

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

MADAGASCAR: FLOODS

12 May, 2003

Information Bulletin N° 1/03

Disaster relief Emergency Fund (DREF) allocated: N/A

This Information Bulletin is for information only. The Federation is not seeking any funding or other assistance from donors for this operation at this time.

The Situation

The tropical Cyclone Manou reached the eastern coast of Madagascar, violently hitting the city of Vatamandry, some 350 kilometres from the capital Antananarivo and 150 kilometres south from Toamasina. With winds reaching 210 km/hour accompanied by heavy rains (200 millimetres in 24 hours), Cyclone Manou caused enormous damage to Vatamandry (population of some 115,000 inhabitants) according to the National Rescue Committee (NRC). The toll on the community is extremely heavy. Ten people lost their lives, two are missing, while 9,000 have been displaced.



The electricity, telecommunications and water networks are badly damaged. Many public buildings are destroyed. The operation theatre at the city's hospital is out of order, while 70 per cent of the health centre is in ruins. Many schools as well as the prison have suffered extensive damages. In Brickaville and Andevoranto, the NRC, estimates that 95 per cent of the dwellings have been destroyed. Eighty per cent of rice fields are under water. The region is totally isolated according to the Malagasy Red Cross, who expressed serious concerns over the risks of outbreaks of waterborne diseases such as cholera due to the lack of potable water and proper sanitation.

Red Cross and Red Crescent Action

Alerted by the Malagasy national society, the French Red Cross immediately activated its La Réunion-based Indian Ocean Rapid Intervention Platform (Plateforme d'Intervention Rapide de l'Océan Indien - PIROI).

The Nairobi regional delegation is in close contact with the regional PIROI delegate and issued a news release to alert the media on the national society's response to the disaster. In the framework of a regional disaster preparedness programme, the PIROI has already trained 360 emergency relief volunteers in Madagascar. Consequently, teams of trained emergency relief volunteers of the Malagasy Red Cross from Antananarivo and Tamatave were rapidly deployed to the disaster area.

The emergency response stocks, already propositioned in Antananarivo early this year, are being used to respond to the first relief needs.

A convoy carrying 4,500 kg of relief articles, including a water purification unit capable of producing enough potable water to meet the daily needs of 10,000 people, consisting of essential drugs, hygiene kits, high protein biscuits, tents and tarpaulin for temporary shelter and clothes is on its way from Antananarivo to Vatomandry. The convoy as well as teams of volunteers is expected to reach the city of Tamatave today.

Due to the damage to the road infrastructure between Tamatave and Vatomandry, the cargo is expected to finally reach the affected area by boat, via the Pangalanes canal, this afternoon (12 May 2003). The Malagasy Red Cross response is closely co-ordinated with the National Rescue Committee. As such, the boat transport from Tamatave to Vatomandry is facilitated by Madagascar's government. The PIROI will launch a local emergency appeal shortly for funds to support the Malagasy Red Cross in its relief efforts.

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

For further details please contact Martin Fisher, Federation Regional Officer, Phone 41 22 730 4440; Fax 41 22 733 0395; email martin.fisher@ifrc.org

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.