

# ***ETHIOPIA: DROUGHT***

**Preliminary Appeal no:**

**08/2000**

***8 April, 2000***

***THIS APPEAL SEEKS CHF 5.2 MILLION  
IN CASH, KIND AND SERVICES  
TO ASSIST 80,000 BENEFICIARIES IN SOUTH WOLLO  
FOR 8 MONTHS***

## ***Summary***

Four years of rain failures in Ethiopia's northern highlands have brought drought conditions and minimal harvests. This has had a cumulative impact on farming households in the region and forced many of them to sell their livestock and other assets and some to migrate from their land in search of income and food.

**This International Federation and Ethiopian Red Cross Society (ERCS) appeal will provide continued support in cash, kind and services for 80,000 beneficiaries in two districts of South Wollo for eight months.**

**At the same time, preparations are under way to assess the need and potential for expanding Ethiopian Red Cross Society response work to other parts of the country.**

## ***The Disaster***

The northern highlands of Ethiopia are facing their fourth successive year in which the belg rains have failed. One of the worst hit zones is South Wollo which is an area that was badly affected by the famines in both 1974 and 1984 and that has repeatedly required food assistance over the years. Erratic rainfall patterns have characterized the last three years. This year the belg rains have also failed to produce much precipitation although some rain fell at the end of March. The belg rains which normally begin in February and peak in mid April are important in that 2 million in the northern highlands are dependent on them for the production of short cycle crops. They are also significant in terms of the coming meher season. The high yield, long maturing meher crops of

sorghum and corn are normally planted in late April and are dependent on the residual moisture of the belg rains.

The cumulative effect of the failure of successive belg rains in South Wollo has reduced traditional coping strategies to a point where malnutrition levels are rising. Many households have sold their oxen and other assets and are not in a position to take advantage of the rains even if they do arrive. Prices of livestock have fallen as oxen have been sold by the belg farmers and there are indications that grain prices have risen. There is some movement by people off the land in search of other sources of income and food. 45,687 Belg farmers in Ambassel and 31,907 in Kutaber are already on the country's Disaster Planning and Preparation Commission (DPPC) beneficiary lists for food aid and it is anticipated that they will continue to require support until June and beyond, if there are no rains. In addition, the woreda authorities identified a further 43,110 in Ambassel and 18,903 in Kutaber requiring food assistance.

Evidence is mounting that food insecurity throughout the country may cross a dangerous and life threatening threshold before mid year. Over the past months, difficult food security conditions in much of Tigray and Amhara, belg agricultural areas in Oromiya and much of the pastoral areas of Somali, Oromiya and Southern Nation, Nationalities and Peoples regions have been well documented.

In late January 2000, the Government of Ethiopia launched its annual Appeal for 836,000 metric tons of Emergency Food Assistance targeting roughly 8 million individuals. This was a 21% increase on the last appeal in 1999. Failure of the belg rains would increase relief requirements by several hundred thousand MT over and above the current estimate of relief foods.

Despite the alarming picture, surpluses do exist within the country. A Cereal Availability Survey conducted in January by EC- Local Food Security Unit in collaboration with the WFP indicated that there is about 500,000 MT of surplus wheat, sorghum and maize which could be made available for local purchase in the traditionally surplus producing areas of Ethiopia.

## *The Response so far*

### **Government Action •**

Emergency relief programmes in Ethiopia are co-ordinated through the Disaster Prevention and Preparedness Committee (DPPC) which was established in the late eighties. Bulk food contributions to the country's 'Emergency Relief Needs' from international organizations, bi-lateral donors and NGOs are, for the most part, channelled through the DPPC with the funding organization playing a monitoring role. The DPPC is constituted at the National, Regional and Zonal levels. At the woreda level, the administrative units of the zones, the DPPC is normally composed of the local administrator and representatives of various line departments.

There are several key constraints in meeting current and future relief food requirements. As at April 4, only 9,954 MT of the 438,389 metric tons pledged so far against the DPPC's January appeal had been distributed to the beneficiaries. The Government of Ethiopia's Emergency Food Security Reserve (EFSR) reached a low level of 50,720 MT as at the beginning of April. The pipeline of additional supplies remains thin through to May with 16,700 MT in March and 98,000 MT in April and 57,000 in May scheduled as repayments to the EFSR. Djibouti, the main port for shipment, has a reported maximum capacity of 120,000 MT per month. This statistic has to be juxtaposed against the DPPC estimated requirement of 127,000 MT of relief food for June alone

for an indication of the seriousness of the situation. In addition, the DPPC has decided to procure 100,000 MT of food on the local market.

