



DPR KOREA: SITUATION BULLETIN

September & October 2003
Nº 08/03

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Contributions for the November 2003 Bulletin should be sent to OCHA no later than 5 December

DESPITE IMPROVED HARVESTS, DPR KOREA URGENTLY NEEDS FOOD AID FOR MILLIONS OF PEOPLE AT RISK

Despite better harvests this year, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea will have another substantial food deficit in 2004, requiring a large amount of external assistance, two United Nations agencies said today.

A combination of insufficient domestic production, the narrow and inadequate diet of much of the population and growing disparities in access to food as the purchasing power of many households declines, means that some 6.5 million vulnerable North Koreans will require assistance next year, according to a joint report by the UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) and World Food Programme (WFP).

The situation remains "especially precarious" for young children, pregnant and nursing women and many elderly people, the Rome-based agencies warned.

The report projected domestic cereal availability in the 2003/04 marketing season (November-October) at 4.16 million tonnes, 4.7 per cent up from the revised 2002/03 estimate of 3.97 million tonnes.

The 2003 rice and maize harvests each rose by an estimated 4.5 per cent over 2002, to 1.48 million tonnes (milled basis) and 1.73 million tonnes respectively. The improvements were attributed to favourable weather, a relatively low incidence of crop pests and diseases, increased application of donated fertilizer and better irrigation.

Forecasting total cereal needs – food, animal feed and seeds – for 2003/04 at 5.1 million tonnes, the FAO/WFP report projected an import requirement of 944,000 tonnes. Given anticipated commercial imports of 100,000 tonnes, concessional imports of 300,000 tonnes, and food aid expected to be in stock or to arrive after 1 November, 2003 of 140,000 tonnes, the uncovered gap will be 404,000 tonnes.

Despite evidence of improved nutritional levels in recent years, malnutrition rates remain "alarmingly high", the report said. Four out of ten young children suffer from chronic malnutrition, or stunting, according to a large-scale, random sample survey conducted in October 2002 by UNICEF and WFP. Continued, targeted food aid interventions are essential to prevent a slippage back towards previous, higher levels of malnutrition, the UN agencies said.

The economic policy adjustment process initiated in July 2002 has led to many factories being unable to pay full wages. Combined with food price increases that were higher than increases in wages, this has caused a further deterioration in the already inadequate purchasing power of many households, especially in urban areas.

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WFP DONOR ALERT - see last page

UNICEF New situation analysis

UNICEF recently completed an updated analysis of the situation of children and women in the DPRK. Copies are available from UNICEF Pyongyang as well as on the new UNICEF DPRK web-site <http://www.unicef.org/dprk>



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Rations from the Public Distribution System (PDS) – a primary source of food for the 70 per cent of DPR Korea's 23 million people living in urban areas – are set to decline to no more than 300 grams per person per day in 2004, from 319 grams this year, according to government authorities. The present allocation ensures only half of an individual's caloric requirements.

Low as the PDS rations may be, industrial workers and elderly people now spend up to 60 per cent of their income on these rations alone. After paying for non-food necessities, they can ill-afford staples such as rice and maize in private markets, where prices are as much as 3.5 times higher, let alone more nutritious foods. As the situation may worsen in the immediate future, the report recommended that attention also be given to the low-income PDS dependents in urban areas rendered increasingly under-employed by the economic adjustment process.

The FAO/WFP report urged that 484,000 tonnes of commodities, including 400,000 tonnes of cereals, be sought as food aid for 2004 for the most vulnerable DPR Koreans. Three-quarters of the total is earmarked for children in nurseries, kindergartens, primary schools, orphanages and hospitals, pregnant and nursing women and elderly people.

Despite improvements in the operating environment for aid agencies, the report noted that there are still restrictions on access to the needy and to markets and shops, reducing the scope for monitoring and the timely detection of newly emerging food-insecure groups. But it also says that the DPRK government has been more forthcoming with information needed to assess household food security.

The report recommended that "in addition to providing urgently needed food aid, the international community enter with the government into a policy dialogue to set an enabling framework to mobilise the economic, financial and other assistance needed to promote sustainable food production and overall food security."

Source: WFP/FAO Press Release PYONGYANG/ROME, 30 October 2003

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HEALTH AND NUTRITION

UNICEF

Immunizations continue for children and pregnant women

During the past three months an estimated 60,000 infants received vaccinations against measles, diphtheria, whooping cough, tetanus and tuberculosis – helping to protect them from illness, disability and death. With UNICEF assistance, monthly vaccination sessions were held at over 5,000 sites throughout the country. A new vaccine family card was introduced and an inventory of cold chain equipment in some 6,000 hospitals and clinics throughout the country is almost completed, the results of which will guide future procurement of immunization items. One priority is to now ensure regular reporting of vaccination coverage results from each county, to help identify those children who are being missed by the programme.

Baseline nutrition assessments in disadvantaged counties

A new Programme of Co-operation between the DPRK and UNICEF, for the period 2004-2006, will begin in January. Alongside the still very important humanitarian action nationwide, UNICEF will support more focused actions in a selected number of vulnerable counties/cities. In all, ten counties and cities in nine provinces will be earmarked for a focused approach to ensuring that all children survive, grow and develop to their full potential.

