

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

NIGERIA: FLOODS

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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

CHF 100,000 (USD 77,700 OR EUR 64,082) HAS BEEN ALLOCATED FROM THE FEDERATION'S DISASTER RELIEF EMERGENCY FUND (DREF) TO ASSIST SOME 2,700 BENEFICIARIES FOR A PERIOD OF THREE MONTHS.

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 Organizations (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 please refer to the Federation's 2005 Annual Appeal for Nigeria sub-regional programmes, no. 05AA025 – http://www.ifrc.org/cgi/pdf_appeals.pl?annual05/05AA025.pdf.

The situation

As a result of eight hours of heavy rains that occurred on 7 August, 2005 the heaviest and worst floods in 40 years occurred in Jalingo, the state capital of Taraba (north-east of Nigeria, bordering Cameroon), killing over 100 people and displacing more than 50,000 others. Hundreds of people on the River Jalingo Bridge linking the state of Taraba with other parts of the country were in immediate danger of being swept away when the bridge caved in, and 80 of them were swept away by the powerful currents. Among those feared dead was an assistant commissioner of police who had gone to disperse the crowds from the bridge. The policeman hung on the bridge's rails for over three hours waiting for assistance. Other victims were passengers who were being conveyed across the bridge. 40 bodies had been recovered by 26 August 2005 and five people were rescued.

Nigeria: Floods; Minor Emergency no. 05ME51

The rescue operation was severely hampered by the volume and speed of the raging waters. The most affected areas are Mafindi, Nunkai, Magami, Lamurde, Mallam Gabdo and Sabon-gari.

The following statistics summarize the situation:

- 80 houses totally swept off.
- 410 houses extensively destroyed.
- 2,661 families displaced (now in IDP camps).

The internally displaced people (IDP) in the camps are located as follows:

- 1,100 families at Nafindi Primary School.
- 880 families at Lamurde Primary School.
- 621 families at Nunkai Primary School.



People struggle to cross a flooded section

The remaining IDP's are currently accommodated by friends, relatives and other community members.

Red Cross action taken so far

The Taraba state branch of the Nigerian Red Cross Society¹ mobilized 45 emergency and first aid team (EFAT) volunteers to play a lead role in the search and rescue operation, including provision of first aid services and transportation of the injured people to nearby hospitals not affected by the floods. The volunteers actively participated in evacuating the victims and their properties to safer areas. 50 volunteers involved in the operation are registered as IDP's and are maintaining the hygiene, sanitation and security in the camps.

The national society north east zone disaster preparedness and response officer has also been deployed to Taraba State by the national headquarters to coordinate the activities of the national society's volunteers, in collaboration with the branch's secretary and Taraba branch's disaster preparedness coordinator.

Through the British Red Cross's small-scale emergency fund, Nigerian Red Cross Society was able to temporarily support the deployed staff and volunteers for one-week period and carry out a prompt assessment of the flood disaster. Food items and second-hand clothes were also distributed to 200 affected families.

The disaster management delegate from the Dakar regional delegation is also in the field assisting the disaster response operation, assessments and coordination with other agencies and institutions.

The needs

Urgent needs include basic food items, health and sanitation support, tracing and establishment of family links, staffing and equipping the volunteers.

Coordination

The governor of Taraba State inspected the four most affected areas and set up two committees to respond to the situation:

- A technical committee to temporarily re-link the state.
- A relief committee to verify the number of IDP's and the extent of damage.

The relief committee, headed by the deputy governor and co-assisted by the permanent secretary of the Taraba State Relief Agency, set up three temporary shelters in primary schools and provided basic items, including mattresses, surface water tanks, mats, and latrines. Expert divers were deployed in the river and swamp areas to conduct search

¹ Nigerian Red Cross Society- <http://www.ifrc.org/where/country/check.asp?countryid=128>

Nigeria: Floods; Minor Emergency no. 05ME51

and rescue missions. The committee is comprised of the Nigerian Red Cross Society and government agencies such as the police, Federal Road Safety Commission (FRSC) and the Nigeria Security and Civil Defence Corps among others.

The technical committee has improvised a road linkage through an old bridge, which was abandoned when the new one came into use.

The Taraba state government has been overwhelmed by the situation and has appealed for assistance from the general public, the federal government, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and the international community at large. The operation is being supervised and monitored by the Nigerian Red Cross Society national headquarters, where the information and dissemination department is also handling media relations. Security issues will be discussed and agreed with the military, police, immigration, customs and the Nigeria Security and Civil Defence Corps.

The Bauchi zonal office of the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) is assisting with drugs for both children and adult while the World Health Organization (WHO) has immunized all children in the camps and donated oral rehydration salts (ORS). Donations have also been received from Jama'atul Nasir Islam and Christian/Muslim Peace Group.

Plan of action

Goal: To provide immediate non-food and dry food relief assistance to 1,300 vulnerable families affected by the floods disaster in Jalingo, Taraba state of Nigeria.

Objectives

- Provide one-month dry food ration for 600 most vulnerable families affected by the floods in Jalingo, Taraba state.
- Provide first aid services and basic sanitation within the IDP camps.
- Provide basic health support and health education for the affected people and referral services to identified health centres.
- Provide assistance in tracing and establishing family links.
- Liaise and coordinate with relevant authorities and agencies and operate within the sphere standards in all of the disaster response activities.
- Mobilize, train, equip and manage volunteers and staff to ensure an effective disaster management operation.

Activities planned to attain the objectives

1. Basic food items:
 - Field assessment and coordination with other partners, with the support of DM delegate from regional delegation.
 - Beneficiary identification and registration of IDP's in the three camps.
 - Procurement, transportation, storage and distribution of food and non-food items to affected populations.
 - Transportation and delivery of the supplementary food to IDP in the three camps.
2. Basic health and sanitation:
 - Emergency and first aid teams are deployed.
 - Provision of first aid services and basic sanitation in the three camps is continued by the Nigerian Red Cross Society's volunteers.
3. Tracing and family linking:
 - Establishment of a missing persons identification centre.
 - Provision of a database to assist with the location of missing family members by coordinating and collaborating with other stakeholders.
4. Coordination with stakeholders:
 - Conducting advocacy and sensitization visits to relevant government agencies and other stakeholders.

Nigeria: Floods; Minor Emergency no. 05ME51

- Organizing weekly stakeholders meeting and briefings.
 - Production of weekly updates and progress reports and sharing them with all stakeholders.
5. Staffing and equipment:
- Ensuring a coordinated and comprehensive management capacity.
 - Instituting a counselling and psycho-social support programme for staff and volunteers.

Scope of operation

This operation is expected to cover a three-month period to assist 2,700 direct beneficiaries.

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