### **Red Cross/Red Crescent Action**

The Ethiopian Red Cross, supported by the Federation, undertook a successful supplementary feeding programme in Ambassel and Kutaber woredas in South Wollo from June to December 1999. A total of 418 metric tons of supplementary food was distributed to over 40,000 beneficiaries. The experience of this operation and previous ones has strengthened the capacity of the branch and the sub-branch which have 355 trained and experienced volunteers.

In February this year, an assessment team comprising representatives from the ERCS and an American Red Cross delegate assigned to the Federation conducted a three day assessment in Kutaber and Ambassel woredas. The assessment team's report was reviewed by the ERCS HQ management group which included the Federation Head of Delegation. The review was conducted within the national context (outlined above) that was characterized by two main themes: firstly, that the Government's food reserve was low and the pipeline of additional relief food supplies was thin and likely to remain so for a couple of months: secondly, that food surpluses from other regions are available.

With South Wollo being one of the worst affected areas, ERCS management supported by the Federation country delegation decided to build on its long experience in Kutaber and Ambassel by addressing the drought there first, not least to ensure some continuity for beneficiaries. It was further agreed to investigate the use of a combination of interventions that would address the immediate needs of the vulnerable population. One of the forms of intervention that was considered was the establishment of employment generation schemes (EGS) for specifically targeted groups of beneficiaries who would be paid cash for their work.

A team consisting of an ERCS senior relief officer, a local consultant who has had several years of experience in designing and implementing cash for work schemes, and the Federation relief delegate returned on March 21 to the two woredas to investigate the feasibility of this and other kinds of intervention with the task of designing a programme that would address immediate needs. They reported back to the ERCS HQ management group on March 30 and a plan of action was agreed by April 5.

Meanwhile, the Federation has released CHF 330,000 from the Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF) to support the supplementary feeding component. The German Red Cross has indicated strong support for this same activity.

The ICRC has carried out surveys in Gode and Afdher zones in the Somali National Regional State in February and late March and on the basis of these assessments will provide assistance in a number of woredas. ERCS staff and volunteers from Jijige branch and Gode sub branch will be involved in this operation.

### **Other Agencies Action**

In response to the DPPC's appeal for this year, the WFP approved on February 25 a US\$ 137 million operation to feed 2.3 million people. Under the arrangement with the government, 250,000 mt of food aid will be supplied to the DPPC between April and December. The DPPC will distribute it to the most vulnerable.

There are indications of a substantial increase in commitments from the US government and other sources.

In South Wollo, the DPPC, together with Save the Children and Concern, allocated 12,191 metric tons of food to beneficiaries in South Wollo zone. World Vision, CARE, Norwegian Church Aid and OXFAM are also present in the zone. However, there are no international NGOs operating in the two woredas that ERCS and the Federation are targeting.

### **Co-ordination**

The DPPC is the main implementor of relief interventions in the country. At the same time the ERCS, in its constitutional charter, has an explicit mandate to conduct relief interventions. The ERCS is the only other institution in the country with this level of autonomy. The supplementary feeding programme undertaken by the ERCS in 1999 demonstrated the effective co-operation that exists between ERCS and DPPC. The ongoing emergency intervention will be the vehicle for further strengthening the co-ordination between the ERCS and the DPPC.

There is no other agency distributing food in the two South Wollo woredas where the ERCS will work. However, the co-ordination on monitoring and evaluation of the status is spearheaded by Save the Children (UK) who have been assessing the food economy of South Wollo as well as undertaking nutritional surveillance.

