

# 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

## **MYANMAR: FLOODS**

13 September 2002

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*This bulletin is primarily for information only. While not formally requesting the Federation to launch an international appeal, the Myanmar Red Cross Society (MRCS) has indicated that offers of external assistance - to maintain the ongoing response from staff and volunteers to the deteriorating floods situation - would be most welcome.*

### ***The Situation***

Heavy monsoon rains starting mid-August, caused serious flooding and landslides along the main rivers in Myanmar: Chindwin, Ayeyarwady and Thanlwin. Several thousands of families were displaced sporadically in Kayin and Mon States, but more particularly in remote locations up the Chindwin river in Sagaing Division in the north west of the country.

By early September, water levels had receded in most places, allowing the displaced to return home, except in some parts of Sagaing Division. In recent days, however, widespread rain has resumed and flood levels are about to be reached again along the three major rivers and several smaller ones farther south.

As a result, in isolated townships along the Chindwin from Hkamti in the north to Mingin, an estimated 2,000 families are in need of humanitarian assistance, many of them displaced in locations that are inaccessible because of flooding and partly damaged infrastructure.

Local authorities in the Sagaing Division and the MRCS Supervisory Committees continue to monitor the situation. The YMCA, supported by Japanese Embassy, is carrying out relief work from its Mandalay office, for some 900 families around and north of Monywa.

Meanwhile, in other flooded parts of the country the situation is again worsening. Yesterday (Thursday), the country's Hydrological and Meteorological Bureau handed down an early warning for Yangon, Ayeyarwady, Bago and other coastal divisions/states, focusing on the next high tide starting 19 September, when flood waters from the major rivers in the north, coinciding with heavy rain and rising sea waters could result in the inundation of large and densely populated areas, including the capital city.

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

From the start of this latest floods disaster, the MRCS, supported by the Federation's Myanmar delegation was quickly into action, despatching an assessment team to Sagaing Division, with the Society's supervisory committees in Kayin and Mon monitoring the situation in these provinces.

Earlier this week, the International Federation's South East Asia regional disaster response coordinator was assigned to Myanmar to work with the Myanmar delegation in supporting the MRCS.

To date, the MRCS through its volunteers in the affected areas has provided emergency health services and food/non-food assistance to more than 10 000 of the most needy - and the Society's 17 warehouses are now empty of any DP stocks, with replenishment an urgent priority.

Distributions of second-hand clothing are still possible and the respective Red Cross supervisory committees at division/state and township level continue to task assessment teams.

The Society also plans to assist at least 2,000 severely affected families in the Sagaing Division through local procurement of food and non-food items and, more broadly, is planning on the basis of the floods continuing in the coastal areas with even more devastating impact.

A joint MRCS/ Federation team will carry out a two-day field assessment early next week in Yangon and Ayeyarwady Divisions.

While the MRCS is not requesting the Federation to launch an international appeal, nevertheless the Society would welcome external assistance in order to continue its effective response to the deteriorating floods situation.

For a full description of the National Society profile, see [www.ifrc.org](http://www.ifrc.org)

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*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 Annual Appeal.*

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