

# 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

## TANZANIA: FLOODING IN ZANZIBAR

22 April 2005

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. 01/2005) is being issued for information only. The Federation is not seeking funding or other assistance from donors for this operation at this time. Based on further updates and details from assessment reports, or should the situation deteriorate, the Federation may consider international support through DREF or 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

Unprecedented heavy rainfall in Zanzibar Island for two consecutive days (17-18 April 2005) has led to heavy flooding in what has been described as the worst in 40 years. The flooding has completely submerged several hundred houses, totally damaged a few and destroyed infrastructure in six of the hardest hit administrative locations/wards of Mwanakelekwe, Jang'ombe, Sebuleni, Karahani, Mombasa and Miembeni in Zanzibar urban.

To date, no resulting deaths or injuries have been reported by the government; however, 150 families have been formally registered to have been rendered homeless, and have been given temporary accommodation in three schools (closed due to the flooding). As of Wednesday 20 April, 2005, sixty-four (64) houses had been destroyed in urban areas and 10 in rural areas. All household items were lost in the deluge.

A bridge linking Zanzibar town to one of the affected locations in Zanzibar South was also badly damaged and partly washed away. Fortunately, most roads have suffered minimal damage and are still passable. Three power transformers were damaged leaving some of these areas without electricity.

## **Tanzania: Flooding in Zanzibar; Information Bulletin no. 1/2005**

Five boreholes which cater for the most of the domestic water requirements in the affected areas were badly damaged and contaminated, posing the threat of an outbreak of water-borne diseases. Two cases of cholera – endemic in Zanzibar - have already been reported, but local measures to rapidly contain the situation exist and have been successfully mobilized in the past.

The local government authorities undertook a preliminary assessment; this was followed with a local appeal for cash and in-kind donations for water treatment chemicals, food and medicine. The local government authorities in Zanzibar are also issuing cash handouts to the families sheltered in schools for purchasing of essential/basic food items. At an emergency meeting organized by the local government authorities in Zanzibar, an urgent request was made to assist 1,758 families affected, including those who had been residing in 800 houses impacted by the floods.

Other organizations on-site include UNICEF - which has provided water storage facilities and some food items to the displaced families - and Care International. UNDP is coordinating the UN response to the disaster.

### **Red Cross and Red Crescent action**

The Zanzibar branch of the Tanzania Red Cross National Society<sup>1</sup> participated in the preliminary assessment of the damage undertaken by the local government authorities. The national society has also put 55 trained volunteers, disaster response staff and first aiders on standby for subsequent interventions.

The Tanzania Red Cross disaster management department and the Zanzibar branch are closely monitoring the situation; however, neither the Zanzibar branch nor the Tanzania Red Cross headquarters have any disaster preparedness stock.

Based on a request by the national society, the Federation's regional delegation in Nairobi is deploying the regional water and sanitation officer to join the Tanzania Red Cross team in assessing the situation in order to determine the most effective intervention strategy. A member of the regional disaster response team (RDRT) will also be deployed to join the team. The regional disaster management department is coordinating the Red Cross response with UN agencies and NGOs and contacting suppliers and transport agencies.

*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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<sup>1</sup> Tanzania Red Cross National Society – <http://www.ifrc.org/where/country/check.asp?countryid=189>