

WEST AFRICA: FLOODS

24 January, 2000

***appeal no. 26/99; Budget revision and 3-month programme extension
situation report no. 2
period covered: 23 December, 1999 - 20 January, 2000***

The annual floods this year throughout West Africa caused exceptional damage, affecting almost every country in the region. Direct or bilateral donor assistance played a critical role in some flood affected countries, while support directed by the Federation's Regional Delegation in Abidjan (in response to an appeal) effectively allowed resources to be prioritised to those beneficiaries who received little aid from other sources. Due to this factor the appeal budget is being revised and the programme time-frame extended for 3 months.

The context

Between June and September, 1999, West Africa experienced exceptionally heavy rainfall, flash floods and tropical storms. Benin, Burkina-Faso, the Gambia, Ghana, Mali, Mauritania, Niger and Senegal were the most severely affected countries with widespread population displacement, loss of crops, destruction of property and jeopardised livelihoods. Those affected are, in the majority of cases, subsistence farmers and subsistence workers. On behalf of and in support to respective National Societies, the Federation launched Appeal No. 26/99 (19 October, 1999) to respond to the identified needs.

Red Cross/Red Crescent action

The following countries received bilateral support::

- **The Gambia:** Assistance was primarily provided through a number of UN agencies and NGO's. A one month's supply of food is being provided to most of the flood victims. The Federation is in the process of providing blankets needed for the cold weather.
- **Ghana:** The Swiss and German Red Cross, as well as USAID, provided contributions to the Ghana Red Cross to assist flood victims. Second-hand clothing donated by the Swedish Red Cross was distributed to the flood-affected areas. A total of 5,000 blankets, ORS salts, and cholera information leaflets were distributed, and education sessions were provided on how to prevent the spread of cholera. Various UN agencies provided assistance in the form of mosquito nets, vaccines, syringes, and vitamin A capsules.

- **Mauritania:** The Spanish Red Cross, through ECHO funding, provided 500 tents for the worst-affected in the regions of Trarza, Brakna and Gorgol. The provision of shelter came at a crucial time with the approach of the cold season as families gathered under trees and flimsy huts constructed of branches and leaves.
- **Senegal:** The Spanish and Senegalese Red Cross, with funding provided by ECHO, assisted 5,000 people in the Department of Podor along the River Senegal. A further 25,000 people in Podor who had completely or partially lost their homes (many of them vulnerable including children under fifteen, pregnant and lactating women, physically and mentally handicapped, the elderly and heads of families), received rice, oil and beans for one month, blankets, mats, bleach and soap, and seeds for 2,000 families.

The following countries received support from the Regional Delegation in response to the Federation's appeal:

- **Benin:** Funding has been received in response to the Appeal from the Finnish and American Red Cross for the flood operation in Benin. Second-hand clothing, blankets, impregnated mosquito nets, essential medicines and beans, maize, oil and sugar are in the process of being distributed by Red Cross volunteers.
- **Burkina-Faso:** With funding made available in response to the appeal, the Red Cross Society of Burkina-Faso will assist 1,000 of the most vulnerable persons in Markoye, Saimossi and Titao. With the need for food remaining a primary concern, 12 kgs of cereals per person per month are planned to be provided over a three month period, and mats, blankets and second-hand clothing are being purchased and distributed by Red Cross volunteers.
- **Mali:** With funding and assistance made available in response to the Appeal, the National Society is providing blankets, second-hand clothing and kitchen utensils to the most vulnerable in Kayes, Koulikoro, Sikasso, Ségou, Mopti, Tombouctou, Gao and Bamako, most of whom lost all their possessions during the floods.
- **Niger:** With a balance of funding from the 1998 floods operation, the Red Cross Society of Niger purchased 9 mt of millet for distribution and, from its stock, provided a total of 55 tents to those without shelter in Tahoua and Diffa regions. 3,000 blankets will also be provided with funding received in response to the Federation Appeal

Outstanding needs

The revised Appeal budget is currently covered at over 82%. Many of the flood-affected persons have now managed to re-build their homes, and the significant budget item intended for tents has been reduced accordingly.

Contributions

Annex 1 (List of Contributions) only reflects cash and in-kind support responding to the Federation's appeal. Information related to bi-lateral contributions is unavailable at this time.

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