In these counties UNICEF will be seeking to demonstrate how child and maternal malnutrition can be reduced significantly and sustainably. Baseline surveys are now being conducted in the first three counties, Kosan, Kowon and Jongpyong by the Central Bureau of Statistics. The surveys will give information on the health/nutritional situation as well as information in education and water and sanitation. Information gained will be used as the basis for planning actions in these counties. Findings of the surveys will be available in December.

Ensuring essential health treatments for children and women

Over 2,000 health facilities, mainly at the village level, received "very vital" medicines thereby ensuring that those children will illnesses such as pneumonia and diarrhea could be treated promptly. The UNICEF assisted Central Medical Warehouse made deliveries to all twelve provinces / cities throughout the country. Over 90% of deliveries were completed on time to: 2,050 Ri clinics, 117 county hospitals, 11 provincial paediatric hospitals, 11 provincial maternity hospitals and 2 central paediatric and maternity hospitals. Full details of the 2003 essential medicines delivery plan, current health facilities coverage and the types of medicines provided are available from the UNICEF Pyongyang office.



Eliminating the effects of iodine deficiency

Iodine deficiency is widespread in the DPRK and its effects are devastating – impairing brain development and preventing millions of children from learning to their full potential. To address this problem UNICEF is helping to iodize salt at seven locations around the country. Unfortunately iodized salt production has remained at around 19,000MT for the past two years which is only around half of the country's total requirements. A plan of action for the production of at least 40,000MT of iodized salt and therefore the achievement of universal salt iodization was written in October. The plan calls for upgrading of iodization capacity at three salt factories by the end 2004.

Training on malnutrition and early childhood development

Over thirty staff of the Institute of Child Nutrition and the Central Bureau of Statistics attended a week long workshop on malnutrition and its causes in the DPRK. The workshop, held in October, used data and findings of the recent nutrition assessment with technical support from UNICEF/Institute of Child Health London.

Improving the management of childhood illnesses

Four Ministry of Public Health staff undertook a two week study visit to Vietnam and Cambodia on the management of childhood illnesses. This study visit is part of the programme to improve health worker skills in the DPRK, with a focus on the treatment of the most common childhood illnesses.

Improving the storage and handling of vaccines

In October, one new vaccine cold store was installed at the central vaccine stores in Pyongyang. The biggest problem in upgrading the storage is the irregular and inadequate power supply. A UNICEF cold chain expert is now visiting health facilities around the country giving training in the proper storage of vaccines and the maintenance of equipment.

Safe-motherhood working group formed

Recognizing that a greater and more coordinated effort will be needed to reduce maternal deaths in the DPRK, a sub-group of the health and nutrition co-ordination group held its first regular meeting in Pyongyang. Chaired by UNICEF and attended by UNFPA, WHO and IFRC, the maternal health group will discuss overall approaches to reducing maternal mortality as well as a more coordinated agency response. Maternal mortality in the DPRK has doubled over the past decade.

GERMAN AGRO-ACTION

Winter Aid Project Completed – Helping to Prevent Child Morbidity

ECHO provided funding for the Winter Aid Project in two counties of North Pyong'an Province. This project intended to improve the environment of primary schools and kindergartens. Altogether 17,000 children in kindergartens and primary schools benefited from the project until it is closed in October 2003.

In Unsan County 30 primary schools and one kindergarten were involved in the project. These institutions installed in total 1,510 double-glazed plastic windows and 518 plastic doors.

Another 1,725 windows and 242 doors were fixed in Kujang County. In this county 25 primary schools and 23 kindergartens had been included in the project.

Through this intervention the classrooms are protected against the harsh winter conditions in the Northern Province. This means that more children can attend lessons during the cold months, and whilst at school they are less susceptible to winter respiratory illnesses.

WHO – WORLD HEALTH ORGANISATION

First national workshop on HIV/AIDS prevention strategies

As a first step towards the prevention of HIV/AIDS, the Ministry of Public Health organized the first national HIV/AIDS workshop on 23rd and 24th October 2003. Although HIV / AIDS is not considered a problem in DPRK at the moment, more efforts are needed in broadening of prevention strategies. The WHO office in Pyongyang supported this initiative financially and technically with the presence of Dr. J.P. Narain, WHO Regional HIV Coordinator and Dr. Liu Kang Mai, Senior officer of Disease control Centre of China. The workshop, attended by some 50 people, had good representation from various sectors. The participants came from the Ministry of Public Health at central and provincial level, Ministry of Education, other Government ministries, Medical Universities, the Korean Red-Cross, the Korean Family Planning Association, Women's League and residential international organizations (WHO, UNICEF, UNFPA, UNDP and IFRC). The workshop was chaired by Dr. Kim Jong Hwan, National HIV/AIDS program Manager. The UN Country Theme Group on HIV/AIDS, chaired by WHO, assisted in the planning and preparation of the national workshop.

The workshop focused on the global HIV/AIDS situation, the epidemiology of HIV/AIDS, the prevention strategies in Asia, an analysis of the situation in China, its control strategy and the prevention and control plan in D.P.R. Korea. It resulted in a better awareness of all participants on the HIV/AIDS issue. Activities such as the promotion of condoms and the strengthening of surveillance were discussed and will be further integrated to the strategic plan prepared by the Government. WHO is planning to provide technical support in 2004 for development of a national HIV work plan based on the strategy document.

