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Emergency appeal operation update Namibia: Drought

 International Federation
of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

Emergency appeal n° MDRNA008

GLIDE n° DR-2013-000062-NAM

Operation update n°1

15 July 2013

Period covered by this Ops Update: 28 June to 12 July

Appeal target: This Emergency Appeal seeks CHF 1,372,054 in cash, kind, or services to support the Namibia Red Cross Society (NRCS) to assist 55,000 beneficiaries (11,000 households) in four northern regions (Kavango, Ohangwena, Oshikoto and Kunene) that have been severely affected by drought. This Appeal is for 12 months and will be completed by June 2014.

Appeal coverage: 4 % [<click here for the updated donor response report, or here for contact details >](#)



A Himba man eats a meal, Kunene, in northern Namibia (Source: IFRC)

Appeal history:

- **An Emergency Appeal** was launched on 28 June 2013, following the National State of Emergency issued by the Government of Namibia in May.
- CHF 150,000 was allocated from the IFRC's Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF) to support the National Society to start up activities and the provision of immediate assistance.
- This operations update provides additional information on the humanitarian situation, observed in the time since publishing the Emergency Appeal.

Summary

Namibia, with its population of 2.1 million, is a semi-arid desert country, and is the driest country in sub-Saharan Africa. The agricultural sector accounts for only 5.6% of the GDP although 70% of the population works within this sector (communal and commercial). Whilst there is generally strong national economic growth, there are high levels of poverty, high unemployment (37%) and unequal distribution of wealth and income (inequality of wealth and access to services in Namibia is amongst the highest in the world).

The country received below average and erratic rainfall for the early part of the 2012-13 rainy season. The period from January to March 2013 was dominated by very hot and dry conditions over the greater part of Namibia, with patches of moderate rainfall only in the north-eastern parts of the country (Caprivi and Kavango regions). The rainfall over the greater part of Namibia depicts meteorological drought conditions. The low and erratic rainfall season has produced insufficient pasture to support the current number of livestock.

According to the Government's Crop Prospects and Food Security Situation Report of March 2013, harvest for 2012-13 will be significantly below average as drought conditions intensify. The total national maize output is estimated to be 34% below the five-year average output; production of maize compared to the last season has reduced by 15.2% and 53.3% for communal and commercial maize respectively. In the northern communal areas, where the vast majority of people live, livelihoods depend on livestock and crop farming.

Cattle prices have been declining since December 2012, and the trend is expected to continue as grazing resources diminish.

A national state of emergency was issued by the Government of Namibia on 17 May 2013 seeking for international assistance for the estimated 331,000 people in rural communities classified as food insecure (14% of the total population of Namibia).

To support the government call of emergency assistance, the Namibia Red Cross Society (NRCS) launched an appeal to intervene in four of the worst affected regions. This Emergency Appeal responds to a request from the NRCS and provides support to take appropriate and timely action by delivering assistance in the following sectors; Water and Sanitation, Food Security, Nutrition and Livelihoods.

So far, CAD 55,000 and SKR 700,000 have been pledged from Canadian Red Cross and Swedish Red Cross respectively. The British Red Cross has provided support to undertake a Household Economic Security Assessment, and a WASH assessment is being undertaken by the Rapid Assessment Team of the Global WASH cluster. Positive indications for support towards the operations have been given by the American Red Cross, as the severity of the situation is acknowledged.

The situation

Further to the analysis provided in the Emergency Appeal, a recent field visit to the affected locations was undertaken by a joint team of IFRC and NRCS. This team visited new settlements of recent migrations near towns, semi-permanent settlements near towns, rural schools, female-headed households, and the outposts where men are staying with the remaining cattle. Based on rapid household interviews, it was noted that in regions other than Kunene, the drought is aggravating a structural deficiency, particularly by weakening existing coping mechanisms. People who are relatively better off are no longer sharing resources with those worse off, pushing those people further into destitution. The households that were visited in these regions are not dependent on livestock or crops, so the drought is having a knock-on effect rather than a direct one. Kunene is very different, as livelihoods depend on livestock and crops, and the effects were more evident.

Main issues/observations from the field visit are highlighted as below:

- People state that there have been three bad years, and particularly the last two years have been very difficult. In some places that have received no rain at all this year, people did not even plant.
- No one remembers a drought of this severity in their lifetimes. In rural/pastoralist areas, people have no livelihood options other than livestock and crops and therefore the situation will get progressively worse.
- Loss of cattle (previously, the average household would own approximately 50 cows, now most families claimed they had lost them all). People claimed cattle had been sent long distances in search of water and grazing and had died en-route.
- Dependency on remaining goats. People reported that more and more goats were falling sick. People are selling goats in exchange for maize and herds are depleting.
- The main coping strategy is to reduce food intake. People described reducing food intake to one meal per day – comprising maize only.
- Some children appeared anaemic and showed signs of protein-energy malnutrition
- Vulnerability appeared to be consistent from household to household, with every one reducing food intake.
- Food until the next rains was the priority request from all people interviewed. All also consistently claimed that they would be able to cope from April next year providing the rains are good.

