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Emergency appeal operation update Namibia Drought: Food Insecurity

 International Federation
of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

Emergency Appeal n° MDRNA009		GLIDE n°: DR-2015-000130-NAM
EA Operations Update no. 3		Timeframe covered by this update: October 2015 – March 2016
Operation manager (responsible for this EPoA): Naemi Heita, Disaster Risk Management Coordinator, IFRC, Southern Africa.		Point of contact (name and title): Ms Dorkas Kapembe-Haiduwa, Secretary General
Operation start date: October 2015		Expected timeframe: 7 months (October 2015 – April 2016)
Overall operation budget: CHF 950,205	Appeal coverage: 15 %	Revised timeframe: 10 months (October 2015 – July 2016)
Number of people affected: 580,000		Number of people to be assisted: 11,500 (3,200 households)
Host National Society presence (n° of volunteers, staff, branches): Namibia Red Cross Society Headquarters and 2 Regional Branches of Kunene and Kavango, (5 fulltime, 4 support staff, 40 volunteers)		
Red Cross Red Crescent Movement partners actively involved in the operation: The Spanish Red Cross is assisting in country at HQ-level to prepare proposals for recovery in drought-affected regions while the IFRC Pretoria Cluster Office is providing technical support.		
Other partner organizations actively involved in the operation: Government of Namibia through the Office of the Prime Minister, the Ministry of Agriculture, Water and Forestry, the Ministry of Health and Social Services, and the Regional Councils of Kunene and Kavango. Traditional Authorities and faith-based organisations are also providing support to local operations.		

This operations update seeks a **3 months extension** to evaluate the increasing needs and to take into account the current revision of the regional strategy to respond to the food insecurity in the region.

Appeal History:

This Emergency Appeal (**Appeal n° MDRNA009**) was launched on 30 September 2015, **950,205 Swiss franc** support to the Namibia Red Cross Society (NRCS) to enable them reach 3,200 households (11,500 individuals) through short and medium-term humanitarian interventions. Programmes were designed to be implemented over 7 month period and sought to address immediate food security and water requirements through emergency assistance provision, long-term livelihoods support through community gardens development, sustainable water access through spring and borehole cleaning/creation and hygiene promotion.

One hundred thousand one hundred and thirty seven (100,137) Swiss franc was initially allocated from the Federation's Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF) to support the National Society begin immediate operations. However, partially due to the drought not being declared a national disaster by the Namibian government, the Appeal has received limited attention and funding. This has negatively impacted initial operations. As such, the intervention has been able to only cater for 1,200 beneficiaries with emergency food assistance provision and delayed in commencing water point rehabilitation projects.

At time of writing, the Appeal remains significantly underfunded, having received only 15% coverage. The IFRC, on behalf of NRCS, would like to thank the Canadian Red Cross, Japanese Red Cross Society, Red Cross of Monaco, and the Netherlands Red Cross for supporting the Appeal thus far. However, the Federation is appealing to all distinguished donors to support this EA in order to enable the NRCS provide the much-needed support required by drought-affected communities. This is particularly important given the shifting realities on the ground and increasing needs of the affected population.

Due to erratic rainfall during the planting season, a number of households in the initial target regions are expected to face further food security risks. Combined with the delayed commencement of emergency operations, the NRCS is requesting a 3-month extension of the EA to allow continuation of already existing soup kitchens for 3 months. The National Society has been receiving in-kind food donations from local companies and still awaiting for a few more soft pledges.

Summary:

Between October 2014 and February 2015, Namibia experienced highly erratic rainfall patterns that negatively impacted the planting and cultivation seasons. Prolonged dry spells and extensive flooding characterized this period and resulted in delayed planting and destroyed crops. As a result, the 2014/15 crop production yields were 46 % below average (NAMVAC 2015), which put parts of country at high risk of food insecurity. Additionally, the drought forced many to adopt negative coping strategies in order to access water, including collecting water from unprotected sources. This put affected populations at risk of contracting waterborne diseases, which, if left unattended, may have negatively affect public health. The emergency also disproportionately affected the livelihoods and nutritional status of highly vulnerable individuals, including the elderly, orphaned and vulnerable children, and those living with HIV. Thus, the situation necessitated a concerted response from the Movement and as such, prompted the NRCS to connect with the IFRC Southern Africa Regional Office to design an Emergency Plan of Action (EPoA). The EPoA was developed in August 2015 and launched in September 2015.

Coordination and partnerships

Overview of Red Cross Red Crescent actors in-country

At present, only the Spanish Red Cross Society (SRCS) is present in Namibia as a Partner National Society (PNS). In relation to the response, the SRCS is working with the NRCS to develop Disaster Risk Reduction and Recovery proposals that target the regions outlined in the EPoA but is limited in its engagement with actual response operations. However, the SRCS is funding the Livelihoods and Food Security (LFS) program in 2 (Kavango and Zambezi) regions that have been targeted by the EPoA - which helps to supplement the strengthening of food security in those areas.

