

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

KENYA: FLOODS

20 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. 2/2004) is being issued based on the needs described below reflecting the information available at this time. CHF 50,000 has been allocated from the Federation's Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF). The Federation is not seeking funding or other assistance from donors for this operation at this time.

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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

Presently, 50 people have been confirmed to have died from the floods since the onset of the heavy rains in March 2004. Upwards of 10,000 people have also been displaced. However, the rains have lessened and flooding reduced over the past days, improving the situation significantly allowing some people to return to their homes. Kenya Red Cross places the current number of displaced at 7,886 people or 1316 families to whom it has provided assistance.



Compared to 2003 when 60,000 people were affected, the 2004 floods has had less impact on the flood prone areas compared to previous years for several reasons; in Central Kenya, there was less rain on the Aberdare Mountains which usually overflows the dams and causes severe flooding downstream. In Western parts of Kenya, the reinforcement of the banks of two main flood prone seasonal rivers (Nyando and Sabaki) by the Kenya army and the National Youth Service lessened the effect of the rains. Also, two of the most flood prone areas of Budalangi and Tana River have not been severely hit yet, although water levels in River Nzoia and Tana River in these two regions are gradually rising.

As a result of the situation, the government does not consider this year's floods as a national disaster. However, it remains in a state of preparedness for response and the

Kenya: Floods; Information Bulletin no. 2/2004

Office of the President has pre-positioned relief food items consisting of 10560 MT of maize, 2640 MT of beans and 5200litres of vegetable oil in strategic flood prone areas in Nyando, Busia, Garrissa, Rachuonyo, Kisumu, Migori, Tana River, and Homa Bay districts. Relief items consisting of 6000 blankets, 3000 tarpaulins, 3000 mosquito nets, 3,000 jerry cans, 3000 kitchen sets and 300,000 chlorine tablets have also been pre-position in Kisumu, Busia, and Malindi.

The government is in touch with all major agencies and partners for any assistance that might be required. World Vision, African Medical Research Foundation (AMREF), and the Israeli Embassy have committed funds for stock. Leftover funds from UNDFP have also been offered.

Red Cross action

The Federation allocated CHF 50,000 from its Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF), to assist the Kenya Red Cross to preposition disaster preparedness stock in flood prone area and purchase further stock to meet a shortfall of 10, 000 family kits required for the national disaster preparedness stock scenario. The Head of Africa Department in Geneva has approved this allocation; the Kenya Red Cross is not required to refund this amount.



An assessment by a Red Cross Action Team confirms that flooding reported that the situation is stabilizing; the rain has subsided in most parts of the country and allowed volunteers to access the flood-affected areas to assist the affected families. The Kenya Red Cross information officer undertook a field visit on 17 May to Nyando district where the floods have killed 3 people and displaced a further 2,261 people; severely damaged 21 primary schools and destroyed most crops including maize and millet. The situation has since improved and the water levels subsided; most of the displaced people have returned back to their homes.

Nevertheless, the water and sanitation situation in Nyando is still bad with sanitation system clogged; chlorine tablets have been distributed. Mosquitoes pose a big problem in the area. Many people interviewed reported cases of malaria particularly among children and pregnant mothers; this is confirmed by a sharp rise in cases reported in the clinics. The Nyando Branch of the Kenya Red Cross has distributed a total of 233 mosquito nets, exhausting all its stock but has applied for more. The branch exhausted its stocks of mosquito spray but these will be replenished thanks to the DREF allocation.

The branch mobilized 36 volunteers during the flooding period who have distributed relief items, conducted assessments and participated in the evacuation of flood victims. In addition to the mosquito nets, a total of 370 blankets, 108 kitchen sets, 145 tarpaulins, and 500 bottles of juice have been distributed to the affected population.

Overall, Kenya Red Cross has distributed 544 blankets, 272 tarpaulins, 650 mosquito nets, 472 jerry cans, 22 kitchen sets, 121,000 chlorine tablets, and 200 pieces of soap to affected families in Nyando, Nyeri, and Kibera and Kasarani in Nairobi. It has distributed 600 bottles of limejuice donated by Coca Cola to victims in Nyeri. Besides the 36 volunteers active in Nyando, an additional 180 volunteers were involved in responding to the floods in six other branches.

The national society has also pre-positioned stock of 4,250MT relief items able to assist an additional 2,934 families should the situation drastically change. Red Cross volunteers continue with malaria prevention activities in the Rift Valley in conjunction with the Ministry of Health where 400 sachets of residual spray have been sent out to highland malaria prone areas of Nandi, Nyamira, Kericho and Bureti.

The Federation's Regional Disaster Management unit and East Africa sub-office have maintained close contact with the management of the Kenya Red Cross from the inception of the operation. At the peak of the crisis contacts with national and international media by the Kenya Red cross Information Officer supported by the Regional Information unit resulted in good coverage of the Red Cross response to the floods.

Kenya: Floods; Information Bulletin no. 2/2004

As a result the national society, which was well present in national media, made the headlines on BBC Focus on Africa and was quoted in reports by news agencies such as AP and DPA, the German News Agency.

While external communications functioned well, the flow of information - in terms of images and articles from the disaster area was rather weak. This is mainly due to the lack of expertise and technical skills in the concerned branches. The Kenyan Red Cross/Federation counterparts are already working on identifying ways to improve this area of activity in the future.

The CHF 50,000 DREF is sufficient to cover the present needs of the affected communities. In view of the stabilizing situation and capacity of the Kenya Red Cross to effectively respond to the situation, at this stage it is unlikely that the Federation will issue an international appeal for assistance.

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 for East Africa sub-regional programmes, no. 01.08/2004 \(a multi-country appeal that includes Kenya, Rwanda and Uganda\)](#).

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