WHO: Urgent Need to Strengthen Health Care At Community Level

The access to essential health services is still severely compromised for a large part of the population. This is the conclusion of an assessment by a WHO primary health care expert in October. Clinics and hospitals are lacking the most basic equipment and consumables. These difficulties are paralleled with an extremely limited exposure to international trends in health development. WHO has initiated a program aiming at improving the quality of the community-based health services through the provision of basic supplies and the training of household doctors and other categories of health personnel. Since 2000, WHO has provided basic equipment to about 1500 primary health care facilities. Emphasis is given to the basic tools to undertake minor surgery and to the most essential equipment to enable proper diagnosis of common diseases, antenatal care, safe deliveries, proper sterilisation of surgical instruments and



utensils. This programme has been complemented with trainings aiming at updating health personnel on recent development in primary health care. A WHO expert on primary health care has been assisting development of training material and assist in the training. A national plan for more systematic updating of skills and knowledge of the household doctors is now being developed after the recent assessment by the WHO expert.

In its 2004 project included in the UN Consolidated Appeal, WHO aims at strengthening Ri level health facilities, the first level of health care, by providing 1,000 Ri-clinics and 20 county hospitals with essential equipment and consumables. Further trainings for doctors and health personnel will also be implemented. In addition, 25 hospitals will receive a kit recently adapted to the DPRK situation to enable them to undertake and handle complicated deliveries, obstetric emergencies and other essential surgery. Training will be provided in injection practices, sterilization procedures and the proper use of supplied equipment. Training in diagnosis and treatment of common ailments and diseases will also be conducted in the clinics and hospitals which will have received the equipment.

WHO Reports Significant Reduction of Malaria Cases

Changes in agricultural practices to adapt to a difficult economic situation and dramatic energy problems (less pesticides available, different irrigation system in the rice fields) are believed to have contributed to the re-emergence, in 1998, of the Vivax malaria, eradicated in the 70s. The number of cases reached epidemic proportion in 2001 with 300,000 reported cases.

Under the leadership of WHO and thanks to the generous contribution of South Korea, Sweden and Norway - around 2.5 million USD - international organizations were able to provide substantial technical and material support to the malaria control campaign since 2000. As of 15 September, there were 38,920 cases reported as opposed to 185,420 cases at the same period last year. The vast improvement of the malaria situation can be attributed to the malaria control efforts carried out in the past two-three years.

Besides the supply of anti-malarial drugs, impregnated bed nets, microscopes and other laboratory, a key factor of WHO's support has been the technical assistance it has provided to the malaria control program. WHO invites regularly WHO short-term consultants and experts to carry out trainings, capacity building and assessments. In spite of the SARS travel restrictions from April to July this year, WHO was able to bring in two international malaria experts to assist the Ministry of Public Health. The use of international WHO experts has contributed to better understanding and documentation of the malaria problem in DPRK, including knowledge of the vector and the reporting system. Further trainings aimed at laboratory technicians, entomologists and other key health workers will be implemented in 2004 to help building sustainable national capacity in malaria control.

UNFPA

The final evaluation of the present country programme took place during 23-30 August, 2003 by IPPF (executing agency). One of the main achievements was the review and revision of the reproductive health clinical guidelines and protocols which were adopted as State-Standard Guidelines.

The evaluation showed that the revision of essential drug list jointly by UNICEF, WHO and IFRC, training of health workers in the country and overseas, IEC activities as well as the provision of essential drugs, medical equipment, contraceptives and other supplies were a success. There was also a good commitment from the government to the country programme.

UNFPA Capacity Building. Senior project managers from UNFPA implementing agencies attended two weeks overseas training in Nanjing in China. The training was on Programme Cycle Management (PCM). One representative of the Central Medical Store, The Ministry of Public Health and The National Coordinating Committee participated in Reproductive Health Commodity Security Workshop in China as well.

UNFPA - Technical Review and Planning Meetings. The technical review meeting took place in Beijing with the participation of all key stakeholders (UNFPA, IPPF, NCC, The Implementing Agencies, and CST). Two national staff members from UNFPA Pyongyang Office participated in Transition Workshop in Beijing on ERP (Enterprise Resource Planning) from 18th to 25th of October.

UNFPA Missions/Arrivals to Pyongyang. Mr. Shu Yun Xu, Division Director of Asia and Pacific Division/NY, Ms Siri Tellier, UNFPA Representative in China and UNFPA Country Director for DPRK and Mr. Yu Yu, UNFPA Programme Officer for DPRK in China paid a visit to DPRK. Professor Li Buhao paid a special visit focusing on RH Survey issues. Ms. AnneMarie Serrano, The Head of The Office at UNFPA Pyongyang Office arrived on 13 September, 2003 in Pyongyang.

AFMAL FATEBENEFRAELLI

On 1st September 2003, AFMAL FATEBENEFRAELLI started an ECHO funded project in Osandok-dong of Hoeryong City in North Hamgyong Province. The overall objective is to provide the means to restore the surgical activities within the Hoeryong Maternity Hospital in North Hamgyong Province for the Gynaecology Department.