## ***The Needs To Be Met in South Wollo***

### **Immediate needs in the woredas**

<b>Woreda</b>	<b>Total Population</b>	<b>Affected Population</b>	<b>Vulnerable Belg individuals</b>	<b>At risk individuals</b>
Ambassel	126,811	88,797	45,687	13,706
Kutaber	106,770	50,810	31,907	9,572
<b>Total</b>	<b>233,581</b>	<b>139,607</b>	<b>77,594</b>	<b>23,278</b>

Out of a total population of nearly a quarter of a million, some 140,000 are affected by the drought. The most vulnerable are the belg farmers and their households who have suffered from the failure of successive rains and these are the ones that the Red Cross will target. This population, 45,687 in Ambassel and 31,907 in Kutaber, are included on the beneficiary list for a general ration of 12.5 kg per month per person. This list is drawn up by the communities themselves in each of the kebeles (peasant associations).

During the first three months of 2000, the DPPC has only been able to distribute 607.3 metric tons of grain, equivalent to one month's ration, to the belg vulnerable in Ambassel. In Kutaber, the distribution is 526.56 metric tons of grain over the same period. This is equivalent to a little more than one month's ration over the first quarter. Given the worsening situation and the likely increase in demand for food nation-wide, indications are that the DPPC will continue to find it difficult to provide monthly rations to these vulnerable people. The situation of the vulnerable belg farmers is worsening as the belg rains are failing. This will, in turn, push more people off the land. It is, therefore, vital that this group receive a general ration or the equivalent in cash for the next eight months so that they can sustain themselves.

Within this group, there are those who are particularly at risk. These are the under five children (17% of the belg vulnerable population), pregnant women (5%), lactating mothers (5%) and

elderly and disabled (3%). These four subgroups, making up 30% of the belg vulnerable population, will be targeted for supplementary feeding.

## ***Red Cross Objectives***

### **Operational Objectives**

- To provide approximately 23,250 at risk individuals (pregnant and lactating mothers, children under five and elderly and handicapped persons) with blended, fortified cereal as a nutritional supplement to the staple food from May to December;
- To establish employment generation schemes that would provide employment for approximately 12,350 household representatives who would be paid cash for their work;
- To provide approximately 15,400 vulnerable belg farmers with a general ration of 12.5 kg per person per month from May to December;
- To provide agricultural inputs such as seed and fertilizer to approximately 4,800 belg farmers in December for the 2001 belg season.

In addition, an assessment mission is being organised to create a common Red Cross and Red Crescent strategy for famine relief and co-ordination, led by the Ethiopian Red Cross and effectively incorporating the commitment and resources of other Red Cross partners (PNS).

Terms of reference are currently being prepared.

## ***National Society/Federation Plan of Action***

### **Phases of the operation**

This appeal aims to provide for the immediate needs of 77,594 beneficiaries in Ambassel and Kutaber woredas, through a mixture of interventions that are designed to have the greatest impact as well as build conditions for future development. The period of assistance is until the end of the year during which the beneficiaries will be at their most vulnerable.

The first emergency phase will cover the period through to December, and will involve supplementary feeding, the establishment and implementation of employment generation schemes, as well as the distribution of a general ration to belg farmers. One of the lessons learnt from the supplementary feeding programme that the ERCS, implemented last year was that without the benefit of a regular general ration, supplementary food has less impact on the most at risk groups than envisaged. The advantage of the comprehensive approach to be adopted that involves cash, general ration and supplementary feeding is that immediate and basic needs will be satisfied.

A second phase of the operation in South Wollo is anticipated for December, and will involve the distribution of seeds, fertilizer and tools to belg farmers.

While the immediate response is continuing in South Wollo, an assessment mission will be carried out with the purpose to propose a strategic Federation (in its larger sense: ERCS, Secretariat/delegation as well as PNS) famine response outlining the nature, size and location of potential programmes plus concrete mechanisms for co-ordinating potential international support for expanding Red Cross response work.

## *Activities*

### **Related to Objective 1 (supplementary food)**

The supplementary feeding will attempt to reduce the number of malnourished children by 20% within seven months by providing 15,229 people in Kutaber and 10,635 in Ambassel with 3 kgs per person per month for the period from May to December.

The implementation of this objective will be done in several stages:

### **Procurement and delivery of commodities:**

The supplementary food (FAMIX) will be purchased within Ethiopia (in Addis). An order for 350 MT at 460 USD per ton has already been placed with the factory.

