

TAJIKISTAN: DROUGHT

25 May, 2001

appeal no. 26/00, Programme extension until 30 September, 2001

situation report no. 6

period covered: 16 March - 18 May 2001

Food distribution to 130,000 people and public health campaigns, the main priorities of the Federation's drought emergency appeal, have entered the final stages, and will be successfully completed by the end of July. Thanks to a Department for International Development (DFID) contribution the Federation will be able to implement the seeds component of the appeal, originally put on hold due to the unavailability of funds. This will, however, impose an extension of the current appeal period until the end of September 2001. In view of the reported reduced rainfall in the first months of this year, a possible renewal of the drought emergency response in Tajikistan will be considered in the coming months. This will follow a review of the Federation's current operation scheduled to be carried out in the second half of June, as well as a number of inter-agency assessments of this year's crop and food supply in the country.

The context

The International Federation and the Red Crescent Society of Tajikistan (RCST) launched an emergency appeal on 19 September 2000, seeking CHF 22.6 million to assist some 250,000 people affected by the worst drought that has hit Tajikistan in 75 years. In spite of intense fund-raising efforts, the delayed and inadequate donor response necessitated a prioritization of activities and to focus on the provision of food, water and sanitation, and public health components. The provision of seeds was put on hold. The targeted number of beneficiaries of the food assistance was reduced from the original 250,000 to 130,000. In addition to a number of contributions from donors (including ECHO, the Swedish Government Development Agency (SIDA), the Swedish Red Cross, the Canadian Government and the Red Cross, the Finnish Government and the Finnish Red Cross), an agreement on the implementation of the emergency food assistance in the north and south of the country was reached with WFP.

Latest events

Pledges from the Canadian Red Cross and the British Government's Department for International Development (DFID) will enable the Federation and the RCST to expand the water and sanitation

component, and to implement the seeds operational component, respectively. As the operation was due to be completed by 19 May, and in view of the above contributions, the Federation will officially extend its appeal until the end of September. This will also allow for a successful completion of the remaining objectives, some of which are slightly delayed.

Reports of a reduced rainfall in the first five months of the year compared to the same period last year are causing serious concern among international organizations that the drought affecting Tajikistan is continuing, in which case the implications on the population would be even more devastating than last year. WFP has recently finalized an in-country review of the crops, and the results will be used to determine whether a comprehensive food and crop supply assessment will be conducted in the coming month. The Federation is closely cooperating with partner-agencies in following the main indicators which could determine the need for a renewed emergency assistance to the drought-affected population this year.

In the second half of June, the Federation delegation will host a team which will carry out a preliminary review of the Federation's current drought emergency response, and focus on the co-ordination aspects of the operation, both with partner-organizations and authorities. The review will determine a need for an eventual in-depth evaluation later this year. Findings and recommendations of the review will also be analyzed in the context of an eventual re-launch of the drought emergency appeal, as elaborated above.

Red Cross/Red Crescent action

Provision of food (objective 1) •

The first round of food distribution in the northern region of Sughd was successfully completed by the end of April. Monitoring of approximately 21% of the targeted population was carried out over a period of eight weeks through visits to over 17,000 households, and it resulted in a number of adjustments and exclusions. The food for the second distribution round in the districts of Zafarabad and Ghonchi was pre-positioned in the first two weeks of April. Distribution started on 17 April in Zafarabad, and is expected to be completed by mid-July. The last consignment of food, earmarked for the district of Matchoh, is expected to arrive in the country by the end of May. This will allow the distribution in the north and post-distribution monitoring to be completed by the end of July. The ECHO-funded operation in Sughd has been successfully completed, in spite of initial delays in the procurement process.

The outstanding food in the pipeline includes 129 tonnes of wheat flour from WFP, as well as 447 tonnes of wheat flour and 50.7 tonnes of oil procured by the Federation's logistics service. In order to avoid delays in completing the food distribution in the north, the Federation reached an agreement with WFP to borrow the corresponding quantity of food, and to start the distributions immediately. The borrowed commodities will be returned to WFP once the consignment arrives from Europe by mid-June.