This project aims to increase the number of patients treated, reduce the number of deaths due to poor sterilisation methods, and reduce the number of deaths due to old diagnostic equipment no longer capable of working in an efficient manner for surgical purposes. The provision of modern equipment and new surgery blocks will allow patients to affront less invasive surgery.

Activities undertaken within the project include the physical rehabilitation of the surgical block for Gynaecology and Obstetrics, the delivery of modern surgical and diagnostic equipment, and the training of local medical personnel to utilise the new medical equipment.

In the first months AFMAL-FBF has focused on the tender procedures to choose an adequate international firm for the rehabilitation works and the medical equipment supply and installation.

On 27 September 2003, the AFMAL-FBF Project Manager, Mr. Fabrizio MONTI, arrived in DPRK to coordinate and monitor project activities.

AFMAL FATEBENEFRATELLI

AFMAL FATEBENEFRATELLI is a free humanitarian non profit association engaged in the sector of emergency medical services and in the health care development. AFAMAL-FBF is supported in its works by the Medical Order of Saint John of God, known in Italy as "Fatebenefratelli".

The order was founded in the sixteenth century by Juan de Dios, in its 450 years of activity; it has opened almost one thousand medical centres in every part of the world. Presently the order is providing medical care in 220 centres in 49 countries. The AFMAL-FBF activity is directed towards promoting medical care and any other venture (technical, scientific, cultural and professional) where the aim is to support the physical and moral well-being of the inhabitants of developing countries.

AFMAL-FBF is committed to testifying in favour and sharing the fate of the so called last but not least, thus contributing towards an awareness of peace, justice and charity in an attempt to overcome the causes which impede development of every sort. AFMAL-FBF is further supported by a direct collaboration among the different Hospital Services, in the field of Biomedical Engineering, and computer system that allows the organisation to program and realise structures and systems with adequate technologies.

IFRC – HEALTH ACTIVITIES

With the provision of essential drugs and basic medical equipment to 1762 health institutions, the Federation aims to support and improve the capacity of primary health care available to the population. At the community level, health

promotion activities conducted included the upgrading of the skills of health workers, such as aseptic working manners and rational drug use workshops (10) for nurses and midwives, increasing community knowledge of basic health care management and enhance the prevention of communicable diseases.

Numerous health promotion workshops have recently been conducted. These included: "prevention of water born diseases" (10 workshops), "malaria" (combined with distribution of mosquito nets to families), "Acute Respiratory Infection" (10), "Safe delivery and support of breast feeding" (10) as well as "HIV/AIDS awareness". These health promotion workshops will continue to be a focus of Federation support following the initiatives of the DPRK Red Cross Society

By the end of 2003, the Community Based First Aid (CBFA) program will have activated 510 first aid posts in co-operative farms and remote villages, staffed with 1,020 trained volunteer first aiders, and stocked with material supplies. Integration of CBFA with Community Based Disaster Management and volunteer health promotion activities will be the subject of refresh training in late 2003 and 2004.

In October the Federation distributed 6285 basic kits to 1762 institutions in the operational area. 2100 Household doctor kits and 362 Supplementary Medical kits for hospitals are expected to arrive in DPRK in December and distributed beginning of 2004.

In October, the distribution of liquid soap to hospitals, which was included in the ECHO SARS program, was nearly finalized, while preparation for the workshops on Infection control and SARS for hospital personnel was still ongoing. Publication of the SARS training material, such as flipcharts and booklets, are in the final stages of production.

WATER AND SANITATION

UNICEF

New drinking water schemes show way forward for the sector

UNICEF has concluded planning of two new water supply schemes for Hyesan City (Ryanggang Province) and Hoeryong City (North Hamgyong Province) in the vulnerable northeast of the country. These complement those already ongoing in Jongpyong and Kowon counties (South Hamgyong Province) and Kosan County (Kangwon Province).

Water supply systems have continued to degrade during the eight years since the beginning of humanitarian action in the DPRK. Though 83% of the population access drinking water through piped systems, it is estimated that these only serve 20-50% of needs today, depending on the location. Among the problems faced are the degraded quality of the pipes and pumps – in Hyesan, only 2 out of 12 pumps are now functioning – but also chronic shortages of energy, limiting the amount of time pumps can function.

New ideas are needed, and UNICEF has some.

The new scheme for Hyesan, for instance, involves changing the water source entirely from the Amnok River to a stream 15 kilometres away above any human habitation and completely free of contamination. By using this source and piping the water downhill, gravity eliminates the necessity to pump the water and gets around the need to buy and maintain pumps and the need to have adequate energy supplies.

Given the topography of the country, with abundant perennial water sources in hills and mountains, this is obviously the solution for the future. Setting up the schemes is very labour-intensive, but this provides additional employment to local people, with WFP providing food-for-work. It also, of course, reduces the threat of communicable diseases for children and others, and thus the burden on the health services.

