

CAMEROON: FLOODS

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The Disaster

During the first week of August 2000, Douala has suffered from torrential rainfall. During the night of 3 August, 200 mm of rain fell in Douala, Cameroon's main port. With the ground already waterlogged after a week of heavy rains, floodwaters swept through many parts of the city causing considerable damage. Most affected were the suburbs and shanty towns located on the outskirts of the city. Three persons were killed and two are still missing. Thousands of homes have been damaged and more than 300 people have been made homeless. The authorities have created a crisis committee which includes the Cameroon Red Cross Society.

Red Cross/Red Crescent Action

The volunteers of the Cameroon Red Cross Society assisted local fireman in evacuation of the population trapped in the flood waters and evaluated the needs in the affected areas. The Red Cross has distributed blankets to the victims who lost their homes. These people are temporarily accommodated at the local naval base.

Additionally, the Cameroon Red Cross Society will distribute mosquito nets to the most vulnerable in malaria infested areas. The Cameroon Red Cross Society has an operational relief and health department. The Douala Red Cross branch consists of 5 sub-branches with 3,000 members and 500 volunteers. The Federation Regional Delegation in Cameroon has cholera kits available in the event of an outbreak.

Needs

The Cameroon Red Cross Society is planning a four month sanitation operation in the districts of Douala, Bonaberi, Bépanda and Nylon benefiting 24,000 people.

The Red Cross will train and organise 30 volunteers in hygiene and sanitation. The volunteers will be responsible for disinfecting wells, cleaning stagnant pools and for unblocking of the irrigation and sewer systems.

The equipment required to carry out the task includes wheelbarrows, shovels, rakes, boots, gloves and stretchers.

The Federation has released CHF 40,000 from the Disaster Relief Emergency Fund to support this operation. An additional amount of CHF 34,000 is required to cover the total project budget.

For further information please contact the Desk for Central Africa, Ms Andree Houle, phone no. ++.41.22.730.4.316.

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