In Khatlon, the Federation and RCST carried out pre-distribution monitoring of beneficiary lists provided by WFP within the framework of the co-operation agreement. A number of problems were encountered in the monitoring process, which were mainly caused by a dissatisfaction of the local population and the authorities with the selection. For these reasons, the Federation was obliged to stop monitoring in the Farkhor district, as the local authorities failed to guarantee security of the RCST and Federation's teams. Initial plans to distribute WFP-donated food in all three operational areas were revised, and the third round will be canceled due to the unavailability of food. Therefore, the original allocation for Khatlon of 2,838 tonnes of wheat flour, 142 tonnes of vegetable oil, and 32 tonnes of iodized salt has been reduced by one third. The distribution started in the Farkhor district in the first two weeks of April, and was followed by Sovietsky on 4 May and Danghara on 11 May. The second distribution round will start in Farkhor in early June. In the meantime, WFP decided to shift up to 20% of the existing beneficiary lists from free food distribution into 'food for asset

rehabilitation' projects (FFAR). For more information, please refer to the achievements against the objective 3 (below). The distribution in the south is expected to be finalized by mid-July 2001.

Provision of seeds (objective 2) •

At the end of April, the British Government's Department for International Development (DFID) donated approximately 480,000 Pounds Sterling in response to the Federation's drought operation. These funds will be utilized for the purchase and distribution of wheat seeds in the north and south of the country. The seeds will be procured in the region and distributed in time for the winter planting season September-October 2001. Beneficiary selection process and detailed distribution plans will be elaborated in the coming months, while the procurement process is underway.

Food-for-work activities (objective 3) •

In the north of the country, local authorities were requested to select beneficiaries for food-for-work activities, among those already selected for food distributions, and to design programmes beneficial to the community. Some 15,000 people in all operational areas (20% of the total beneficiaries in the north) are presently engaged in the community work, carrying out a variety of projects, including canal cleaning, tree-planting, cleaning and arrangement of public places in urban centres, and many other activities.

In Kulyab, WFP requested the Federation to identify, in co-operation with the local authorities, up to 20% of total beneficiaries for 'food for asset rehabilitation' activities (FFAR). However, due to a number of reasons, mainly the lack of co-operation of authorities and insufficient time to identify appropriate activities, the FFAR project will be implemented only in the district of Danghara. A total of 2,670 people (19% of total beneficiaries in the district) have been selected. Each beneficiary involved in FFAR projects will receive 2 kg of wheat flour, 100 g of vegetable oil and 40 g of iodized salt per day of work, instead of the second round of free-food distribution. The projects involve rehabilitation of schools, medical centres, construction of sanitation facilities, cleaning of canals and public places in urban areas.

Public health (objective 4) •

Following the completion of public health training for volunteers in the north, a series of similar workshops were organized for newly recruited community volunteers in the Kulyab and Kurgan-Tube districts of the southern region of Khatlon. In total, 264 volunteers in the north and south of the country have been provided with training on a range of topics, including waterborne diseases, TB, HIV, sanitation and hygiene. The volunteers, comprising not only health professionals, but also local administration representatives, teachers, and women's groups are currently conducting public health campaigns in their respective communities, under a close supervision of RCST regional health co-ordinators. They are targeting villages, health centres, mosques, schools and other institutions. In the coming month, the Federation will carry out close monitoring of the quality and impact of the campaigns. As an addition to these campaigns, the Federation procured and distributed soap to schools and social institutions in the operational areas. The Finnish Red Cross-donated second-hand clothes have been partly distributed. The distribution will be completed by the RCST before September 2001.

A total of 80,000 posters, leaflets and brochures have been produced and are distributed by the volunteers. Local television is regularly broadcasting video-documentaries on the prevention of water-borne disease and importance of proper hygiene and sanitation, produced as part of the efforts to disseminate public health messages throughout the country. They also aim at raising the visibility of the National Society in its efforts, as well as for one of its main donors for this specific operational component.

Water and Sanitation (objective 5) •

The water and sanitation project in Kabadian, in the southern region of Khatlon, is in its final stages as the technical problems encountered in the testing phase have been resolved. The replacement of old pipes will start in the coming month, and the project is expected to be completed by the end of July. Once completed, it will provide some 20,000 inhabitants of six neighbouring villages with safe drinking water.

