

Zimbabwe: Food Insecurity

Report for the Jersey Overseas Aid Commission

Summary

An appeal was launched in September 2015 in response to the food insecurity caused by the slow onset of the rainy season which was followed by severe flooding that destroyed crops.

The slow onset of the rainy season and severe flooding was followed, and exacerbated, by a long dry spell, resulting in a crop yield below the 5 year average. The amount of rainfall received was inadequate to meet basic household consumption needs as well as support for livelihoods, agriculture and wildlife. The most affected sectors are food and nutrition, agriculture, water, education, health and wildlife.

Overall, the food insecure rural population has risen to 30% a significant increase compared to 16% that had been predicted by government during the peak lean season from January to March 2016.

Malnutrition remains a challenge especially in children under five. While the immediate needs of these households is food assistance, Zimbabwe Red Cross Society (ZRCS) proposes that any food assistance provided should be complemented by livelihood recovery interventions such as seed support, trainings in climate-smart agriculture practices, and water and sanitation activities.

Response of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement

Overview of Red Cross Red Crescent actors in-country

The Finnish, Norwegian and the Danish Red Cross have in-country presence in Zimbabwe and are supporting health, disaster management and organisational development programmes. ZRCS also receives bi-lateral support from the American and the British Red Cross which do not have representatives in the country. ZRCS and its Partner National Societies (PNS) maintain coordination through quarterly Movement Coordination Meetings and emergency steering committee meetings as, and when, the need arises.

Movement Coordination

ZRCS is working closely with in-country partners to ensure there is coordinated implementation of the operation. PNSs were consulted in the development of this appeal. The ZRCS and Danish Red Cross delegate conducted joint field monitoring and witnessed the cash transfers as well as the seed distributions in Muzarabani. In February 2016 the Danish Red Cross Secretary General and a Danish Red Cross back donor, together with International Federation of the Red Cross (IFRC) Disaster Risk Management Coordinator conducted field monitoring of the Muzarabani district, and witnessed cash transfer and had opportunity to interact with families benefiting from the Emergency Appeal.

The British Red Cross livelihoods advisor visited the ZRCS to assist in developing a Community Food Security and Livelihoods Resilience project proposal as well as developing relevant monitoring and evaluation tools to be implemented in Chipinge and Mwenezi districts.

Water Health and Hygiene Promotion

Key Achievements

- Rehabilitation or Repair of 29 Water Points
- 203 people (171 males and 32 females) from 29 water point committees received water point committee training.
- Participatory health and hygiene (PHHE) training to 23 volunteers (who are reaching approximately 2,300 people per month)
- An additional 10 volunteers currently undergoing training facilitated by the Ministry of Health staff.

A total of 29 water points against a target of 25 have been repaired and rehabilitated in Mudzi district. A total of 10 boreholes were completely rehabilitated whilst 19 were repaired.

13 of the rehabilitated water points had aprons constructed a total of 7 water troughs were also constructed. 203 people (171 males and 32 females) from 29 water point committees received the water point committee training.



People pump water from a bore hole IFRC©

In Muzarabani, a water point assessment was conducted identifying 5 water points in Maungaunga ward. Rehabilitation of boreholes has since started with one borehole having been completed.

Participatory health and hygiene (PHHE) training was also conducted, which saw 23 volunteers trained in hygiene promotion and nutrition.

Trained volunteers are carrying out awareness sessions and are reaching an estimated 2,300 people per month. The volunteer training in Muzarabani is on-going, there are 10 volunteers currently undertaking training.

Food Security, Nutrition and Livelihoods

Key Achievements

- 2,166 households are being assisted through mobile cash transfer
- 40 lead farmers have been trained: cascading skills and knowledge to 20 households each.
- 944 households received 5kgs maize seeds
- 1,222 families supported food need through livestock (goats)

There are 2,166 households being assisted through mobile cash transfer to meet their food needs for the lean period from January to April 2016.

In Mudzi each household has been receiving a total amount of USD 40.

So far three cash transfers have been conducted and two post distribution assessments have also been done in both districts. Highlights from the post distribution monitoring indicate that the money received in both districts was put to good use as families mainly spent the money on food



People queue to receive their cash transfer payment IFRC©

though a few families spent it on school fees.

Generally, cash was the preferred transfer modality as households felt that it gave them the freedom to choose what to purchase depending on their needs. This operation adopted the lead farmer approach, where ZRCS have selected and will train 100 lead farmers. Each lead farmer will then be responsible for cascading knowledge and skills to an average of 20 households.

To date 40 lead farmers (26 males and 14 females) have been trained in Muzarabani district. Cascading of the new acquired knowledge by the lead farmers is ongoing.



Seeds distribution in Muzarabani IFRC©

For Mudzi, the training is yet to be conducted due to limited funding availability and because priority has been given to cash transfers.

To ensure increased food production at household level, the operation provided drought resistant seeds to the households.

A total of 944 households in Muzarabani received 5kgs maize seeds as support for the 2015/16 agricultural season.

In Mudzi, stakeholders have requested that seeds be replaced with small livestock support as gardens do not do well in the district due to lack of water.

It is therefore proposed that an amount of CHF10,830 meant for vegetable seeds be used to support 1,222 families with small livestock such as goats.

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We cannot thank you enough