

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

MEXICO: FLOODS

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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 for information only.

The Federation is not seeking any funding or other assistance from donors for this operation at this time.

The Situation

One of the heaviest rainy seasons in years has led to flooding in several cities and states in Mexico. Several tropical depressions were reported on the east and west coasts, causing heavy rainstorms throughout the country. The heaviest damage was in the states of Querétaro, Guanajuato, and Jalisco. The flooding has caused damage to homes, crops and roads in all these areas. There have been no reported deaths but thousands of people were forced out of their homes and into temporary shelters.

One of the hardest hit areas was the state of Querétaro in central Mexico, where at least 100 communities were affected by the flooding. Rainfall between 6 September and 10 September totalled 278 millimetres, surpassing all previous records. During the most intense rains some 70 cubic metres of rain were falling per second.

More than 12 thousand houses in Jalisco were damaged by the floods, including 500 in the community of Tototlan. In addition, key crops such as corn were seriously affected.

In Guanajuato, more than 15 thousand people were affected by the flooding, including particularly heavy damage in the communities of San Javier, Reforma, 1910, Nuevo México, Las Estancias and Los Sauces.

Other hard-hit areas were the states of Nayarit, Mexico, Michoacán and Veracruz. In Nayarit, on the west coast of Mexico, the municipalities of San Blas and Santiago Ixcuntla were cut off from the rest of the country due to the severe weather, affecting more than 5000 people. In Mexico State, three municipalities and some 650 houses suffered serious damage. Crops in Michoacán were seriously affected and there was flooding in the communities of Maravatio, la Piedad and Morelia. In Veracruz, on the east coast of the country, there was damage in three communities.

The National Meteorological Society is predicting continuing rainfall throughout the country.

Red Cross and Red Crescent action

The Mexican Red Cross and local branches in the affected areas are working with Red Cross volunteers, the Mexican military, local and municipal government authorities and other relief organizations to provide medical

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attention, perform rescue operations, conduct damage assessments and manage relief shelters. These specific actions are being taken in the following areas:

Querétaro

At the onset of the flooding, the local branch of the Red Cross sent 4000 relief kits and 300 boxes of food into the affected area through the Mexican Red Cross's Disaster Response Unit. The Querétaro Red Cross has set up four shelters and is providing medical treatment to victims. It is also evacuating some 2030 victims from high risk areas. The area remains in a state of alert as the rains continue.

Jalisco

A shelter was set up in Tototlan to house 300 people. The 10,000 residents of the town of Ocotlan, 9000 residents of the town of La Barca and the local delegations remain in a state of alert in the event that the nearby River Lerma begins to flood.

Guanajuato

The Mexican Red Cross has been working with the Mexican Civil Protection and the state branch of the National Organization for Family Development (DIF) to set up 29 temporary shelters to house a total of 7024 victims from seven communities. There are several more affected communities in the area that are still without temporary shelters. The Mexican Red Cross has sent 14,000 relief packages, 2100 boxes of food, 7500 paper cones, 50,000 disposable cups, 30,000 disposable containers of food, 550 blankets, 960 pieces of soap, 500 articles of underwear, 220 dozen socks, 270 kilograms of new clothes, 100 boxes of diapers and 80 boxes of toilet paper. They are still lacking food, clothes and kitchen supplies.

Nayarit

The Red Cross's Disaster Response Unit sent 1000 boxes of food, 370 shirts, 240 pairs of pants, 200 kilograms of new clothes, 10,000 containers of food, 1200 pieces of sanitary soap, 400 pairs of sandals, 25 boxes of diapers and 20 boxes of toilet paper into the state of Nayarit. They are still lacking food and clothes.

México

Two shelters have been opened to house the victims in the state of Mexico, and the towns located near the River Lerma remain in a state of alert. The Red Cross in this area is lacking food and clothing.

Michoacán

Three shelters have been opened in the area and are housing 400 victims. Branches remain on alert.

Veracruz

Flooding occurred in three municipalities but no shelters were opened. The local branches remain in a state of alert due to continuing rainfall.

Hurricane Marty made landfall in Baja California late in the evening of 22 September. The Mexican Red Cross is deploying its relief coordinator to the affected area in which a damage and needs assessment will take place. Further information on this and the situation related to the flooding in central Mexico will be provided in future information bulletins as details become available.

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

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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.

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