Movement Coordination

The NRCS works closely with the SRCS to ensure coordinated implementation of the operation and to explore opportunities for integration with the existing LFS programme. Currently, updates and plans are being shared with Movement partners to explore further support and possibilities through the SRCS and the country embassy office. The SRCS has donated Open Data Kit (ODK) and Mega V to the NRCS and has provided a Delegate to support scaling up its application and use in the field. This donation covered the planned procurement of these items in the initial Appeal. Response coordination is done through quarterly meetings and, when the need arises, emergency steering committee meetings.

To bolster awareness for the emergency situation and garner public financing for the Appeal, in March 2016 the NRCS welcomed a Communications Delegate from the Norwegian Red Cross Society. The Communications Delegate visited the regions affected by the drought and was shown the soup kitchen operations. She is in the final stages of producing the mission's deliverables and will share the communications materials and stories widely once they have been completed. Additionally in March 2016, the NRCS, in collaboration with the SRCS, developed 2 concept notes related to livelihoods programming that aimed to implement resilience and recovery projects within the affected areas. At time of writing, no feedback has been provided regarding the status of applications.

To bolster financing for the Appeal, the NRCS has held discussions with the Canadian, German and Dutch Red Cross Societies. As well, the NRCS is planning to launch the "Namibians for Namibians" campaign, which saw initial success during the drought Appeal in 2013. The official launch is scheduled for 13 April,

2016, however some initial in-country support has already been received. So far, N\$10,000 from Namwater and 12,000 tins of fish (equivalent to N\$140,000) from the Namsov Trust have been donated to the response effort. As well, 2 pledges have been made to the NRCS in the form of N\$100,000 from the FNB Foundation and N\$130,000 worth of food items from Pupkewitz Foundation.

Regarding capacity building, the NRCS' Disaster Risk Reduction Coordinator participated in the IFRC Africa Zone's *EPoA and Contingency Planning workshop* held on 14-18 March 2016. The workshop sought to build the capacity of participating NSs in EPoA preparation and reporting. As such, the NRCS has an increased capacity to submit timely EPoA applications and strong reports.

Overview of non-Red Cross Red Crescent actors in-country

The NRCS officially launched the local Appeal in October 2015, in consultation with local partners including UN, government, regional councils and NGOs. It participates in government-led reviews of the drought response (organised by the Directorate of Disaster Risk Management in the Office of the Prime Minister) and provides updates on the status of implementation of the EPoA. The NRCS also participates in food security monitoring and reporting at the local levels.

In 2015, the Namibian Government launched a comprehensive drought response program designed to assist affected communities with dry food rations and water provision until the end of March 2016. Throughout the response, the government has provided drought relief to an estimated 370,316 people across the country. Additionally, the South African government has provided in-kind drought response support worth 100 million NAD in the form of food assistance (maize meal) and borehole drilling (104 boreholes). The Namibian Government has also received 700 metric tonnes (MT) of maize grain, 30 MT of rice and 3 MT of fish and fish powder from the Federal Republic of Nigeria. It is unclear whether further assistance provision will extend beyond March 2016.

Perhaps owing to the fact that the government has not declared a drought emergency, there has been limited engagement by other humanitarian agencies throughout the response. There has also been very limited coordination and information sharing between the NRCS and other humanitarian partners such as the World Food Program (WFP), Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), and UNICEF, despite the major roles these agencies played in the 2013 drought response. Despite these realities, the NRCS continues to work towards engagement and coordination with its in-country partners. Of note, UNICEF has provided Middle Upper Arm Circumference tapes to the NRCS, which has enabled the National Society to conduct MUAC measurements regularly during food distributions at soup kitchens.

In order to raise awareness and visibility of NRCS operations, the Humanitarian Diplomacy/Communications (HD) Department conducted a week-long media tour with local journalists to visit the operation's soup kitchens. Local papers ran several stories on the response effort and the HD/Communications Department produced a number of articles for the IFRC available at www.ifrc.org/africa.

