

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

MADAGASCAR: FIFTH CYCLONE HITS ISLAND

16 March 2007

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 185 countries.

In Brief

This Bulletin (no. 1/2007) is being issued for information only, and reflects the situation and the information available at this time. The Federation is not seeking funding or other assistance from donors for this operation at this time.

Activities undertaken are aligned with the International Federation's Global Agenda, which sets out four broad goals to meet the Federation's mission to "improve the lives of vulnerable people by mobilizing the power of humanity".

Global Agenda Goals:

- **Reduce the numbers of deaths, injuries and impact from disasters.**
- **Reduce the number of deaths, illnesses and impact from diseases and public health emergencies.**
- **Increase local community, civil society and Red Cross/Red Crescent capacity to address the most urgent situations of vulnerability.**
- **Reduce intolerance, discrimination and social exclusion and promote respect for diversity and human dignity.**

The Situation

Cyclone Indlala hit the north-eastern coast of the Indian Ocean island of Madagascar on Thursday, 15 March 2007. With strong winds up to 165 km/h, the cyclone is still ravaging the country and is expected to last until Sunday, 18 March. It is moving on a path towards the south west of Madagascar and has left considerable damage on the north east coastline. Roofs have been blown away and around 40% of property in the town of Antalaha has been destroyed. About 90% of the buildings at the town's police station and CARE International offices have been damaged. Infrastructure such as water and electricity has also been affected.

Displaced and affected people from Maroantsetra have gathered at the town's municipal council hall. In Mananara North, rising water level in the river is threatening to cut off the area. Communication has been affected, denying small communities access to weather reports since the national radio has been off-air, in some areas, for the last two days. Authorities have considered closing schools in the area.

Cyclone Indlala is the fifth cyclone that has hit/affected the country within the past three months: Cyclone Bondo made landfall on 25 December 2006; Cyclone Clovis on 3 January 2007; Cyclone Favio on 18 January 2007; and Cyclone Gamede on 26 February 2007. This is the first time that the island has been struck by so many cyclones in such a short period. Seasonal rains have been made worse by the Inter-Tropical Convergence Zone (ITCZ) moving slightly south, resulting in continuous rains from the end of December 2006 to the present moment.

The accumulated impact of all these cyclones is damage to infrastructure and crops, flooding, landslides and displacement of communities. The Government of Malagasy estimates that 293,000 people have been affected by

Madagascar: Fifth cyclone hits island; Information Bulletin no. 1

the floods, with 32,000 displaced. More than 150,000 farming families have lost a total of 90,000 hectares of crop. Immediate needs include targeted food distribution to prevent malnutrition, essential drugs, water and sanitation.

On 20 February 2007, the Malagasy Government launched a US\$ 242 million appeal. On 15 March 2007, the United Nations and its humanitarian partners launched a Flash Appeal requesting nearly USD 9.6 million to provide aid to people affected by floods and cyclones for a period up to six months.

Red Cross Action

The Malagasy Red Cross Society (MRCS) has indicated that there are humanitarian needs arising from the recent storms and has proposed pre-positioning of stocks which could be released upon demand. The National Society has also highlighted the need to address the damage to livelihoods and the possibility of future storms during the current season. In order to have a more conclusive assessment of the humanitarian situation arising from the storms and to determine the capacity of the National Society to address existing and future gaps, a decision has been taken to place a disaster management (DM) specialist selected from the Regional Disaster Response Team (RDRT) with the Malagasy Red Cross for a period of 6 weeks. The DM specialist, who arrived on Wednesday 14 March, is expected to work closely with the MRCS and the International Federation staff in Madagascar.

No full assessment of the impact of Cyclone Indlala can begin before Monday, 19 March, given the prevailing weather and road conditions. The Federation Indian Ocean Islands sub-regional office is in close contact with the French Red Cross – through the Indian Ocean Regional Disaster Response Platform (PIROI)¹ – who would be the first to intervene, should the Malagasy Red Cross Society request for assistance in carrying out an assessment. In the event that back up assessment resources would be required, an RDRT alert has been issued. There are plans to reactivate links with the West and Central Africa regional delegation as the majority of RDRT members from the latter delegation are French speaking. Should there not be an appropriate response to the RDRT alert, there would be a need to consider deploying a Field Assessment and Co-ordination Team (FACT).

Coordination

The Malagasy Red Cross Society is working closely with the World Food Programme (WFP) which is intending to do food distributions targeting 2,348 families. Further co-ordination mechanisms are currently being explored with local actors and partners. As mentioned above, an assessment will be carried on the ground on Monday 19 March 2007, after the cyclone passes.

For further information please contact:

- ***In Madagascar:*** Ratsimbazafy Fanja Nantenaina, Secretary General, Malagasy Red Cross Society, Antananarivo; Email: crm@ds.mg; Phone + 261.20.222.21.11; Fax + 261.20.226.67.39
- ***In Mauritius:*** Susanna Cunningham, Head of Sub-Regional Office for the Indian Ocean Islands, Mauritius; Email: susanna.cunningham@ifrc.org; Phone + 230.454.69.34; Mobile + 230.252.08.55
- ***In Kenya:*** Per Jensnäs, Federation Head of East Africa Regional Delegation, Nairobi; Email: per.jensnaes@ifrc.org; Phone + 254.20.283.51.24; Fax + 254.20.271.27.77
- ***In Kenya:*** Youcef Ait Chellouche, Acting Regional Disaster Management Coordinator, Nairobi; Email: youcef.aitchellouche@ifrc.org; Phone + 254.20.283.21.17; Fax + 254.20.271.27.77
- ***In Geneva:*** Amna Al Ahmar, Federation Regional Officer for East Africa, Africa Department; Email: amna.alahmar@ifrc.org; Phone + 41.22.730.44.27; Fax + 41.22.733.03.95

All International Federation assistance seeks to adhere to the [Code of Conduct for the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and Non-Governmental Organizations \(NGO's\) in Disaster Relief](#) and is committed to the [Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Disaster Response \(Sphere\)](#) in delivering assistance to the most vulnerable.

For longer-term programmes in this or other countries or regions, please refer to the Federation's Annual Appeal. For support to or for further information concerning Federation programmes or operations in this or other countries, or for national society profiles, please also access the Federation's website at <http://www.ifrc.org>

[<Click here to return to the title page>](#)

¹ In French: Plate-forme d'intervention régionale pour l'océan Indien (PIROI).