHKs) and supplementary drugs were distributed by the Sudanese Red Crescent Society (SRCS). The Spanish Red Cross supported Dongola through a post floods rehabilitation programme.

Relief Activities and Distribution •

- *White Nile:* The SRCS branch received 490 blankets and distributed them to the most affected persons. However, drugs, tarpaulins and insecticides are still to be delivered. No mobile clinics have started due to a lack of medicines. It is planned that more blankets will be sent to the state.
- *Gezira:* the six IDP camps in Managil and Gezira provinces have 15,000 affected people. Two cholera kits and supplementary drugs have been dispatched and a mobile clinic established in each of the camps.
- *Southern Kordofan:* three mobile clinics have been set up in Kadugli in response to the latest events, providing medical relief to those affected. One cholera kit and supplementary drugs were dispatched to the area.
- *Northern Darfur:* One cholera kit and supplementary drugs, to combat water borne and diarrhoeal diseases, have been dispatched to Millit town.

Procurement •

Medicines purchased included seven cholera kits and five NEHKs, as well as supplementary drugs. Most of the medical items were procured through the Regional Logistics Centre (RLC) in Nairobi, with the exception of one NEHK, two cholera kits and the supplementary drugs which were purchased in-country.

Abate and fenitrition chemicals were also procured by the RLC. Plastic tarpaulins were eventually purchased in-country as logistical difficulties caused an overseas contract to be cancelled. Local and regional procurement has been favoured, although in-country availability and quality restrictions posed an obstacle.

Training •

A three day Needs Assessment and Reporting workshop was carried out from November 17-19. The purpose of the workshop was to identify the main strengths and weaknesses of the current flood operation in order to develop future strategies for the strengthening of the National Society response capacities. The workshop aimed at covering the following areas: reporting, assessment and programming events through group exercises and case studies. All the flood affected branches were represented, with 35 participants from 16 states. The Regional Relief Co-ordinator in Nairobi provided assistance.

Problems and Constraints •

Problems with the transport and procurement of local or in-country supplies have caused a major set back to the operation, with delays making much needed supplies unavailable to the beneficiaries in a timely manner.

Outstanding needs

While the total appeal figure remains only 68% covered, a budget revision or an extension of the appeal time-frame is not expected. There is a need however to reallocate funds due to logistics constraints and the late arrival of some contributions. A final narrative and financial report will be issued by the end of February, 2000.

External relations - Government/UN/NGOs/Media

The SRCS and the International Federation have participated in all co-ordination meetings initiated by the Humanitarian Affairs Commission and the UN agencies. Information obtained through the SRCS state branches is being shared with humanitarian organisations involved in the operation.

Contributions

See Annex 1 for details.

Peter Rees-Gildea
Director
Operations Funding and
Reporting Department

Bekele Geleta
Director
Africa Department