

# 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

## MAURITANIA: FLOODS

20 February, 2002

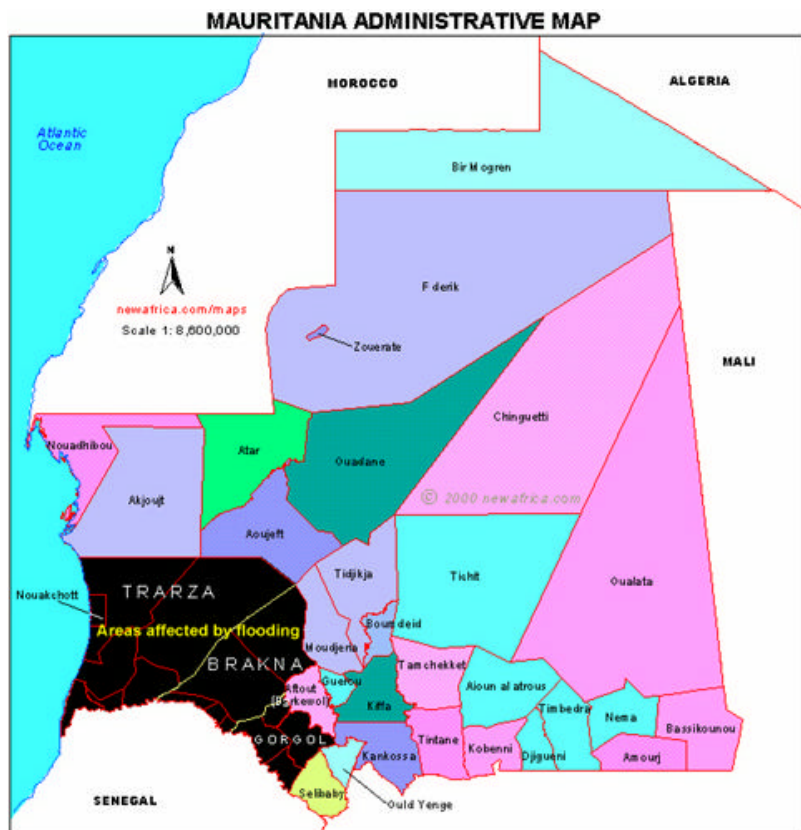
Information Bulletin N° 01

DREF Allocated: No

*This Information Bulletin is being issued based on the needs described below reflecting the information available at this time. While there is no intention of launching an emergency appeal at this time, based on further updates and details from assessment reports, or should the situation deteriorate, the Federation may consider further support through an Appeal.*

### The Situation

Torrential rains accompanied by cold snaps hit the regions of Brakna (Aleg, Boghe, Bababe, M'bagne, Dar El barka, and Maal) and Trarza (R'akiz, Mederdra, Lexeiba and Tekane), and Gorgol (Monguel and Kaédi) between 9-11 January 2002. Within forty-eight hours these areas experienced serious floods, with temperatures dropping at night to 0 Celsius. Some areas received up to 84 mm of precipitation. The ensuing floods took 30 lives, destroying an estimated 1,732 houses, 6,415 tons of rice farm ready for harvest, and an estimated 110,244 heads of livestock. Some 37,000 people are estimated to have been affected by this natural disaster. Most victims are small-scale farmers and nomads in the region. Communities which were already facing a food deficit of 160,000 tons of cereal are now encountering a poor harvest, stagnant water left by the floods which serves as a breeding ground for mosquitos and a potential rise in the malaria cases. Decaying animal carcasses pose the threat of spreading diarrhoeal diseases such as cholera.



The Government, together with local and regional authorities, launched an appeal to help 43,128 people with cereal food products, vegetable oil, blankets, tents and medicines. Identification of the worst hit areas has been done by

local authorities and some communities in Trarza, Brakna and Gorgol have been marked as the priority areas for urgent action. Some 250 tons of cereal food products have been distributed among the two regions.

## ***Red Cross and Red Crescent Action***

As soon as the floods were reported the Mauritania Red Crescent Society (MRCS), in collaboration with local authorities, the Spanish, French, and Italian Red Cross, and the union of NGOs, deployed an evaluation mission to the affected areas and have since been closely watching developments. The mission identified the lack of shelter as a major problem. MRCS volunteers have thus far distributed 1,500 items of clothing donated by the Lutheran World Federation. A further 150 blankets, 75 family tents, 75 mosquito nets, 75 tarpaulin for shelter and 1,500 bars of soap donated by the US Embassy were distributed by Red Crescent volunteers to 825 families.

## ***The Needs***

The MRCS plans to undertake an emergency assistance programme from 20 January 2002 to 20 April 2002 for 6,500 people in Gorgol and 12,359 people in the Brakna and Trarza regions which together total 30% of all those affected.

Area	Victims	Wheat	Vegetable oil	Blankets	Tents
Trarza	6,400	231 T	23,040 L	800 units	1,500 units
Brakna	5,959	213 T	21,425 L	773 units	
Gorgol	6,500	260 T	7,800 L	1625 units	812 units
TOTAL	18,859	644 T	52,265 L	3,198 units	2,312 units

In addition, the Mauritania Red Crescent plans to initiate food security and income generating development projects for victims during a period of three months. This will include seed distribution, creating animal husbandry micro projects, increasing access to potable water, assuring environmental hygiene, and strengthening the capacity of the community through training.

The Mauritanian Red Crescent has experienced resource persons and structures available and able to support emergency assistance activities to victims. It is already benefiting from the support of three sister national societies (the Spanish, Italian, and French Red Cross). The Spanish Red Cross has donated CHF 67,823 towards the MRCS relief effort. Furthermore, the MRCS has good co-operative relations with the Federation's regional delegation for West Africa (located in Abidjan) which will provide the needed technical assistance.

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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