### **Targeting and distribution:**

The ERCS will work closely with the DPPC authorities at the regional, zonal, woreda and district levels to monitor the distribution of the supplementary food. Beneficiaries have already been identified through the kebele selection process. The members of the household to receive supplementary food will be registered by the Red Cross volunteers employed in the project who would carry out the distributions. These will occur in Wuchali town, 60 km from Dessie, for Ambassel and Kutaber for Kutaber woreda. Two months distribution will be made at a time, the first in May.

### **Monitoring:**

An integral part of this intervention will be the baseline that will be carried out at the beginning and at the end of the project that will measure the change in nutritional status among the vulnerable population. The baseline survey will be conducted by independent consultants in co-ordination with the DPPC woreda personnel and will target a 3% sample of the recipient under-5 population registered to receive supplementary food.

### **Training:**

The Red Cross volunteers will provide the core skills in monitoring the implementation of the programme. They will be trained to monitor deliveries, report on progress towards project goals, and conduct nutritional surveillance.

### **Related to objective 2 (cash for work)**

The main form of intervention in South Wollo will be through employment generation schemes such as terracing, road maintenance, water resource development and environmental sanitation. There is widespread use of EGS in Ethiopia and, particularly, in South Wollo to provide a means of distribution of income to deprived sections of society, build up the assets of vulnerable households, develop infrastructure and re-inforce the work ethos of the affected population. They have the advantage over general food distributions of linking relief with development.

Cash based responses to food emergencies have, in the main, been successful in the past being more effective and more empowering to local communities and less costly than traditional food distributions. Additional advantages include the involvement of professional government extension workers as well as the Red Cross making full use of its potential as a facilitator for relevant work at community level. The situation in Ethiopia is suitable for such a response with pockets of food surplus that are not, at present, redistributed to other areas as a result of weak purchasing power.

By injecting cash into the two woredas in South Wollo, purchasing power will increase and demand will rise and this will encourage traders to transport food to these areas from the food surplus regions of Ethiopia. This approach will also not put extra strain on the thin food pipeline.

The ERCS/Federation team, while in the two woredas, carried out a rapid assessment of all options for creating productive, temporary employment for the affected people. This review was conducted with the woreda DPPC and included analysis of employment needs as defined by each kebele as well as assessing the possibilities of adapting and expanding ongoing labour intensive projects and/or initiating new budgeted and planned projects.

On the basis of this assessment, standard agreements will be established between the ERCS and the two woredas setting out roles and responsibilities of the parties for the implementation and monitoring of the projects. Red Cross staff and volunteers will work closely with the line bureaux in the selection of the EGS. ERCS will provide cashiers who will pay the money and staff/volunteers who will monitor the schemes.

Under EGS guidelines issued by the DPPC, only 80% of the households can be represented in employment generation schemes and 20% would need support through relief. Each of the 80% of households, on average made up of 5 members, would be represented by one member in the EGS and work 22 days in the month. They will be paid 5 birr a day which provides enough money to purchase 62.5 kg per month (the general ration of 12.5 kg times 5 household members). An attempt will be made to ensure payment to the women, who are responsible for food purchases in most households.

The remaining 20% of the households (approximately 15,400 individuals) will receive a general ration (see objective 3).

#### **Related to objective 3 (general food distribution)**

This activity will be co-ordinated with WFP, exploring the possibility of obtaining WFP-resourced food. Should this not be possible, local procurement of food will be carried out by the ERCS head office. Tenders will be invited from the Ethiopian Grain Trading Enterprise (EGTE), local state and commercial farms, and companies which have sufficient stocks at this stage.

It should be noted that for a potentially extended Red Cross operation in the country, the possibility of the Red Cross network mobilising food internationally is not ruled out.

Consignments of 1,500 MT will be received in the ERCS central warehouse from where they will be delivered to the ERCS South Wollo branch warehouse and other warehouses rented in Dessie. The ERCS has a transport company which has several 15 to 20 ton trucks which can be used. In addition there is an adequate number of larger commercial trucks that can be hired.

There are 355 volunteers who will be available for the distributions. These will occur in Wuchali town, 60 km from Dessie, for Ambassel and Kutaber for Kutaber woreda. Two months distributions will be made at a time, the first in May.

#### **Related to objective 4 (seeds and fertilizers)**

The ERCS has experience in procuring and distributing seeds during the last emergency intervention. Seed will be locally obtained from the Seed Agency using varieties and lines that are recommended for the region. There is an Agricultural Development Agent for each 2,000 farmers and they will be utilized in training farmers in fertilizer use.