Operational implementation

The NRCS is assisting 1,200 food insecure people in Kunene and Kavango regions as well as implementing water rehabilitation activities in Kunene through the following outcomes:

Quality programming / Areas common to all sectors

Outcome 1: NRCS effectively implements the operation and improves their presence and communication within the affected communities

Output 1.1 The operation is informed by 2-way communication with the community

To inform the planned response, an operations assessment was conducted in December 2015 and commenced with consultation meetings involving the Kunene and Kavango Regional Councils. Following these consultations, community members and volunteers were mobilized to assist in the operational fieldwork. To date, 40 volunteers - 20 from Kunene and 20 from Kavango have been sensitized on the operational approach as well as criteria for beneficiary selection. Furthermore volunteers were trained in record keeping to ensure accurate data collection from the soup kitchens, how to conduct MUAC tests in

order to monitor and screen children for malnutrition, and the effective use of the Mega V and ODK equipment donated by the SRCS. NRCS staff as well as the Secretary General of the NRCS also received training in ODK and Mega V.

Output 1.2 The visibility of the NRCS is improved

To increase the operation's visibility, the NRCS conducted a media tour in February 2016. Field visits were conducted with local journalists and led by the NRCS' Humanitarian Diplomacy/Communications Manager and the Secretary General. The media tour was aimed at highlighting the food insecurity situation in Kavango, Kunene, Oshikoto, Ohangwena and Zambezi regions targeted through EPoA. From this, a number of stories were published in the local newspapers and on the IFRC website. A second media tour was conducted for a Communications Specialist from the Norwegian Red Cross Society, which sought to highlight the drought's impact on crops as well as profile the NRCS' soup kitchen operations in Kavango region. The stories and communications materials developed as result of this mission are in the final stages of development and will be shared widely once they have been completed. Finally, to increase the visibility the operation, the NRCS procured t-shirts, overalls, aprons, and bibs for volunteers working at the soup kitchens in Kunene and Kavango.

Food security, nutrition and livelihoods

Outcome 2: Immediate food needs of 3,600 beneficiaries are met

Output 2.1: 720 households / 3,600 beneficiaries receive daily meals from soup kitchens

Since October 2015, a total of 1,185 people have been assisted in Kunene (562) and Kavango (623) through daily meals provision offered every day except Sunday. Despite these gains, this figure represents only 33% of the initial target of 3,600 beneficiaries. This result is a result of limited funding, which has been used to support 4 soup kitchens out of the 12 originally proposed; Kavango (2), Kunene (4), Oshikoto (2), Ohangwena (2) and Zambezi (2). At this point in implementation it was expected that 170,640 meals would have been served, however, to date only 21,087 have been served.

Further challenges have been experienced throughout implementation that has been useful in informing the future of the programme. First, in terms of access, populations in Kunene are highly migratory, which limits their accessibility to area-specific soup kitchen sites. Similarly, for some remote villages, the soup kitchens are located at too great a distance to access on a regular basis. Secondly, problems have arisen during periods where the government is engaged in drought relief distributions. The NRCS opines that because government assistance is designed to target an entire family it is preferable to the NRCS distributions that are designed to serve only registered members of a family.



Soup kitchen beneficiaries receive meals at Katutura site Kunene region. Picture/ NRCS

Outcome 3: Livelihoods among targeted population are improved & Outcome 4: Longer-term food insecurity among targeted population is reduced

Due to funding limitations, the national society made a decision to focus on a few soup kitchens, to avoid spreading resources too thin and be able support identified beneficiaries longer. The in kind donations sourced from local companies resulted in savings made on the operation, and the National society is proposing the extension of the emergency appeal with 3 more months to further continue operating soup kitchens. The beneficiaries remain vulnerable due to continuing drought in the country.

Water, health and hygiene promotion

Outcome 5: Reduction in risk of waterborne and water-related diseases in targeted communities

Output 5.1 800 families have access to safe and clean water for household and livestock consumption through community managed water sources.

Due to funding constraints, the NRCS prioritised food assistance in the rollout of the initial response operation. As such, water point rehabilitation was delayed until sufficient funding was received to ensure that soup kitchens would not be interrupted. So the national society commenced water point rehabilitation in Kunene in March 2016. Kunene was targeted for initial programming, as it has been the region hardest hit by the drought. To date, 6 water points (out of the 10 targeted) in Kunene have been rehabilitated in collaboration with the local communities and the Ministry of Agriculture, Water and Forestry. Rehabilitation of the remaining four water points is on going.



Community water tank for rehabilitation. Photo NRCS

Output 5.2: Hygiene promotional activities are conducted with the affected communities.

To promote safe hygiene practices, the NRCS delivers Water and Sanitation (WASH) education at soup kitchens during food distributions.

This approach helps reduce the potential for communicable disease transmission and infection by ensuring that safe hygiene is practiced prior to eating. An estimated 1,185 beneficiaries in Kunene and Kavango have been reached this way and volunteers continue to engage with beneficiaries.



An NRCS volunteer teaches hand washing to a beneficiary of the food assistance programme at Opuwo office soup kitchen. Photo : NRCS

Overview of the NRCS overall planned interventions and progress.