CESVI

During September the one month mission of an expert laboratory technician has come to a conclusion. During his stay, the consultant has visited all the Anti Epidemic Stations supported by CESVI through the 2002-2003 water and sanitation programme, with funds of several donors (ECHO-OCHA-SIDA). The purpose of his mission was to check the



status of the equipment provided, verify the work carried out during the year by the AES staff in terms of quantity and quality of water samples analysed and share difficulties encountered by the local technicians. Furthermore, the expert also assessed the situation of the AES of Pangyo County that CESVI intends to support in the next water and sanitation project. The mission report will be made available to all international agencies. The training to the local technicians seemed to have had a very positive impact in terms of knowledge and of the motivations of the staff.

Mr Nikolaus Hoss, the new project manager of the water and sanitation programme funded by the EU/AIDCO Food security, has joined CESVI in September.

The equipment purchased with the international tender has arrived in October. Two trucks with the drilling machine arrived through the Sinuju border while 3 containers with the spare parts and more equipment for the drilling and testing arrived via Nampo port. The purchase of the drilling equipment was the first of the activities foreseen in the project in order to create technical conditions to improve exploitation of safe water resources in DPRK. An expert technician provided by the supplier, Mr Paul Verheyden, has arrived on the 1st November. He will spend one month in the country training a selected group of 8 to 10 local technicians provided by the Ministry of City Management on the use of the drilling machine and drilling techniques.

The training will involve drilling testing on the field. The second main component of this project foresees the construction of new water supply infrastructures (boreholes) and the rehabilitation of existing old ones (mainly shallow wells and water supply systems) in South Hwanghae Province. The selection of sites on where to start the intervention and a feasibility study on the kind of intervention to be carried out is ongoing. Another important part of the project relates to the strengthening of capacity building at national, provincial and county levels.

After the one month training scheduled for November, 5 technicians selected within the group will be trained on the field on the correct use and maintenance of the drilling machinery under the supervision of the project coordinator. As an additional fundamental activity, sanitation facilities in institutions and possibly, at the household level, will be constructed and made available to the population of the targeted selected locations.

SIDA funded water and sanitation project in Chonnae is still ongoing. In September the testing of the new water supply system rehabilitated has been completed. The system is working and is providing running water to over 13.000 people. At present, CESVI experts, together with the local technicians, are studying the most feasible intervention for the second phase of the project. An important step of the feasibility study is the hydrogeological survey that will take place during the second week of November. The outcome of this survey will be fundamental in deciding the specific intervention that will be carried out.

IFRC

In mid 2003, a water and sanitation program for 20 villages was finalised by the DPRK Red Cross together with IFRC. The water and sanitation activities will continue in 2004, with planning under way for an additional 40 villages to be supplied with clean water, appropriate sanitation and health education, in order to prevent water borne diseases, by the end of year 2004. The program is financed by ECHO through Netherlands Red Cross and Swedish Red Cross.

Water pumps ordered from Anju pump factory are now ready and will be distributed to 10 villages assisted through the Swedish Red Cross (SRC). Transformers and additional electrical items have also been ordered for 10 SRC villages and are expected to arrive in October-November and after they are delivered the water supply systems can be finalised in the 10 villages. The final parts for the Eco san latrines (plastic stools and ventilation pipes) have been distributed to the villages included in the ECHO program that ended in June 2003. After this delay with this final part the latrines are now finalised and can be used. Totally 164 Eco san latrines are included in this part of the program.

IFRC- Building Capacity. An IFRC study trip to Guanxi province took place in mid September for 4 watsan Red Cross staff from DPRK Red Cross, together with one watsan delegate from IFRC. Technical workshops started in October and will be performed on 5 occasions with participating water sanitation technicians and local Red Cross of total number of 110 persons from 30 villages. The workshops are part of the new ECHO program that started during the autumn.

GAA PROJECT IMPROVES WATER QAULTY AND QUANTITY FOR OVER 35,000 PEOPLE

In September 2003 Deutsche Welthungerhilfe/German Agro Action (DWHH/GAA) completed an ECHO Water and Sanitation project in Kujang, Unsan and Hyangsan counties in North Pyong'an province. This was a highly technical and complex project. 141 water systems and 1,199 Latrines have been constructed for 7,126 HH (35,630 beneficiaries) in 22 cooperatives. Altogether, 97 nurseries (3,981 children), 48 kindergartens (2,167 children), 26 schools (11,341 children) and 26 rural clinics have participated in the project.

The rural population gained a better understanding of hygiene. In total 625 water tanks (catchments, sedimentation tanks, water tanks, distribution tanks) have been constructed and 463 km of pipe installed until the end of the project. Three county anti epidemic stations have been equipped with water testing equipment and staff trained in their use. A similar project phase has been submitted to the donor to request funding.

IFRC – DISASTER MANAGEMENT ACTIVITIES

One of the main objectives of the Red Cross in 2003 was to strengthen its capacity to effectively prepare for and efficiently respond to natural disasters. A major step in meeting this objective was the preparation a five year (2003-2007) strategic plan for disaster management by the Red Cross of DPRK. A key objective of the plan is to train staff and volunteers in disaster management. So far this year, over 100 Red Cross staff and volunteers has been trained in disaster management. This training has been support by the formation of Disaster Preparedness working groups in North and South Pyong'an, Jagang, and Kangwon provinces.



Disaster Management Training

One disaster management workshop was recently conducted in South Hamgyong Province. The objective of the three-day workshop was to improve the capacity of 30 Red Cross volunteers in disaster management. The participants included women, youth representatives and community leaders.