As per table below, a combination of 70% barley (125 kg/ha.) and 30% wheat (125 kg/ha.) will be provided to those most vulnerable households that only plant belg crops in December. Tools such as hoes and spades will be provided.

<b>Woreda</b>	<b>Vulnerable belg households (48%)</b>	<b>Barley seed requirement (70% of total belg seeds) MT</b>	<b>Wheat seed requirement (30% of total belg seeds)</b>
Ambassel	2,966	129.77	55.61
Kutaber	1,829	80.02	34.29
<b>Total</b>	<b>4,795</b>	<b>209.79</b>	<b>89.9</b>

### **Capacity of the ERCS**

The ERCS has two very experienced officers within the Disaster Preparedness and Relief Section of the Programmes Department at Headquarters. They will both be fully involved in the procurement and logistics of the operation as well as assisting in programme implementation and monitoring.

The ERCS has a well established Branch in Dessie town, the zonal capital of South Wollo. Both the Branch Secretary and the Programme Co-ordinator have been actively involved in relief operations with the ERCS since the mid eighties. An active sub-branch in Haik has responsibility for the Ambassel woreda.

The branch maintains a warehouse in Dessie town with capacity to store some of the quantities of food and seed stocks. Other warehouses are available and will be rented. It also has a field vehicle which will be used to transport teams of youth volunteers from Haik and Dessie who will carry out distributions and conduct end use monitoring. Two other vehicles will be made available. There are at present a total of 355 volunteers belonging to these two branches.

The ERCS and Federation has established a relief management task force at Headquarters comprising the Assistant Secretary General, the Director of Programmes, two DPR officers when available and the Federation Relief Delegate co-ordinated by the Secretary General. The Federation Head of Delegation will attend these meetings as often as possible.

### **Capacity of the Federation**

The Federation has six delegates at present. The Head Of Delegation will play a co-ordinating and management role during the operation. The Relief Delegate will work alongside the ERCS in assisting them in programme implementation and monitoring. The Finance Delegate will assist in the financial management and reporting.

The ERCS and the Federation will continue to monitor the situation in this area and other regions and will extend its operations if needed. The planned assessment will come up with an overall strategy for possible expanded Red Cross famine relief work and co-ordination as well as make recommendations for preparatory steps for possible follow-up work (rehabilitation). The assessment team will involve representatives from Participating National Societies, and will mainly undertake 7 to 10 days of intense discussions at Addis level with ERCS and key actors such as Government, UN, other NGOs. One of the key purposes is to get agreement from the government and support from other key actors for a possibly expanded Red Cross role in close coordination with the ICRC.

## ***Budget summary***

See Annex 1 for details.

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		ANNEX 1
<b><u>BUDGET SUMMARY</u></b>	APPEAL No. 08/2000	
ETHIOPIA DROUGHT		
TYPE	VALUE	
<b>RELIEF NEEDS</b>	IN CHF	
<u>Food &amp; seeds</u>		
Cereals	628,320	
Supplementary feeding	455,328	
Seeds	183,600	
Fertilizers	25,500	
Agricultural tools	224,400	
EGS cash outlay / Cash for work	2,660,437	
<b>TOTAL RELIEF NEEDS</b>		4,177,585
<u>CAPITAL EXPENDITURES</u>		
Telecom equipment (Computers/satellite/Generator)	30,600	
<u>PROGRAMME SUPPORT</u>		
Programme management	356,110	
Technical support	106,601	
Professional services	118,219	
<u>TRANSPORT STORAGE &amp; VEHICLE COSTS</u>	272,867	
<u>PERSONNEL</u>		
Expatriate staff	38,491	
National staff	134,456	
<u>ADMINISTRATIVE &amp; GENERAL SERVICES</u>		
Travel & related expenses	38,188	
Information expenses	1,020	
Administrative & general expenses	2,452	
Consultant fees	4,590	
<b>TOTAL OPERATIONAL NEEDS</b>		1,103,594
<b>TOTAL APPEAL CASH, KIND, SERVICES</b>		<b>5,281,179</b>
<b>LESS AVAILABLE RESOURCES (-)</b>		
<b>NET REQUEST</b>		<b>5,281,179</b>