

# 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

## KENYA: FLOODS

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### In Brief

**CHF 100,000 (USD 80,192 OR EUR 65,040) HAS BEEN ALLOCATED 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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### The Situation

Local media has reported that at least five people have died since the onset of heavy rains in the beginning of May 2005. Kenya Red Cross Society assessments indicates that one person died in flooding in Dadaab, and over 10,000 people are displaced countrywide due to heavy downpours that have led to floods.

According to the KRCS, the situation has worsened in recent days. The western parts of Kenya are the most severely hit by the rains. Water levels in most rivers are currently rising and many areas are flooding. The first week of May 2005 brought increased rainfall that resulted in the death of livestock and destruction of houses and property. Thousands of acres of farmland containing mostly maize and millet have been destroyed, raising fears of

## **Kenya: Floods; Minor Emergency no. 05ME032**

looming famine. Schools are currently experiencing low daily attendance rates or have been closed, while others are dealing with the loss of books and educational materials.

Kenya has been experiencing massive floods during the annual rainy seasons since the 1997 El Niño rains. Based on last year's experience, national authorities, the Red Cross and other humanitarian partners contemplate several intervention scenarios. Forecasts from the meteorological department predict two more months of rain, with possibly more severe consequences. The renovation of the dykes in Budalangi by the National Youth Service has lessened the impact of the flooding in this area. The government is working with all agencies and partners in coordinating assistance that might be required.

**In Isiolo District**, according to an assessment team (*see team composition below*), heavy rains pounded Merti Division on 29 April 2005, causing severe floods that affected 300 families (180 in Merti town and another 120 in Gulesa and Malkagala, all within a radius of 40km of Merti town). The team found that mud-walled houses had collapsed, some rendered inhabitable, while others were washed away. Property (value unknown) was also destroyed. 350 goats and sheep were reported killed.

The affected families sought temporary shelter from friends and relatives as they waited for water levels to subside before returning to their houses. Merti town was cut off from Isiolo town due to impassable roads, causing a serious food shortage and skyrocketing food prices, further complicating the food deficit situation.

Classes in all the schools in Merti Division were also disrupted. Limited numbers of teachers and students reported when schools opened for the new term, and the majority of the teachers were stranded in Isiolo town. There is a need for supplementary feeding as there are cases of malnourished children in Merti. Pit latrines in Merti Secondary, Gamocho Primary and other schools were either washed away or had collapsed. The Public Health Officer expressed fears of disease outbreak.

**Rachuonyo and Homa Bay Districts** were severely affected by floods when the Oluch, Mango and Awach Kagan rivers in the two districts overflowed their banks. In these districts, there is a high likelihood of increased malaria and waterborne diseases (cholera and dysentery) since access to clean water is limited. Some of the vital road links have been washed away, increasing the number of bed-ridden patients who cannot access medical treatment.

**In Homa Bay District**, 1,200 people were displaced and 56 houses destroyed. Over 50 cattle were killed and hundreds of acres of farmland submerged. Villagers are allegedly feeding on some of the dead animals, posing serious health risks. Pit latrines have also over-flown posing a health hazard to the community.

**In Rachuonyo District**, some 2,268 people have been displaced (576 people in Kayitir, 972 people in Kawadhgone, and 720 people in Koyugi). A total of 420 houses were destroyed in the 3 areas and an additional 707 domestic animals were reported killed. A KRCS assessment team on the ground found that Central Karachuonyo and North Eastern Karachuonyo were completely inaccessible.

Many people have been accommodated in schools and 6 churches in the area. There are reports of people coughing and respiratory tract infections. All water sources have been contaminated as latrines have sunk, increasing the risk of diarrhea. Only a little chlorine powder has been given. Stagnant water may also cause cases of malaria. The Government of Kenya distributed food to the people.

**In Nyatike (Migori)**, there has been severe flooding with unconfirmed reports indicating that 2,000 families have been affected. In Central Kaden location, 3 areas were affected by severe floods; 700 households in Kakelo sub-location, 200 households in Lower Karapulo and 450 households in Lower West Kanyuor. In North Kaden, 100 households were affected in Magungu, while 100 people were affected in Aleko village of West Kaden. There are no camps for people to seek shelter and other relief assistance. Some pupils have relocated to other schools, while some have had to cross 3 rivers to reach schools. Cases of mosquitoes, contaminated water, and the limited availability of usable toilets increase the potential of water borne diseases. Health facilities are not accessible, and limited food assistance has reached Nyatike.

## Kenya: Floods; Minor Emergency no. 05ME032

**In Kisumu**, 453 people have been displaced by floods. The main areas affected are Chiga and Central Kolwa locations in Winam Division. The floods in Central Kolwa were caused by Nyamasaria and Mahenya rivers. Kadibo Division has not experienced any floods but the community is on high alert. 550 children from three schools (Bungu, Anywang, and Tago) were reported to be at risk. Most people have moved to higher ground as they wait for their homes to dry out.

**In Garissa District**, two people were injured and property was washed away by flooding. Floods have also been reported in Dadaab Division of Garissa District, affecting thousands of people (both locals and refugees). Garissa town was also flooded following a heavy downpour on 20 May 2005. Over 25,000 Somali refugees living in Ifo camp in Dadaab have been displaced and one person died following heavy rains in the region.