Donation of non-food items assist Disaster Preparedness and Response

In August the Red Cross of DPRK received a donation from the Red Cross of the Republic of Korea through the Federation. Items received include: 6000 blankets, 3000 kitchen sets and two Hyundai station wagons. The blankets and kitchen sets were allocated to Disaster Preparedness stocks.

In order to ensure that DPRK Red Cross has adequate pre-positioning of emergency relief stocks to be used whenever necessary, the Federation of the Red Cross provided non-food items for approximately 2000 families. These are 2000 cooking sets, 10,000 blankets, 7,040 twenty-litre water Jerry cans and 600,000 water purification tablets. Currently, the Red Cross has six warehouses located in Pyongyang, Sinuju, Wonsan, Kaesong, Huichon, and Chongjin cities. In these warehouses, the Red Cross has at the moment pre-positioned stocks that can meet the needs of 50,000 families. A recent example of the utility of this approach was in August, when heavy rains that caused severe localised damage in parts of South Pyong'an Province. The Red Cross conducted assessments for two days. Based on the report, Red Cross distributed to 120 flood affected families, 120 kitchen sets, 517 blankets, 15510 water purification tablets, 120 pieces of plastic sheeting and 120 water containers.

Community Based Disaster Preparedness Project

The Red Cross is implementing a Community Based Disaster Preparedness (CBDP) project in nine ris in South Pyong'an Provinces. The project activities are training of volunteers and community members in CBDP. Mitigation activities that have been completed are the embankment of 500 metres of river banks. The embankments were constructed by 100 volunteers who were mobilised by the local Red Cross branches. The Red Cross supplied 200 MT of cement for the construction.

The British Red Cross is a strong supporter of the disaster management programmes in DPRK. In September, two Senior British Red Cross delegates visited DPRK to acquaint themselves with the programmes. A member from the British Embassy in Pyongyang accompanied the visiting delegation to the field. The delegation promised to continue to support the Red Cross programmes in DPRK.

World First Aid Day

On the occasion of the world first aid day, the Red Cross conducted a simulation exercise of emergency evacuation, administering of first aid, and also organised competitions on the above mentioned simulation exercises. 150 pupils participated in the exercise in Sunchon secondary school.

FOOD AID UPDATE – WFP OPERATION REVIEW

Reports of snowfall were received from some counties in Ryanggang, North Hamgyong and Kangwon provinces during the month, signaling the early start of winter in the eastern and north eastern regions. Post harvest activities continue in most provinces. Due to lack of adequate supplies of power and fuel, transportation of harvested crops to threshing facilities has again been delayed in many areas. Manual threshing of maize and soybeans has been observed in some counties. Post harvest losses are also expected to be significant owing to the lack of adequate storage facilities. All provinces reported a reduction in government food rations through the Public Distribution Centers (PDCs) in October to 300 grams/person/day; down from the 380 gram level reported throughout the July - September lean season. The reduction in the ration was attributed to a shortage of food stocks just before the main harvest.

The November ration is expected to remain at the 300 gram level. Coping mechanisms in September and October, the main crop harvest months, include the exchange/barter of commodities between the rural and urban populations. Vegetables are also bartered with manufactured goods such as clothes, salt, etc. At this time of year, people living in mountainous areas are able to collect nuts of various types (acorns, chestnuts,

pine seeds, etc.), edible grass and roots to supplement their PDC rations. Preparation of the winter *Kimchi* by fermenting radishes and cabbage has also begun. *Kimchi* is typically the only vegetable available to many households during the harsh winter months.

FALU – UPDATE

Shipment arrivals During the period 28 September to 20 October a donation of total 2,120 mt of wheat flour arrived in country by rail through Sinuju and Namyang. Canadian Foodgrains Bank in collaboration with Caritas Hong Kong granted the wheat flour for the production of locally produced Cereal Milk Blend (CMB). Beneficiaries of processed wheat flour into approximately 2,500 mt of CMB will be children in Nurseries, Kindergartens, and Residential Children's Institutions both on west and east coast provinces of the DPRK. Other implementing partner is the World Food Programme in DPRK through FALU. Total value of this grant is approximately \$US 890,000

130 mt of sugar arrived on 9 September at Nampo port. This donation from ACT / Diakonie-Germany will contribute to the support of WFP Local Food Production activities in the Pyongyang factories. Beneficiaries of processed blended foods will be children in Nurseries, Kindergartens, and Residential Children's institutions of the west coast province of the DPRK. Total value of this grant is approximately \$US 38,000.



Caritas Hong Kong Agreement Signed

Caritas Hong Kong signed on 27 October an agreement with FDRC for the provision of 69 mt of canned sardines and 32 mt of sugar to be distributed to children in residential childcare institutions in DPRK. The canned sardines will provide a supply of six months and the sugar for one year. Within the same agreement additional 67 mt of sugar will be provided and allocated in support of the WFP LFP factories activities. The value of this donation is \$US113,000 and should arrive in DPRK in January 2004.

