

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

CENTRAL AMERICA: HIGH TIDES & FLOODING

12 September 2002

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This Information Bulletin is for information only. The Federation is not seeking any funding or other assistance from donors for this operation at this time.

The Situation

As a result of an earthquake of 7.5 on the Richter Scale north of Papua New Guinea, strong waves were generated on the eastern Pacific coast at El Tamarindo, department of La Unión, El Salvador, affecting the community of Las Puntas. On Monday, 9 September, at approximately 16.30 hours, rough seas resulted in flooding which stretched 60 metres inland, destroying 16 houses and damaging a further 7.

Volcanic-seismic activity also affected the Pacific coast of Nicaragua on the same day with huge waves hitting at 5.10 hours and 17.30 hours. This caused damage in the town of Corinto, the main port on the coast in the Golfo de Fonseca, with a population of 20,576 inhabitants.

The Los Pescadores area of Corinto was partially flooded and 15 families were evacuated, 14 staying in shelters and one with family. 12 houses were affected, 10 of which were destroyed.

Rough seas and high tides also hit Cedeño, department of Choluteca, on the Pacific coast in Honduras between 13.00 hours and 15.00 hours on Sunday, 8 September and at 1.00 hours and 3.00 hours on 9 September. 120 houses were flooded with sea water, leaving a metre of sand in the damaged houses; those evacuated have joined family members.

Red Cross/Red Crescent Action

In El Salvador, 76 people were evacuated with the assistance of six Red Cross volunteers from the Intipuca branch, in coordination with the national police and local authorities, and have taken shelter in the school at Tamarindo.

Volunteers from La Unión and Intipuca branches are currently assessing the damage and the needs of the population. The Intipuca branch warehouse has some stocks of clothing and the La Unión branch has 50 blankets available. The headquarters of the Salvadorean Red Cross Society will provide other relief goods that may prove necessary, in accordance with the assessments taking place.

The Nicaraguan Red Cross branches of Corinto and Chinandega are on alert, assisting with evacuation and providing support to the civil defence. Three specialized relief volunteers working with the Golfo de Fonseca project were mobilized and the Federation provided a vehicle in the area, together with the Spanish Red Cross which also provided a vehicle and a driver to help transport those affected.

The branch of Corinto is a member of the local emergency committee, thus ensuring coordination of relief activities.

In Honduras, the national emergency committee (COPECO) supplied a week's food rations for 130 families today, 10 September. The Honduran Red Cross sent an evaluation team to the area which is led by a national intervention team (NIT) member. Volunteers are on alert in branches near to the affected area. The National Society will also send today, 10 September, 750 sheets, 500 jerry cans and 500 personal hygiene kits.

Experts predict that seismic activity in the Gulf area may continue. Needs of those affected continue to be assessed and further information will be provided as soon as it becomes available.

For a full description of the National Society profile, see www.ifrc.org

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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 Annual Appeal.

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