Further assessments on WASH (Water, Sanitation and Hygiene) led by the WASH cluster's Rapid Assessment Team and a Household Economic Security Assessment supported by the British Red Cross are currently underway. These will provide vital and concrete information and analysis.

Coordination and partnerships

The recent visit of the IFRC Regional Representative for Southern Africa to Namibia reinforces the commitment of the NRCS to respond to the current emergency. Meetings were held with UN Resident Coordinator, USAID and EU Ambassador. The NRCS continues to co-ordinate with all the stakeholders and the Government.

Other coordination measures remain the same as reported in the Emergency Appeal.

Red Cross and Red Crescent action

Overview

CHF 150,000 has also been allocated from the DREF to the current Emergency Appeal to allow the NRCS to commence relief activities and provide assistance to some of the most vulnerable communities.

Following an RDRT (Regional Disaster Response Team) alert, an RDRT delegate has been positioned in Windhoek and will provide surge capacity support in operationalizing this response. A WASH assessment has been commissioned and is being led by the WASH cluster, and a Household Economic Security Assessment is being undertaken in the target regions.

So far, CAD 55,000 and SEK 700,000 have been pledged from Canadian Red Cross and Swedish Red Cross respectively. The British Red Cross has provided support to undertake a Household Economic Security Assessment, and a WASH assessment is being undertaken by the Rapid Assessment Team of the Global WASH cluster. Positive indications for support towards the operations have been given by the American Red Cross, as the severity of the situation is acknowledged. Discussions are currently taken place with ECHO.

The needs

The needs largely remain the same as presented in the emergency appeal, however on-going detailed assessments may present further analysis on specific needs of the vulnerable population groups and gaps in current programming.

Progress towards outcomes

Food security, nutrition and livelihoods	
Outcome 1: At least 2,000 Orphan and Vulnerable children, disabled and elderly people have improved access to sufficient nutrition food in the targeted areas for up to six months	
Outputs (expected results)	Planned activities
Integrated needs assessment and baseline completed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Designing of methodology and questionnaires for integrated WASH, Food Security and Nutrition assessment Household Economy Security technical support 40 volunteers are trained to assist government for targeting and food distribution (10 in each affected area)
Provide cooked meals at the four regional soup kitchens to 2,000 of the most vulnerable individuals in the four regions for six months (two times a day).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support 2000 individuals (500 most vulnerable individuals each in the four regions). Procure cooking materials for each kitchen in each region. These will include 2 big pots, one stove with two plates, 500 plates, 5 washing dishes and 500 spoons per region. Procure foods items for soup kitchen (Maize meal 176.4 MT, Beans 3.15 MT, Fish 1.6 MT, Beef 1.6 MT, cooking oil 1.6 MT and vegetable 5.25 MT) The ratio was calculated using standard calculator. Train 40 volunteers (10 per region) in food preparation 10 volunteers cook and provide meals to beneficiaries per region
Strengthen and establish a total of	

<p>four kitchen gardens for supporting feeding scheme</p> <p>4 regions = 4 kitchens = feeding 2,000 in total (500 per kitchen)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish one community group (fifteen members per group) per garden that will work on the gardens entailing beneficiaries of the feeding schemes. If necessary, gardening activities will start November and December during rainfall season. The community groups will also benefit from the tanks to be provided all though the gardens will be next to river or water points. • Give one training and follow up support to each community groups on gardening (soil preparation, compost making, planting, pest and diseases control, watering and harvesting) • Procure vegetable seeds for the gardens (including Cabbages, Tomatoes, Lettuce, Rape, Carrot, Beetroots, Spinach, Onion and Green peppers), 350 kg per community group. • Procure tools that will be used in the gardens (8 watering cans, 8 digging forks, 8 rakes, 3 spraying cans, 5 spades, 3 wheelbarrows, 15 gloves, 2 generators, 4 roles of steel wires, 2 roles of soft wires, 2 roles of diamond wire, 56 poles, 2 gates, 25 cement, 4 black pipes, 4 tanks and tank stands each garden) • Procure other gardening inputs such fertilizers and weed killers • Support soil preparation, planting, weeding, disease and pest control and harvesting by NRCS volunteers and Government extension workers
<p>Outcome 2: At least 80 per cent of under 5 children have access to community based nutrition and during the drought emergency in four northern regions of Namibia</p>	
<p>Outputs (expected results)</p> <p>80% of households with mothers and caregivers of children under 5 years of age receive nutrition education and counselling and hygiene promotion</p> <p>100% of children under 5 years from the target regions, identified as being severely malnourished are referred to health facility services for management and treatment</p> <p>Community demand for maternal, infant and young child nutrition</p>	<p>Activities planned</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct a minimum of two TOTs in C-IYCF, acute malnutrition screening and WASH hygiene promotion (PHAST) for 350 volunteers • Cascade C-IYCF, acute malnutrition screening and hygiene promotion to health volunteers in Kavango, Ohangwena, Oshikoto and Kunene regions. Target 80% (280) of 350 volunteers over 12 month period. • Develop a household monitoring and record keeping template for use by 350 trained health volunteers • Develop and set up strong referral linkages to existing health facilities implementing the Nutrition, Assessment, Counselling and Support (NACS) programme. • Develop a referral tool that links pregnant and lactating women, infants and young children to health facilities for treatment and management of severe acute malnutrition. • Orientate Government Health Committees including the Regional Aids Coordinating Committee (RACOC) and Constituency Aids Coordinating Committee (CACOC) in the target regions on the expanded scope of practice of health volunteers
<p>Outcome 3: Reduced food insecurity among 4,000 affected rural households through inputs, support and training.</p>	
<p>Outputs (expected results)</p> <p>4,000 households provided with seeds and 150 lead farmers trained in good farming practices and provided with fertiliser</p>	<p>Planned Activities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Carry out continuous assessments of food security, nutrition and livelihoods • Identify 150 lead farmers (37 per region) • Distribute maize and pearl millet (mahangu) seeds to 4,000 and 2,000 households respectively and fertilizers to 150 lead farmers. (25 kg of maize seed, 25 kg of mahangu seed per household and 50kg of fertilizer per lead farmer) for a field of up to 4 ha. • Distribution of tools to 4,000 households (each household will receive one hoe). • Community sensitization and training on best agricultural practices • Identification of drought tolerant crop varieties • Train 150 lead farmers in conservation agriculture and usage of drought tolerant, early maturing crops varieties and introduction to livestock and rangeland management