At present, Appeal coverage has only reached 15%, which has significantly impacted the implementation of the intervention's work plan. As such, priority was assigned to food assistance operations initially and water rehabilitation has only recently begun. The National Society is currently carrying out activities in Kunene and Kavango.

A detailed summary of progress made thus far is outlined below:

PLANNED INTERVENTIONS
Quality programming / Areas common to all sectors
Outcome 1: NRCS effectively implements the operation and improves their presence and

communication within the affected communities		
Output	Activities planned	Progress
Output 1.1 The operation is informed by 2-way communication with the community.	Project initiation meeting with all Stakeholders	100%
	Conduct media tours and hold press conferences	100%
	<input type="checkbox"/> Initial assessments to identify water points and asses the market capacity	100%
	Procurement of visibility material (hats, t-shirts, and bibs)	100%
	Procure ODK equipment kit	100%
	ODK training	100%
	Beneficiary satisfaction survey using ODK	0%
	Establish beneficiary complaints and feedback mechanisms (Suggestion Boxes and Help desks)	100%
	Development of monitoring tools and systems	100%
	Post-feeding monitoring	0%
	Monthly and quarterly field visits.	60%
<input type="checkbox"/> Final evaluation and lessons learnt workshop with local stakeholders	0%	
Output 1.2 The visibility of the NRCS is improved.	Visibility items are procured for staff/volunteers	100%
	Media tour	100%
	Press releases conducted	10%
Food security, Nutrition and Livelihoods.		
Outcome 2: Immediate food needs of 3,600 beneficiaries in the affected regions are met		
Output	Activities planned	Progress
Output 2.1 720 households / 3,600 beneficiaries receive daily meals from soup kitchens	Selection and Registration of beneficiaries	100%
	Procure cooking materials for kitchens in each region.	20%
	Procure foods items for soup kitchen	Ongoing
	Establish structures in identified areas	100%
	Provide meals at soup kitchens	Ongoing
	Train volunteers in MUAC and referral systems	100%
	Conduct MUAC and refer to relevant agencies	Ongoing
Please note that the above progress refers only to Kunene and Kavango regions. No operations have yet been conducted In Oshikoto, Ohangwena and Zambezi		
Outcome 3: Livelihoods among targeted population are improved		
Output	Activities planned	Progress

Output 3.1 Agricultural production capacity is increased through provision of inputs and training to 1,100 farmers to improve food security of 5,500 people	Identify and train 100 lead farmers (20 per region) in conservation agriculture and usage of drought tolerant, early maturing crops varieties and introduction to livestock and rangeland management.	0%
	Cascading of trainings on best agricultural practices by lead farmers to 10 beneficiary farmers each reaching an additional 200 farmers	0%
	Cascading of training to a target of 300 farmers by lead farmers	0%
	Procure and distribute 25kg maize or 25kg of pearl millet/mahangu seeds to lead farmers for 1,100 farmers to cultivate a field of up to 4 ha.	0%
	Post-distribution seed monitoring to ensure relevance and timeliness	0%
	Establish farmer co-op to enhance coordination and share best practices	0%
Outcome 4: Longer-term food insecurity among targeted population is reduced.		
Output	Activities planned	Progress
Output 4.1: 25 community gardens are developed to provide nutritious food to 100 households/500beneficiaries	Establish households to participate in 5 community gardens per region	0%
	Provide community gardens with inputs.	0%
Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene promotion		
Outcome 5: Reduction in risk of waterborne and water related diseases in targeted communities		
Output	Activities planned	Progress
Output 5.1 800 families have access to safe and clean water for household and livestock consumption through community managed water sources.	Assessments to identify areas most in need of water point rehabilitation	100%
	Procurement of water point rehabilitation equipment	100%
	Rehabilitation of 10 water points	60%
	Establish and train water point committees in rehabilitation activities and cultivate ownership over the maintenance of water points	60 %
Output 5.2: Hygiene promotional activities are conducted with the affected communities.	Distribution of pre-positioned water purification tablets	60%
	Training volunteers in Hygiene Promotion	100%
	Development IEC materials on hygiene promotion	100%
	Conduct community hygiene promotion activities (including HIV and AIDS awareness) in conjunction with other planned operation activities	100%
Please note that the above progress refers only to Kunene and Kavango regions. No operations have yet been conducted In Oshikoto, Ohangwena and Zambezi		

Contact information

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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 Humanitarian 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.

The IFRC's work is guided by Strategy 2020 which puts forward three strategic aims:



Save lives.
protect livelihoods,
and strengthen recovery
from disaster and crises.



Enable **healthy**
and **safe** living.



Promote **social inclusion**
and a culture of
non-violence and **peace.**