

BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA: FLOODS AND SNOWSTORM

22 December 1999

Information Bulletin N° 1

The Disaster

On 16 December, a heavy storm hit the entire region of Bosnia and Herzegovina. The south-eastern part was particularly affected by heavy rains. This storm is considered to be the worst in the last 40 years. A State of Emergency has been declared for the Cantons of Sarajevo and Herzegovina-Neretva. Due to increased water levels and the opening of gates in the Konjic water reservoirs to relieve pressure on the dams, the areas near the Neretva river in Mostar were evacuated.

Both sides of the river were flooded in Mostar on 16 December, and seventy houses were completely flooded with water. Ninety people displaced by the floods were accommodated in the local collective centre. The rest are accommodated with host families and in a hotel. The total number of affected people in the areas of Mostar, Capljina and Citluk has risen to around 1,000 persons.

As a summary of the situation in the country, severe rainfalls and snow have affected the roads and communication systems in most of Bosnia and Herzegovina. All of the main roads in the country are at least partly closed, including the main road between Sarajevo and Mostar where the most severe flood damage has occurred. In many areas such as Tuzla, Banja Luka, Trebinje and Bihac, there are problems with electricity, heating and potable water.

The weather forecast predicts that heavy rains will continue for the next few days in the southern areas of Bosnia, as well as snow in the central and north areas of the country.

Red Cross/Red Crescent Action

The International Federation's Delegation received an official request from the Red Cross branch in Mostar for building materials, sleeping bags, furniture, stoves, clothing, food, plastic sheets, shoes and canisters for water. An allocation of CHF 66,682 from the Federation's Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF) has been released to cover the initial emergency activities.

To date, 700 sq. metres of plastic sheets, 100 mattresses and 200 blankets have been distributed, as well as food and hygiene parcels. Second hand clothes, donated by the Swedish Red Cross were also distributed in Mostar area.

BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA: FLOODS AND SNOWSTORM

22 December 1999

Information Bulletin N° 1

The Disaster

On 16 December, a heavy storm hit the entire region of Bosnia and Herzegovina. The south-eastern part was particularly affected by heavy rains. This storm is considered to be the worst in the last 40 years. A State of Emergency has been declared for the Cantons of Sarajevo and Herzegovina-Neretva. Due to increased water levels and the opening of gates in the Konjic water reservoirs to relieve pressure on the dams, the areas near the Neretva river in Mostar were evacuated.

Both sides of the river were flooded in Mostar on 16 December, and seventy houses were completely flooded with water. Ninety people displaced by the floods were accommodated in the local collective centre. The rest are accommodated with host families and in a hotel. The total number of affected people in the areas of Mostar, Capljina and Citluk has risen to around 1,000 persons.

As a summary of the situation in the country, severe rainfalls and snow have affected the roads and communication systems in most of Bosnia and Herzegovina. All of the main roads in the country are at least partly closed, including the main road between Sarajevo and Mostar where the most severe flood damage has occurred. In many areas such as Tuzla, Banja Luka, Trebinje and Bihac, there are problems with electricity, heating and potable water.

The weather forecast predicts that heavy rains will continue for the next few days in the southern areas of Bosnia, as well as snow in the central and north areas of the country.

Red Cross/Red Crescent Action

The International Federation's Delegation received an official request from the Red Cross branch in Mostar for building materials, sleeping bags, furniture, stoves, clothing, food, plastic sheets, shoes and canisters for water. An allocation of CHF 66,682 from the Federation's Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF) has been released to cover the initial emergency activities.

To date, 700 sq. metres of plastic sheets, 100 mattresses and 200 blankets have been distributed, as well as food and hygiene parcels. Second hand clothes, donated by the Swedish Red Cross were also distributed in Mostar area.

Nine hundred sq. metres of plastic sheets, 100 mattresses and 200 blankets, provided by UNHCR, were distributed in Capljina, while 300 blankets and one truck of food items were distributed in Citluk.

Coordination meetings between the local Red Cross Mostar branch, Spanish and French troops of the Stabilisation Force (SFOR), UNHCR, and other organisations are taking place to identify needs and distribute relief items. The local Red Cross is also in constant contact with local authorities in order to organise the distribution and assistance to the most vulnerable.

This disaster has also had a severe impact on the elderly people throughout the country, most of whom are beneficiaries of the Home Care Programme. The situation is particularly serious for the elderly of Sarajevo, Trebinje, Herzegovina-Neretva regions where most roads are blocked and the electrical power infrastructure grid has been disrupted for days. Vulnerable groups are still without heating and potable water, and they are unable to leave their homes to obtain food and health assistance. In these three regions 2,500 vulnerable are considered to be in desperate living conditions. The statistics on vulnerable groups in other areas of the country are still being compiled.

Needs

Outstanding needs include food and hygiene supplies for those who are affected by floods in Mostar, Capljina and Citluk, as well as building material, furniture, sleeping bags, blankets and mattresses, stoves and heating material. Donors are encouraged to replace the DREF funds.

Further support to cover the additional activities of Home Care teams in Sarajevo, Mostar, and Trebinje areas for the next two winter months is required.

Peter Rees-Gildea
Director
Operations Funding and Reporting Department

Bjorn Eder
Director
Europe Department

Nine hundred sq. metres of plastic sheets, 100 mattresses and 200 blankets, provided by UNHCR, were distributed in Capljina, while 300 blankets and one truck of food items were distributed in Citluk.

Coordination meetings between the local Red Cross Mostar branch, Spanish and French troops of the Stabilisation Force (SFOR), UNHCR, and other organisations are taking place to identify needs and distribute relief items. The local Red Cross is also in constant contact with local authorities in order to organise the distribution and assistance to the most vulnerable.

This disaster has also had a severe impact on the elderly people throughout the country, most of whom are beneficiaries of the Home Care Programme. The situation is particularly serious for the elderly of Sarajevo, Trebinje, Herzegovina-Neretva regions where most roads are blocked and the electrical power infrastructure grid has been disrupted for days. Vulnerable groups are still without heating and potable water, and they are unable to leave their homes to obtain food and health assistance. In these three regions 2,500 vulnerable are considered to be in desperate living conditions. The statistics on vulnerable groups in other areas of the country are still being compiled.

Needs

Outstanding needs include food and hygiene supplies for those who are affected by floods in Mostar, Capljina and Citluk, as well as building material, furniture, sleeping bags, blankets and mattresses, stoves and heating material. Donors are encouraged to replace the DREF funds.

Further support to cover the additional activities of Home Care teams in Sarajevo, Mostar, and Trebinje areas for the next two winter months is required.

Peter Rees-Gildea
Director
Operations Funding and Reporting Department

Bjorn Eder
Director
Europe Department