

# MINOR EMERGENCY



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: CÔTES-DE-FER FLOODS AND LANDSLIDES

**Minor Emergency  
Update no. 1  
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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 181 countries.

### In Brief

**FUNDING HAS BEEN REQUESTED FROM THE FEDERATION'S DISASTER RELIEF EMERGENCY FUND (DREF) TO RESPOND TO THIS OPERATION.**

**UNEARMARKED FUNDS TO REPAY DREF ARE ENCOURAGED.**

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*All International Federation assistance seeks to adhere to the [Code of Conduct for the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and Non-Governmental Organisations \(NGO's\) in Disaster Relief](#) and is committed to the [Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Disaster Response \(Sphere\)](#) in delivering assistance to the most vulnerable.*

*For longer-term programmes in this or other countries or regions, please refer to the Federation's Annual Appeal. For support to or for further information concerning Federation programmes or operations in this or other countries, or for national society profiles, please also access the Federation's website at <http://www.ifrc.org>*

### The situation

Between 7 and 15 June 2005, torrential rain beat down on the commune of Côtes-de-Fer in the South-East Department, resulting in both the swelling of the river and serious flooding in the commune. During the last day of the rains, a tremor was felt during some five seconds at 2 o'clock in the morning, the cause of which remains unclear (source: members of the community including the Mayor of Côtes-de-Fer and volunteers from the local branch of the Haitian National Red Cross Society). According to those responsible for the national system for the management of risks and disasters, floods are also threatening the Departments of the South and Grand'Anse, and

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potentially the entire country (source: article published in the newspaper “Le Nouvelliste” no. 37175 of 15 June 2005).

It has been difficult to assess the amount of rainfall as a result of the lack of appropriate equipment. In addition, information regarding the epicentre of the quake, its magnitude and the area affected is not available given a lack of recording devices for such events.

The worst-hit zone is the village of Marie Géalde Roberte, built for impoverished families at the foot of a hill made up of large stones. With around 50 houses, the village has some 300 inhabitants who live with the constant threat of natural disasters. With regard to health, the situation is critical; the commune has only one health centre with no beds or medical equipment. As a result of the lack of a potable water supply, the inhabitants drink river, with the risk of numerous illnesses (only 15 per cent of the houses in the commune have latrines) and cases of diarrhoea have already been identified.

The disaster in Côtes-de-Fer has seriously damaged three houses, leaving 13 families without shelter; a large rock came loose from the hill and fell on one of the houses. Two people were seriously injured and three others have suffered fractures. Plantations and cattle were swept away by the rains.

**Red Cross and Red Crescent action taken so far**

Alerted by the communal council, the local Red Cross branch mobilized ten volunteers who provided first aid. They evacuated those affected and provided them with accommodation in temporary shelters in a school and with host families. They also provided them with food using local resources. With the support of the Federation, the Haitian National Red Cross Society has drawn up plans to build four latrines for 450 people, two for men and two for women. They will also rehabilitate three damaged houses.

**The needs**

Given the number of people affected by the disaster - 78 people, including 18 women, 50 children and 10 men, the Haitian National Red Cross Society drew up a plan of action to respond to the immediate needs in the areas of health and logistics. As regards health, those affected need basic medicines and care is required for those who are injured. There is also a need of potable water and water purification tablets, buckets, jerry cans, filters and hygiene kits.

**Coordination**

The government has invited the population of the affected regions to take the necessary measures in the event of floods and to follow the advice of the competent authorities. The office of Civil Protection is mobilizing to respond to potential emergencies. On the spot, the government has as its only partners the Church and the Red Cross.

The Federation supported the Haitian National Red Cross Society for the assessment of the situation in order then to carry out relief activities to assist those affected. Médecins Sans Frontières has approached the Haitian National Red Cross Society to obtain information on the essential needs to be met.

[\*Click here to return to the title page and contact information.\*](#)