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Four training in seed selection and preservation for 300 follower farmers conducted by lead farmers. • Conduct a training on post harvesting and storage handling training for 150 lead farmers • Seed multiplication demonstration • Monitoring of progress for the targeted farmers by NRCS regional officer and extension technicians. DRR and Monitoring and Evaluation coordinators will conduct quarterly field visits for monitoring purpose.
Water, sanitation, and hygiene promotion	
Outcome 4: 11,000 families have access to safe and clean water for emergency domestic and livestock consumption.	
Outputs (expected results)	Planned Activities
85% of target beneficiaries reports access and use of safe drinking water	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Distribution of water purification tablets to 11,000 households • Distribution of jerry cans to 11,000 households • Training of 11,000 households on use of water purification tablets at time of distribution and in follow up home visits. • Distribution of plastic water tanks (5,000L) for 24 community groups, Directorate of Water Supply, Sanitation and Coordination will be filling water in the tanks
Increased access to water for livestock.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rehabilitate 5 water points
Outcome 5: Increased hygiene knowledge for community members in the targeted areas	
Outputs (expected results)	Planned Activities
Hygiene promotion activities which meet Sphere standards in terms of the identification and use of hygiene items provided to target population.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training 350 volunteers in hygiene promotion using PHAST. • Community education on hygiene promotion • Provide hygiene kits to volunteers
Outcome 6: To provide access 450 individuals to sanitation facilities in relocation areas of San communities in Oshikoto region	
Outputs (expected results)	Planned Activities
85% target population reports access and regular use of sanitation facilities provided	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Train 15 volunteers in emergency latrine construction • Consultation with affected population to determine latrine design and location • Construct 22 latrines at a camp for 450 relocated individuals • Awareness raising on the use of the latrine by NRCS volunteers

Progress and Challenges:

As the operation has only recently been initiated, assessment and planning activities are underway. A draft plan of action (PoA) is being prepared and will be shared internally for feedback and will be ready for publishing shortly.

Communications – Advocacy and Public Information

Considering limited presence of humanitarian agencies and funding in Namibia and NRCS being one of the very few actors directly undertaking an operational response to the current emergency it is considered important to take a proactive role to highlight the situation of the affected population groups to the various humanitarian stakeholders both within and outside Namibia. To this end, the appeal was formally launched in Namibia which was attended by Office of Prime Minister, Ministry of Agriculture, various embassies, and was shown on evening news and reported in all national newspapers, was followed by various TV interviews. Regular updates by the IFRC and NRCS are also being provided on ReliefWeb.

Contact information

For further information specifically related to this operation please contact:

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How we work

All IFRC assistance seeks to adhere to the Code of Conduct for the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) in Disaster Relief and the Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Disaster Response (Sphere) in delivering assistance to the most vulnerable.

The IFRC's vision is to inspire, encourage, facilitate and promote at all times all forms of humanitarian activities by National Societies, with a view to preventing and alleviating human suffering, and thereby contributing to the maintenance and promotion of human dignity and peace in the world.

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1. Save lives, protect livelihoods, and strengthen recovery from disaster and crises.
2. Enable healthy and safe living.
3. Promote social inclusion and a culture of non-violence and peace.