

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

ETHIOPIA: HEAVY RAINS AND FLOODS

29 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. 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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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

After heavy rainfall over a 48-hour period, the Wabe Shabelle River flooded over its banks, washing away about 35 villages in the Somali region of Ethiopia on 23 April 2005. Flooding affected the zone of Gode, including West and East Imi. Over 40 people died in the disaster and many others remain missing. The emergency response was hindered as roads leading to the area were under water and impassable. Many people lost their houses and their crops in the flood, increasing food insecurity and economic hardship in a region already suffering from prolonged drought conditions. Areas of the Somali region continue to remain at risk due to the rising river level. The Government of Ethiopia has not asked for international assistance at this time.

Red Cross and Red Crescent action

The Ethiopian Red Cross Society¹ has mobilized volunteers and distributed non-food items to flood-affected people. This response is being coordinated with ICRC, as lead agency for the Movement in the region, and with other humanitarian organizations. The Federation's regional delegation in Nairobi has offered support for a rapid assessment and possible emergency response, should the national society and ICRC require it. The ICRC is active in the Somali region and, in principle, has sufficient capacity to conduct operations within the current scale.

United Nations agencies, the Government and ICRC met in Gode to plan relief operations (25 April 2005). The current needs include food, shelter, blankets and utensils, and medical care, due to the potential increase of cases of malaria and water-borne diseases.

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 2005 Annual Appeal:

- *Horn of Africa sub-regional programmes no. 05AA005 (includes Djibouti, Ethiopia and sub-regional office) – http://www.ifrc.org/cgi/pdf_appeals.annual05/05AA005.pdf.*

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¹ Ethiopian Red Cross Society – <http://www.ifrc.org/where/country/check.asp?countryid=65>