Following the needs assessment carried out in the previous month, the Federation has elaborated a series of small-scale projects in Sughd, Kulyab, as well as the Rayons of Republican Subordination (RRS) around the capital Dushanbe. The projects are divided in two groups: the first one aims at rehabilitating existing water-supply systems in selected communities, including replacement of submersible pumps, spring catchments, and gravity pipelines. The community will be directly involved in the implementation of projects through provision of labour and a small fee for part of the costs, as per specific agreements with community leaders. The second set of projects will address the needs for the restoration of water and sanitation systems in five social institutions. Longer-term financial and other benefits of these projects for the communities will be explored.

RCST Capacity Building (objective 6) •

Through equal and active partnership in the management of the drought relief operation, RCST has developed its disaster-response capacity in a number of areas. Regional branches of the National Society appointed co-ordinators for specific operational components, such as health and water and sanitation, relief and logistics, who are directly responsible for planning and supervision of the implementation of respective objectives. More than 300 Red Crescent volunteers were identified and trained to carry out health campaigns, food distributions, as well as pre- and post-distribution monitoring. Additional training has been provided by the Federation and RCST headquarters on logistics, relief, warehousing, and other operational aspects. In all types of training, the “better programming initiative” (BPI) methodology is being used, based on recommendations of an earlier BPI mission to Tajikistan carried out in November 2000 in order to link certain aspects of the relief operation with the longer-term community and organizational developments. Finally, through active involvement in the operation, respective Red Crescent branches considerably improved their skills in relief activities carried out alongside the Federation.

Special emphasis is being put on identifying a long-term approach to the maintenance of the National Society’s active volunteer-base. Plans are currently underway to create a core-group of volunteers in the sphere of health and disaster preparedness, who will be active on a regional basis after the completion of the emergency operation. As part of this initiative, five first-aid seminars will be organized for 45 selected volunteers (15 per region), to provide them with additional skills to better respond to health needs in their communities. The seminars will be carried out by the RCST first-aid team.

As part of the efforts to develop RCST disaster-preparedness (DP) capacity, the Federation, in close co-operation with nutritionists from *Action Against Hunger*, carried out a seminar dedicated to major health aspects of DP. The topics included nutrition, water-borne diseases, breast feeding and weaning. A total of 17 nurses and midwives - RCST volunteers - participated in the workshop. The next round of training is planned for the end of May. Furthermore, the RCST DP team carried out six workshops for the National Society’s regional and district branches on emergency assessment and response. The workshops followed a vulnerability survey of branches, on the basis of which the selection of most disaster-prone areas was made.

Strengthening of the RCST image and visibility (objective 7) •

This operation has provided RCST with a high level of visibility both with the government and local authorities, and with the general public. This has been achieved through signing of implementation agreements with the authorities on division of responsibilities in this operation. Furthermore, the media coverage of RCST and Federation’s public health activities, as well as volunteer campaigns in communities and institutions further contribute to the National Society’s visibility raising. Health information material, produced by the RCST is disseminated throughout the country, not only by volunteers but also through other international and local humanitarian organizations. Partnerships with other organizations such as the WFP co-operation agreement allowed the RCST to further strengthen its position on the local humanitarian scene.

Outstanding needs

The revised goal of assisting 130,000 people with supplementary food will have been fully achieved by the end of the operation. The health and water and sanitation activities are underway thanks to the support of the Swedish and Canadian Red Cross Societies respectively. Moreover, a recent DFID pledge will allow the Federation and RCST to provide some 6,000 beneficiaries with wheat seeds for the coming winter planting season. In this respect, a relief delegate with an agricultural background will be needed to implement this operational component in co-operation with the National Society's relief team.

The announced review of the Federation's 2000-2001 drought response in Tajikistan as well as results of the inter-agency assessments of the current crop and food supply will determine any eventual future needs for assistance.

External relations - Government/UN/NGOs/Media

Media mobilization continued throughout the reporting period, aiming at raising public awareness, both on the regional and international level, of the needs for assistance to the drought-affected population in Tajikistan, as well as strengthening the image and profile of RCST in this operation. A number of news stories were published on the Federation's web site, and several international news agencies' visits were facilitated (from Netherlands and Sweden). The local television broadcasted public health messages throughout the country, in the context of the Federation's health campaign.

Local and international fundraising efforts, as well as inter-agency co-ordination meetings are ongoing. Apart from the implementation agreement with WFP, the Federation is closely cooperating with other agencies on various aspects of the operation, such as Action Against Hunger in the context of volunteer-training on nutrition and other topics. Operational agreements with local authorities introduce a community-based dimension to the operation, but also ensure higher visibility of the National Society vis-a-vis the government.

