

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

SOMALIA: HEAVY RAINS

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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

This Information Bulletin (no. 1/2005) is being issued for information only. The Federation is not seeking funding or other assistance from donors for this operation at this time.

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The Situation

On 24 April 2005, heavy rains caused flash flooding in Hargeisa and its surroundings. At least five people died; another twenty people were injured and were admitted to Hargeisa hospital, according to official reports by the Somaliland government. Latest reports suggest the number killed may have risen to ten people. There was also property damage.

In total, 170 families in Hargeisa are currently affected. The flood completely destroyed the Hargeisa Club bridge. Walls and some of the buildings of Minsing, Haraf and Hadhwanag hotels near the riverbed were partially destroyed.



Hundreds of houses in Hargeisa were destroyed by the recent floods.

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Approximately 200 houses were partially or totally destroyed; these were located along the Hargeisa riverbeds. The police and armed forces relocated many from this area to safer locations. Authorities estimate that in the Hargeisa region alone some 1,000 people were displaced.

Other towns in Somaliland were also heavily affected. Besides local residents, hundreds of Somali returnees lost their makeshift homes in the Kasoor Camp on the outskirts of Burao. (Source: UN). Note: Returnees, internally displaced persons and refugees constitute about a fifth of the population of Somaliland's major towns.

Infrastructure was damaged and thousands of livestock were killed in several towns including Berbera, Burao and Somaliland's capital Hargeisa. In Burao, 340 km east of Hargeisa, a school and a hospital were also damaged. With the runway washed away, the town's airstrip is temporarily closed.

The main road linking Burao to Lasanod is impassable. Floods have also destroyed telephone and electricity poles. In the vicinity of Berbera, more than 100 houses are damaged, most of which were built over 50 years ago. Water wells located outside the town were also flooded.



Residents of Hargiesa assess the damage caused by floods to road infrastructure.

Assessments, involving the Somali Red Crescent Hargeisa branch, are currently under way in the mountainous area north of Hargeisa town particularly in Jalelo, Awbarkhadle, Malukta and Geeddeble which were affected by the rains.

Red Cross and Red Crescent action

The Somali Red Crescent conducted a needs assessment to establish the extent of damages and needs. People affected by the heavy rains have been accommodated temporarily in to three different locations: Malko-durduro, west of Hargeisa, Qudha-dheer, south of Hargeisa and the police headquarters near the Hargeisa Club.

The Red Crescent branch in Hargeisa has called up 100 volunteers. They are conducting risk awareness activities among the communities living near the riverbeds. People are advised to move to safer areas as more rains are expected to come. In coordination with the Hargeisa Regional Disaster Committee, the Red Crescent branch distributed 100 kitchen pots to affected families.

The national society, with the assistance of the Federation's regional delegation in Nairobi, has just completed a vulnerability and capacity assessment and contingency planning training exercise in Hargeisa that proved useful for this response.

The Somali Red Crescent and Somalia Delegation participated in meetings with UN agencies and NGOs in Hargeisa and Nairobi to coordinate response to the emergency. Through the Hargeisa Regional Disaster Committee, WFP and UNICEF have distributed food, blankets and plastics sheets to 170 families.

The government has also given food to the affected people. At present, UNICEF and WFP state that they have sufficient pre-positioned stocks in Hargeisa of food and non-food items to respond to all known needs.

The situation as well and arising needs and possible gaps will be reviewed once the outcome of the ongoing assessments of the outlying areas is completed.



Somali Red Crescent, authorities and UN agencies are conducting a rapid needs assessment in the affected area.

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For longer-term programmes, please refer to the Federation's 2005 Annual Appeal for Somalia, no. 05AA002 – http://www.ifrc.org/cgi/pdf_appeal.pl?annual05/05AA002.pdf

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