

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

SEYCHELLES: HEAVY RAINS & STRONG WINDS

13 September 2002

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Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF) CHF 40,000

This Information Bulletin is being issued based on the needs described below. A DREF allocation of CHF 40,000 has been released, and the Federation does not anticipate further needs. Unearmarked funds to repay DREF are needed. This operation will be reported on through the quarterly DREF update.

The Situation

The whole of Mahe and Praslin experienced heavy rain and strong wind from Friday 6 September to Sunday 8 September 2002 due to a tropical depression in the region, which was from an easterly direction.

The total number of people affected is estimated at 6,800, of which 375 families were forced to take refuge in their homes or with relatives.

The wind damaged housing, public buildings, roads power supplies and telecommunications. Some villages and settlements in the Grand Anse and Bay St Anne district were submerged and many hectares of cultivated land have been destroyed. Some livestock was also killed. The community depends heavily on agriculture.

Many roads have now been reopened after being blocked by fallen endemic trees. The Cote D'ore area was the most affected and local officials estimate it will take two weeks to get back to normal.

The Ministry of Health is advising the population on the risk of water born disease.

Red Cross/Red Crescent Action

The Red Cross Society of Seychelles (RCSS) Praslin branch volunteers have been active within the communities for the past three days, providing assistance in the provision of:

- ambulance services;
- food and relief; and
- transport to displaced families.

The RCSS Praslin Branch Action Team made an immediate assessment and a team from Mahe completed an assessment within 48 hours.

The next few days will be crucial. Some families are still waiting for their houses to be repaired especially those that have had their roof blown off.

The Needs

The immediate needs are for food and non-food items, such as mattresses, blankets, cooking sets, clothing, seeds and plants. Transportation for distribution will be a priority.

The RCSS is planning to provide essential food, and relief items to 2,250 vulnerable people, particularly in Grand Anse, Anse Kerlan, Baie St Anne, Cote Dor and Month Plaisir districts. The operation will work through the branches, which in turn will increase their capacity and preparedness for future such operations. Training will be also be provided to those branches lacking in the ability to respond effectively.

Seeds and plants will be distributed to farmers by the National Society in collaboration with the district administration. This will enable the farmers to build up their capacity after the loss of their crops.

The Baie St Anne and Grand Anse district administrators have been involved from the first assessment.

Monitoring of the operation will be the responsibility of the Seychelles Red Cross headquarters and Praslin branch. During distribution, daily activity reports from the branch will be submitted.

Capacity of the National Society

The National Society has Federation-trained personnel in relief and they will be engaged in the process. No permanent office exists on Praslin and volunteers operate the branch on a home office basis. The headquarters will support the branch during the operation.

Lack of transport is a major concern and trucks and drivers will need to be hired. There are enough volunteers to provide the relief.

The Seychelles Red Cross will adhere to the Code of Conduct and are committed to the Humanitarian Charter and Minimum standards in Disaster Response. Customary basic needs of the community, which are not included in the charter, will also be considered.

Note on DREF: The Federation's DREF has been strongly supported this year by the Australian, British, Japanese, New Zealand and Swedish Red Cross as well as the British government. The French Red Cross, through its regional emergency response structure, based on La Réunion, has committed USD 21,000 for telecommunications equipment and disaster response training.

For a full description of the National Society profile, see 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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