

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

IRAN (QAZVIN/HAMADAN AREA): EARTHQUAKE

22 June 2002

Information Bulletin N° 1

Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF) Allocated: Pending

This Bulletin is being issued based on the needs described below reflecting the information available at this time. Should the situation deteriorate, the Federation will consider international support through an Appeal.

The Situation

An earthquake of magnitude 6.3 on the Richter scale struck north-western Iran (Qazvin/Hamadan area) on 22 June at 7:28 am local time. Aftershocks of a magnitude of 4.1, 4.8, and 5.2 were recorded. Initial reports indicate that approximately 440 people have died, and at least 1,100 have been injured. The tremor was felt in other areas, including the capital Teheran. The number of affected villages is currently reported to be between 50 and 60. State radio is reporting that more than half of the houses in some 20 villages around the town of Avaj have been completely destroyed. The provincial branch of the Iranian Red Crescent Society (IRCS) is reporting that most deaths occurred in the town of Bou'in-Zahra. Most of the houses in the area are single-story buildings made of mud brick which do not withstand earthquakes. An earthquake hit the same area in 1963, killing 12,225 people and demolishing 124 villages in one of Iran's most devastating natural disasters. Relief efforts are focusing on search and rescue, and evacuation of dead and injured. Several areas remain inaccessible, with villages cut off due to roads and bridges destroyed.

Red Cross/Red Crescent Action

The Iranian Red Crescent responded very quickly, with the headquarters in Teheran and the nearest branch in Qazvin sending helicopters with emergency teams. Preparations for the distribution of relief items such as food and tents and shelter material is already under way. The IRCS's Qazvin branch is strong, with an excellent volunteer base. The first reports back from the IRCS evaluation team which left Teheran hours after the earthquake states that 2 relief teams with all necessary equipment were sent from Teheran (1 from Gilan Province, and 1 from Qom Province). Two search and rescue teams with rescue dogs and trainers were also despatched.

The Federation's Geneva-based Operations Manager, Disaster Management Division, has been in close contact with the IRCS's Disaster Response Department since the incident and a Preliminary Appeal is ready to be launched as soon as and if the society makes a request for international support. The Federation's Delegation in Iran is supporting the IRCS in Teheran with two delegates, the Federation relief and logistics delegates will accompany the next IRCS assessment team. Field Assessment Coordination Teams (FACT) and Emergency Response Units (/ERU's) personnel are on stand-by, and a Federation information delegate is also available to

join them. The Federation has posted updates on its web-based Disaster Management Information System. Contacts are being maintained with a number of PNS who contacted the Secretariat soon after the disaster.

For further details please contact:

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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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