The flooding has also raised concern of disease outbreaks at a camp that hosts 53,000 Somalis. UNHCR and government officials have moved 120,000 families to higher grounds. WFP reported that access to camps has also been hampered due to the floods. As a result, transportation of food aid to the camps has been disrupted and will most likely affect food distribution for the month of June 2005.

### Red Cross and Red Crescent Action

The Kenya Red Cross Society (KRCS) has both the capacity and experience to respond efficiently to disasters of this size. Working closely with the Federation's structures in the region and sub-region, from the onset of the disaster the KRCS distributed relief items (blankets, plastic sheeting and kitchen sets) to some 2,528 families (15,168 people) in:

<u>Area</u>	<u>No. of Families</u>
Isiolo	300
Rachonyo	578
Homa Bay	100
Migori	1,550

Additional sheets of tarpaulin, blankets, mosquito nets, jerrycans, kitchen sets, and chlorine tablets have also been dispatched to assist up to 3,000 potential flood victims in Western Kenya. This assistance provided to those affected by the floods so far has been delivered from the disaster preparedness stocks replenished by the Danish Red Cross and a CHF 50,000 Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF) after assistance to victims of floods in 2004. CHF 100,000 has been allocated from the Federation's DREF for this operation to replenish relief items and to build up national DP stocks. Should the present flooding continue KRCS might consider launching an appeal for more assistance to replenish its contingency stocks.

The national society has pre-positioned relief stocks in the Kisumu branch warehouse that should adequately cover the needs of 700 families. Items to be distributed are:

- blankets.
- tarpaulin.
- jerrycans.

An assessment team comprising staff from the Office of the President, the National Operation Centre, two representatives from the US Embassy (including the wife of the US Ambassador) and the KRCS Disaster Response Officer visited the Merti Division, Isiolo District. Following the team's report, the KRCS distributed 600 blankets, 300 sheets of tarpaulin, 300 mosquito nets, 300 kitchen sets, 300 jerry cans, 324,000 chlorine tablets and 1,200 bars of soap, as well as 518 bales of maize flour, 24 bags of beans and 675 kg of cooking fat to 1,800 people **in Isiolo**.

On 14 May 2005, KRCS responded to 100 families affected by floods **in Kisumu**. 200 blankets, 100 sheets of tarpaulin, and 100 kitchen sets were distributed. The RCAT team of the Kisumu branch conducted a needs assessment of the floods.

**In Rachuonyo**, KRCS distributed 200 blankets and 100 sheets of tarpaulin to 2,268 people. The Government of Kenya also distributed 60 bags of maize, 15 bags of green grams, and 15 cartons of cooking oil. Non-food items for 100 families were also distributed to 1,800 people displaced **in Homa Bay**.

**Current Needs/Gaps for floods in Kenya for Non-Food Items**

The table below reflects the current items and their cost to respond to a projected total number of 10,000 families likely to be affected by floods:

Items	Available	Required (units)	Deficit (units)	Estimated Unit Cost (Kshs)	Estimated Total Cost (Kshs)
Blankets	3,000	20,000	17,000	300	5,100,000
Tarpaulins	1,150	10,000	8,850	700	6,200,000
Jerricans	4,702	20,000	15,298	300	4,600,000
Kitchen sets	3,072	10,000	6,928	600	4,200,000
Bar Soaps	25,920	40,000	14,080	40	600,000
Chlorine Tablets	287,000	2,600,000	2,313,000	1.5	3,500,000
<b>TOTAL</b>					<b>24,200,000</b>

Other priority needs include:

- anti-malaria for prophylaxis against malaria.
- mosquito nets for expectant mothers and children.
- cholera kits.

**Coordination**

The KRCS is a member of the Kenyan National Sudden Onset Disaster Committee. For the second consecutive year, national authorities have asked the KRCS to remain the lead agency for the distribution of aid (other than food) during the present flood disaster response. The KRCS has built up its preparedness and response capacity from challenges and experiences of past flood operations. Further assessments to determine populations affected and their immediate needs are currently being undertaken by KRCS branches countrywide.

A 24-hour nationwide KRCS surveillance system is monitoring every major flood development. About 30 volunteers from each of the flood-affected or flood-prone branches are either active or on alert ready to intervene. A network of HF and VHF radios recently installed in all flood-prone areas through funding from the Danish Red Cross and ICRC facilitates the transmission of information from branches to the KRCS headquarters. KRCS also co-chairs the National Coordination meetings where updates on decisions taken are made on a regular basis.

National authorities have also pre-positioned relief food in key areas, including maize, beans and vegetable oil for potential distribution to displaced families. The Ministry of Health and KRCS are working closely to prevent any possible malaria outbreak. A team of trained RCATs undertook an initial assessment to establish the extent of damage caused by the floods, as well as the immediate needs to be met. Preliminary results of the assessment indicate that heavy rains continue in Homa Bay, Rachuonyo, and Migori.

Should the present flooding continue KRCS might consider launching an appeal for more aid to replenish its contingency stocks, but the magnitude of disaster will determine the future strategy and response. The requested DREF will cover the present needs of the affected communities and capacity of KRCS to effectively respond to the immediate situation. The Federation's East Africa sub-regional office and the regional delegation maintain constant contact with the national society in sharing timely information, situation updates, and needs assessments. At this stage KRCS has not requested technical support from the Federation, but delegates remain available should their support be needed.

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