General Information from Falu Members

Member agencies of the Canadian Foodgrains Bank, a consortium of 13 faith-based NGOs, hosted a conference in Toronto October 20-21, 2003, to discuss the situation in DPRK, review the Foodgrains Bank's program over the past seven years, and determine how best to proceed over the next few years. Participants in the conference included staff from the member agencies, UN representatives, Canadian government officials and Members of Parliament, academics, Korean community representatives, and other experts on DPRK. The member agencies of the Canadian Foodgrains Bank committed themselves to continue providing substantial humanitarian assistance to DPRK in 2004, and to provide expanded support for increasing agricultural production.

GERMAN AGRO-ACTION – FEEDING SCHOOL CHILDREN

The school feeding project of DWHH/GAA (financed by German Federal Ministry of Development Co-operation) which has been running in North Pyong'an Province since July 2002 is closing down. After rehabilitation of five local bakeries the distribution of fortified biscuits to 250 primary schools has started in December 2002. The project area covered eight counties in North Pyong'an Province: Sinuiju, Tongrim, Yomju, Kusong, Pakchon, Unjon, Kujang and Unsan. Until the end of October 2003 over 1,900 mt of fortified biscuits have been produced and distributed to over 82,000 children between the ages of 7 and 11 years. Each child received 100 g of fortified biscuits per school day. The biscuits were backed according to the receipt of WFP.

The kindergarten feeding project of DWHH/GAA (financed by German Federal Ministry of Development Co-operation) started at the beginning of October 2003. Seven targeted counties of Province North Pyong'an have been characterised among the most vulnerable counties in North Pyong'an: Sinuiju, Uiju, Tongrim, Kusong, Kujang, Hyangsan and Unsan. Until the beginning of this year, these kindergartens have been supported by WFP according to international food aid recommendations for DPRK. The shortage of resources and the urgent need of the vulnerable provinces in the Northeast, forced WFP to stop the food aid for kindergartens in the North Pyong'an Province. Deutsche Welthungerhilfe/German Agro Action decided to fill this gap and will support these children, aged between 5 and 6 years. Therefore these kindergarten children will receive a daily ration of 300 g round rice, 40 g Green Gram (Mung Bean), 25 g fortified oil and 100 g of fortified biscuits for 10 months.

The project will reach more than 30,000 children in over 500 kindergartens. The project will distribute a total food aid of 2,100 mt rice, 285 mt Green Gram (Mung Bean) and 175 mt fortified oil. Additionally over 750 mt of fortified biscuits will be produced in cooperation with the bakery of ADRA in Pyongyang.

GERMAN AGRO-ACTION - ACTIVITIES IN AGRICULTURE

In November 2003, DWHH/GAA will finalise the Emergency Food Distribution & Vegetable Production Project in North Pyong'an financed by the German Federal Ministry of Development Co-operation.

The project aimed to improve the diet (nutritional supply) for 36,000 most vulnerable beneficiaries (children at day nurseries and kindergartens as well as members of co-operatives) in 26 co-operatives of the North Pyong'an Province through the provision of extra levels of food thus enhancing nutritional requirements.

The project objectives have been achieved:

- 156 new green houses constructed in 26 selected co-operatives.
- Each co-operative equipped with agricultural inputs for instance vegetable seeds.
- Training provided in greenhouse construction and management as well as the installation and use of drip-irrigation facilities, vegetable production with various sub-topics, related to the actual cropping season.
- In October and November the second vegetable crop is cultivated in the green houses.
- Food distributed to targeted beneficiaries: soya (1,192 mt), oil (448 mt) and salt (77 mt).

Winter Wheat - Project

The project for the Rehabilitation of Seed Certification and Multiplication Management System for Winter Wheat in South Hwanghae Province, DPRK started in September 2003. The project is funded by SIDA and is a new phase of previous interventions. The project aims to increase the availability of high qualitative winter wheat seed.

The project involves the Ministry of Agriculture, the Provincial Academy of Agriculture Science and Provincial Seed Inspection Department in Haeju.

Winter wheat seed is cultivated for Certified Seed on 300 ha at six Multiplication Seed co-operatives and at 26 ha at two Foundation Seed Co-operatives. The co-operatives received different winter wheat varieties and various agricultural machines for land preparation and seed processing. Furthermore the Provincial Seed Inspection Department was equipped with seed testing equipment.

CIMMYT/China provided training in seed production and seed technology to members of the co-operatives and staff of the line ministry.

Rehabilitation of workshops

The Project Rehabilitation of Cooperatives and County Repair Workshops in South Hwanghae Province started in November 2002, and is currently scheduled to finish in February 2004. The EuropeAid Co-operation Office provided the funding for the project.

The agricultural production is highly mechanised in DPR Korea. The lack of spare parts is one main reason for the decrease of agricultural productivity.

A major result of the project will be the rehabilitation of agricultural workshops of 30 cooperatives and 4 county workshops. Beside equipping the workshops with machinery and tools necessary for the maintenance of agricultural machinery, the provision of spare parts for tractors, e.g. piston or fuel pumps, is an important component to improve the running period of tractors and machinery for the cooperatives. Furthermore the co-operatives will receive training in agricultural mechanics.