Contributions

See Annex 1 for details.

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This and other reports on Federation operations are available on the Federation's website: <http://www.ifrc.org>

Tajikistan drought						ANNEX 1
APPEAL No. 26/2000						PLEDGES RECEIVED
						21.05.2001
DONOR	CATEGORY	QUANTITY	UNIT	VALUE CHF	DATE	COMMENT
CASH						
REQUESTED IN APPEAL CHF ----->				22'557'278		TOTAL COVERAGE 43.1%
AMERICAN - GOVT		8'656	USD	14'823	19.09.00	
BRITISH GOVT/DFID		476'196	GBP	1'147'632	30.03.01	
CANADA - GOVT		108'900	CAD	119'964	19.12.00	AS PER DISTRIBUTION AGREEMENT
CANADA - GOVT/CIDA		146'500	CAD	158'586	15.02.01	AS PER DISTRIBUTION AGREEMENT
DANISH - RC		231'250	DKK	47'314	16.10.00	
ECHO/GERMAN - RC /17003		700'000	EUR	1'076'880	29.01.01	FOOD ASSISTANCE
FINNISH - RC		67'275	EUR	102'783	05.10.00	
FINNISH - RC		13'259	EUR	20'398	06.02.01	
FINNISH - RC		6'186	EUR	9'517	08.02.01	PSC
GERMAN - GOVT		448'000	DEM	349'933	20.10.00	FOOD SUPPLIES
ICELANDIC - RC		200'000	ISK	4'295	25.09.00	
JAPANESE - RC		10'000'000	JPY	156'610	26.09.00	
KOREA, REPUBLIC - RC				50'000	05.12.00	
KUWAIT - RC		10'000	USD	17'735	01.11.00	
MONACO - RC		50'000	FRF	11'645	19.09.00	
SWEDISH - RC		2'600'000	SEK	473'200	03.10.00	HEALTH & WATER/SANITATION
SWEDISH - GOVT		10'000'000	SEK	1'761'000	18.12.00	
UNITED ARAB EMIRATES - RC		5'000	USD	8'868	05.10.00	
WORLD FOOD PROGRAMME		123'364	USD	200'836	24.01.01	FOOD ASSISTANCE
SUB/TOTAL RECEIVED IN CASH				5'732'019	CHF	25.4%
KIND AND SERVICES (INCLUDING PERSONNEL)						
DONOR	CATEGORY	QUANTITY	UNIT	VALUE CHF	DATE	COMMENT
BELGIUM - RC		1'000'000	BEF	37'734	15.12.00	20 MT VEGETABLE OIL, 20 MT WHEAT FLOUR, TRANSPORTATION AND INSURANCE
FINNISH - GOVT/RC		304'735	EUR	468'804	06.02.01	682 MT WHEAT FLOUR, 128'800 L. OIL
FINNISH - RC		792'296	FIM	204'967	08.02.01	36'785 KG SECOND HAND CLOTHES, TRANSPORT/INSURANCE
IRANIAN - RC		12'250	USD	21'725	17.10.00	WHEAT FLOUR, EDIBLE OIL
SWEDISH - RC	DELEGATE(S)	400'000	SEK	72'800	03.10.00	HEALTH & WATER/SANITATION DELEGATE
NETHERLANDS	DELEGATE(S)			25'000		
CANADA	DELEGATE(S)	91'000	CAD	101'010		CANCROSS INFO 25/4/01
GREAT BRITAIN	DELEGATE(S)			40'000		
GERMANY	DELEGATE(S)			30'000		
FINLAND	DELEGATE(S)			30'000		
WORLD FOOD PROGRAM		1'937'925	EUR	2'969'153	24.01.01	5'574 MT WHEAT FLOUR, 279 MT VEGETABLE OIL, 98 MT SALT
SUB/TOTAL RECEIVED IN KIND/SERVICES				4'001'193	CHF	17.7%
ADDITIONAL TO APPEAL BUDGET						
DONOR	CATEGORY	QUANTITY	UNIT	VALUE CHF	DATE	COMMENT
SUB/TOTAL RECEIVED				0	CHF	
THE FOLLOWING PROJECTS ARE LINKED TO THIS APPEAL:						
PTJ527						