

INFORMATION BULLETIN



International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies
Fédération Internationale des Sociétés de la Croix-Rouge et du Croissant-Rouge
Federación Internacional de Sociedades de la Cruz Roja y de la Media Luna Roja
الاتحاد الدولي لجمعيات الصليب الأحمر والهلال الأحمر

HAITI: FLOODS

25 December 2003

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Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF): DREF funding under consideration

The Federation's mission is to improve the lives of vulnerable people by mobilizing the power of humanity. It is the world's largest humanitarian organization and its millions of volunteers are active in over 180 countries.

For more information: www.ifrc.org

In Brief

This document is being issued

based on the needs described below reflecting the information available at this time. Based on further updates and details from assessment reports, or should the situation deteriorate, the Federation will consider international support through an Appeal.

The Situation

Following on-going rain in previous weeks, between Saturday, 20 and Monday, 22 December, severe flooding occurred in northern Haiti. Detailed information is difficult to obtain, given political disturbances in several towns and the relative isolation of the affected areas. However, the Federation is benefiting from reports from OXFAM which is carrying out DIPECHO-funded projects in the region. The regions in which flooding has taken place are Cap-Haitien and Port-de-Paix which are vulnerable, disaster-prone areas. In Cap-Haitien the level of the river has increased considerably, and landslides also took place in mountainous terrain, killing two people. Current information indicates that approximately 150,000 people have been affected, 13,000 of whom have been evacuated to 13 temporary shelters and who are mostly women and children. A total of 33,829 people have been evacuated, having all lost their homes and belongings, although some inhabitants refuse to evacuate, clinging on to the roofs of their homes. There are fears of outbreaks of disease since water sources have been contaminated by the flooding. At present, there are few details available from Port-de-Paix; however, it is clear that the area remains under water.

Civil unrest continues in Haiti; two persons were killed in a demonstration on 22 December. However, the situation in Cap-Haitien is calm at present.

Red Cross and Red Crescent action

The Haitian National Red Cross Society (HNRCS) has been addressing security issues in the capital including the theft of a vehicle and it has therefore been difficult to coordinate effective response. Nevertheless, the National Society has requested assistance from the Federation. As a result, a delegate from the Pan American Disaster Response Unit (PADRU) is currently travelling to the affected area in order to support the HNRCS branch in the region to conduct an assessment of needs and to assist in the planning of logistics and response. The Delegate will work within the framework of the HNRCS in close coordination with OXFAM representatives and other international agencies working in Haiti, and will benefit from security measures in place by the ICRC.

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OXFAM is assisting the flood victims with the provision of non-food items such as soap and hygiene kits, as well as water treatment tablets. In addition, World Vision is providing hygiene kits and cooking pots to some 50 families and WFP plans to distribute food rations for one month, targeting the population in temporary shelters.

The Federation Secretariat is processing an allocation of DREF funds and contacts have been made with the European Community Humanitarian Office (ECHO), which is considering a grant of EUR 150,000 to assist the population affected by the floods.

The PADRU Delegate is expected to reach Cap-Haitien on Friday, 26 December, following which further details will be available with regard to the damage and needs in the affected regions.

For a full description of the National Society profile, see www.ifrc.org

For further details please contact

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All International Federation Operations seek to adhere to the Code of Conduct and are committed to the Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Disaster Response (SPHERE Project) in delivering assistance to the most vulnerable.

For support to or for further information concerning Federation operations in this or other countries, please access the Federation website at <http://www.ifrc.org>

For longer-term programmes, please refer to the Federation's Annual Appeal.