

# **ZIMBABWE: FLOODS**

23 February, 2000

## ***Information Bulletin N° 1***

### ***The Situation***

The storms ravaging southern Africa over the last two weeks are also causing severe flooding in southwestern Zimbabwe. Beitbridge has been the hardest hit area, but over the last 24 hours the eastern parts of the country have also been affected. Most affected areas are in Manicaland, Masvingo and Matabeleland South provinces. The floods have left more than 20,000 people displaced, and there are urgent needs in terms of shelter, blankets, clean drinking water, and sanitation facilities.

In Manicaland and Masvingo Provinces, a lack of access to the flood areas is causing constraints to assessments, with many bridges washed away. The government has not yet declared a State of National Disaster in these areas, but the army and airforce has been put on alert to evacuate victims.

With media reports highlighting the humanitarian impact, as well as destroyed housing and infrastructure, the Red Cross is one of the few operational organisations capable of immediately assisting victims, coordinating with government authorities.

### ***Red Cross/Red Crescent Action***

CHF 100,000 has been allocated from the Federation's Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF). The Zimbabwe Red Cross Society (ZRCS) has been involved in coordinating meetings with government departments and other relief organisations to mobilise resources to the affected areas. The ZRCS Headquarters, through the branches in the three affected provinces, has mobilised volunteers to assist in the areas which can be reached by road. With more rains expected, there is a genuine risk of an outbreak of cholera or other water borne diseases. The ZRCS will continue to collaborate with the government and other relief organisations to ensure that assistance is provided to displaced families and vulnerable groups. The ZRCS is also planning to undertake an education campaign about the floods and the related health risks.

### ***Needs***

Material support is urgently required to assist the affected families in the form of shelter (tents and plastic sheeting), sanitation facilities, blankets, and safe drinking water. These needs will be further detailed in further reports as assessment results are received.

Peter Rees-Gildea  
Director  
Operations Funding and Reporting Department

Bekele Geleta  
Director  
Africa Department

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