

SUDAN: DROUGHT

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The Red Sea Hills area of North-eastern Sudan has long been prone to drought. For the last two years there has been negligible rainfall, severely affecting the population of 250,000, most of whom are nomads and rely on seasonal water beds for animal husbandry. Crops have also failed, leading to food shortages.

A recent assessment, carried out by a number of agencies including the Sudanese Red Crescent, has targeted 110,000 people at risk and in need of food aid. The price of grain has rocketed and state-subsidised sorghum, at 24,000 Sudanese pounds per sack, is still beyond the reach of the majority of the population.

Among the at-risk group, according to the inter-agency assessment carried out in late June and early July, are 10,000 women and children, many of whom are showing signs of severe malnutrition. The Government of Sudan has issued a request for NGOs and UN agencies to assist the affected population in Red Sea Hills. Local authorities are presently giving some food aid through the Zakat Charitable Popular Committees.

Prior to launching an appeal, the Federation is considering sending a multi-disciplinary team to conduct an in-depth survey, looking at nutritional, health and water aspects, as well as an information specialist, and present a case for international aid.

Conversely, heavy flooding in other parts of Sudan has led to the Federation releasing money from its Disaster Response Emergency Fund in recent weeks.