

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

DOMINICAN REPUBLIC & HAITI: FLOODS

26 May 2004

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 181 countries.

In Brief

This Information Bulletin (no. 02/2004) is being issued based on the needs described below reflecting the information available at this time. CHF 100,000 has been allocated from the Federation's Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF). Based on further updates and details from assessment reports, or should the situation deteriorate, the Federation may consider international support through an Emergency Appeal.

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All International Federation assistance seeks to adhere to the [Code of Conduct](#) and is committed to the [Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Disaster Response](#) in delivering assistance to the most vulnerable. For support to or for further information concerning Federation programmes or operations in this or other countries, or for a full description of the national society profile, please access the Federation's website at <http://www.ifrc.org>

The Situation

In the Dominican Republic and Haiti rain continues to fall. In the Dominican Republic, serious flooding has occurred in the south, north west, north east and districts close to the capital. Among the areas most affected are the municipality of Jimaní in the Province of Independencia where more than 300 homes have collapsed and approximately 120 houses were swept away by the swollen Solié river. In Santo Domingo, in the communities of Saguasa and Chirino, some 400 families were cut off as a result of the bursting of the banks of the Ozama river along a six kilometre stretch. In Neyba, a bridge was destroyed and in Villa Jaragua-Jimani, another bridge has partially collapsed. Flooded streets were reported in Sabana de la Mar, and in the Municipality of Arenoso, Duarte Province, 100 families have taken shelter at the Salome Ureña school. The communities of Cole and Majagual have been cut off as a result of the collapse of the Carretera Navega-Moca bridge.



Reuters/courtesy www.alertnet.org

Flooding has also been reported in La Zurza, the northern most area of the capital. Four residential areas were flooded in Vicente Noble and the main street that connects the population of Esperanza with that of Mao Valverde has been affected. In Pedernales, the river of the same name has flooded a number of houses. The main road, Km 22, has been damaged cutting off the community. In the province of Duarte, the communities of Los Peinados, Payabo, Los Contreras, El Güayabo, El Mango, La Jagüa, Jurungo, La Güama, Villa María, Las Carreras, La Garza, Los Cacaos, Arenoso, El Laurel, Barrio Lindo, Atronca Perro, El Polvorín, Hostos, La Verde, La Cueva de Cívicos and Los Coles have been affected. Damage is also reported in the province of San Juan de la Maguana, in Mata Yaya, Hondo Valle and Sabana Larga.

Furthermore, thousands of hectares of rice and plantain crops have been destroyed.

The most affected area is Jimaní. The table below provides the data collected by 14.00 hours (local time) on 25 May by the Dominican Red Cross response unit. Water and electricity services are down; however, telephone communication has been reestablished and the area is accessible by land since debris has now been removed from the main road leading to the community.

Bodies recovered	143
Missing	361
Houses destroyed	308
Seriously damaged houses	97
Affected families	1,200

In Haiti, the area which has been hardest hit by the floods is Fonds Verrettes in the South East Department close to the border with the Dominican Republic. The Civil Protection reports that 10,000 families have been affected by the floods, 158 people are missing, 546 houses have been destroyed and 1,500 houses have been damaged. It is estimated that in Fonds Verrettes alone 3,000 people are in need of immediate assistance. In addition, in the region of Jacmel in the West Department, the town of Galet Maro (Gosier) reports 100 dead, 150 injured, 70 missing, 500 houses destroyed and 70 houses damaged. The town of Belle Anse (Mapou) also reports that 100 people have died in the floods.

Red Cross and Red Crescent action

In the Dominican Republic, the Red Cross branches of Barahona, Duvergé, Los Ríos and Jimaní, have been providing services such as search and rescue, in coordination with the Civil Defence and the Fire Brigade, as well as recovery of bodies, support to affected families and assessment of damage. The National Emergency Committee is in permanent session and the National Emergency Operations Centre (COE) is operating at maximum capacity. A COE coordination meeting was held in the afternoon of Tuesday, 25 May in order to define the actions to be taken by the Dominican government. Representatives of the Dominican Red Cross, the Federation and other humanitarian organizations took part in this meeting.

The Dominican Red Cross has mobilized volunteers trained in psychosocial support and first aid to the affected areas, as well as medicines to ensure initial response. In addition, professional psychologists from the psychosocial support unit are being deployed to the worst-affected areas.

The National Society’s contingency and disaster management system was activated including the internal emergency operations centre, and two emergency operations posts were set up in Bajo Yuna (Duarte Province) and in Jimaní. The Dominican Red Cross activated its contingency plan, which was recently finalized with the support of the Federation/Pan American Disaster Response Unit (PADRU) and trained human resources, such as NITs (national intervention teams) have been deployed.

Communication and coordination were established with the Federation through the Regional Delegation in Panama and the Pan American Disaster Response Unit. Two delegates from PADRU reached the area on 24 May: a disaster management delegate who, in coordination with the Dominican Red Cross, is carrying out damage and needs assessments and drawing up a plan of action, and a telecommunications delegate who will monitor the situation in Haiti. Damage and needs assessments are being carried out at community level in conjunction with other agencies.

To date, 250 containers of water, 100 boxes of biscuits, 25 bags of bread and four tents have been dispatched from the Dominican Red Cross headquarters to Jimaní.

PADRU is ensuring coordination with other agencies in the field such as OFDA, ECHO and WFP. At the same time, a stock inventory is being carried out and water and sanitation equipment is being prepared in order to be dispatched to the area, if required. Members of the international intervention teams are being contacted for possible deployment, and at least one of these will possibly assist in the management of the emergency.

Visits to the field are ensured both by land and air in order to support assessment initiatives. In the area near the border with Haiti, the Head of the Relief Department of the Dominican Red Cross took part in an aerial assessment on 25 May by helicopter in order to determine the scale of the disaster and to evaluate the situation in Haiti. The assessment team from Port-au-Prince was unable to reach the area by road as a result of the level of flood waters. This morning, 26 May, the Netherlands Red Cross Delegate based in Port-au-Prince set off by road to Jacmel in order to assess the situation.

For the moment, the identified needs for the most affected in both the Dominican Republic and Haiti include: water, food, blankets, sheets, mattresses, hygiene kits and kitchen sets.

Further information regarding the emergency and the Red Cross response will be provided as soon as it becomes available.

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.

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