Sweet Potato Cultivation and Processing

The Project Intensification of Sweet Potato Cultivation and Processing in South Hwanghae Province was funded by OCHA in 2001, additionally 2002 by the German Ministry of International Co-operation. In the first phase DWHH/GAA distributed new and improved varieties of sweet potatoes and fertiliser for 24 co-operatives. In 14 co-operatives DWHH/GAA installed processing units for the starch-production and equipment to transmit the starch into noodles.

Now, two years later, the production and processing units are still annually facilitated during the harvest period. All units are functioning and have processed Irish Potatoes and sweet potatoes into starch. The main problem is the limited availability of electricity. According to the estimations given by the 14 cooperatives in October 2003 they will process approximately 750 mt of Sweet potato into approx. 100 mt starch.

Through this intervention combined with the positive collaboration of the farmers the nutritional situation in the South Hwanghae Province can be improved.

AGRICULTURE

Mr Kenan Aydinoglu, agronomist and project manager of two long term agricultural projects, has arrived in the country on the 4th October. He has started meetings with the Ministry of Agriculture and site visits in Kangwon and North Hwanghae Provinces. The first activity concerns the collection of technical and socio-economic data of the cooperative farms necessary to plan the detailed intervention. The agricultural projects, funded by IFAD and the Italian Government, will be implemented in 7 cooperative farms of Thongchon, Popdong and Pangyo Counties in Kangwon Province and in 3 cooperative farms of Koksan and Singye in North Hwanghae during a 3 years time. In particular, the *Multi-sector food security intervention in Thongchon, Popdong e Phangyo Counties, Kangwon province*, funded by the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, has the purpose to improve food security in Kangwon Province through training, input supply and better management of goat breeding.

The IFAD project, *Institutional strengthening and food security in the Southern uplands of DPR Korea, North Hwanghae Province (ISAFS)*, is a component of the broader IFAD Upland Food Security Project. The global aim of ISAFS is "to contribute to enhance food production, income, nutritional standards and living conditions in the three identified Co-operative farms". ISAFS is a pilot project, with both operational and methodological targets. Operational, as one of its objectives is to work directly at CF level to identify and trigger implementation of sustainable and sound Whole Farm Plans. Methodological, as it will have to contribute to the wider implementation of the Upland Project by defining a work method for a better definition and implementation of Whole Farm Plans at County and CF level.

These two agricultural projects represent a great challenge for CESVI's work in DPRK, being the first real chance to implement development activities on a sustainable basis and with long term impact.

PMU INTERLIFE – AGRICULTURE PROJECT PROFILE

PMU Works in Cooperation with FDRC

Project: Agricultural development
Project period: 2003-2005
Funded by Sida (South Pyong'an), Finida (North Pyong'an) and private donors.

The new project is in Songchon, Unsan and Taedong County South Pyong'an and Jonju County North Pyong'an.

The project is to develop agricultural production in Seed potatoes, serials, vegetable and goat milk. Other activities include:

- Rehabilitate and help to central workshops in there production and maintenance of farmers equipment.
- Workshops on cooperative level also get help to improve there service capacity.
- Renovation of machinery for metal and wood, some new have to bee provided the workshops.
- Provide basic agricultural inputs as fertilizer, seed, plastic and chemicals.
- Provide equipment as tractors including tools, potato processing units, cutters and sprayers are some example.
- Construct Greenhouses and potato storage (already under construction).
- Small scale biogas production (trial plant has been built and works well).
- Build a dairy for Yoghurt and butter production (already completed).

Through this project the quality of life stock and fodder are improving, while study tours, workshops and more basic equipment are the basis for continuation.

In North Pyong'an PMU have the responsibility for a Finnish financed project on seed potato production.

**WFP – DONOR ALERT****700,000 ELDERLY PERSONS AND CAREGIVERS NO LONGER RECEIVING WFP RATIONS**

From the beginning of November, 700,000 elderly persons and caregivers in child institutions will not receive WFP cereal rations owing to a pipeline break. By cutting distributions to these groups, WFP may continue coverage to its core beneficiary groups - the youngest children and pregnant and nursing women. However, if no new pledges are soon received, distribution cuts, even to these core groups, will begin from late January.

By March, about 2.7 million children in nurseries, kindergartens and primary schools, as well as pregnant/nursing women, will be dropped from WFP cereal distributions. Local food production factories will also start to face shortages of wheat flour from March and therefore must cease operations. Suspension of these cereal and blended food distributions will harm the nutritional status of the youngest children and affect their physical growth and mental development. Without the essential micro-nutrients and cereal supplements, pregnant and nursing women will not be able to nurture healthy babies.

VISITORS

From September 23 to 27 2003, H.E. Gabriele Menegatti, Ambassador of Republic of Italy in the People's Republic of China and concurrent Ambassador of Democratic People's Republic of Korea and Mongolia, accompanied by Dr. Fabrizio Di Michele, First Secretary visited the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to present the Credentials. On September 24, H.E. Ambassador presented Credentials to H.E. Kim Yong Nam, the President of the Presidium of Supreme People's Assembly. During his sojourn in the Country, he paid the protocol visits to several Ministries. He also had the meetings with EU Ambassadors and Representatives of the UN Agencies in DPR Korea respectively.

The OCHA Office in DPRK produces this Bulletin on the basis of information supplied by contributing organizations and public sources

Sweden is funding the OCHA Office in 2003