

# 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

## ***MEXICO: HURRICANE ISIDORE***

26 September 2002

*Information Bulletin N° 02/02*

*Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF): CHF 88,000*

*This Information Bulletin is being issued based on the needs described below reflecting the information available at this time. Based on further updates from the National Society and details from assessment reports, the Federation will consider international support through an Appeal. For the time being, the Federation is requesting that donors offer their support by replenishing the DREF.*

### ***The Situation***

On 23 September, the category 3 hurricane Isidore hit Mexico's Yucatán Peninsula; winds of 200 km/hour uprooted trees and tore roofs from houses. A total of 70,000 people were evacuated from high risk, coastal areas, and it is now estimated that some 300,000 people have lost their homes. In the state capital, Mérida, 18 shelters have been set up to house those who have lost their homes; much of the town remains without electricity, and telephone lines are down. Heavy rains continue, causing widespread flooding in Quintana Roo, Campeche, south Tabasco, south Chiapas and Veracruz.

At the same time, a depression has now strengthened into tropical storm Julio close to the coast of Mexico and a warning is in effect for the coast from Zihuatanejo to Punto San Telmo. It is feared that associated rains could provoke flash floods and mud slides.

Isidore, now downgraded to a tropical storm, is resulting in heavy rain and strong winds in Louisiana and Mississippi, USA. Landfall is expected in the early hours of Thursday morning, 26 September and a coastal storm surge of between 3 and 6 feet is anticipated, together with flooding. A hurricane watch is in effect in Louisiana and Mississippi, whilst a tropical storm warning has been declared from Texas to Florida. Some 8,000 residents of low-lying land in Louisiana have been evacuated.

### ***Red Cross/Red Crescent Action***

The Minister of Development, together with the President of the Mexican Red Cross, left on Wednesday, 25 September, to visit the affected area. A team of 22 people was formed to carry out a damage and needs assessment, in which the Mexican Red Cross has the lead role. The evaluation, to take place in 47 communities, is currently being carried out and detailed results are awaited. Despite continued heavy rain and flooded roads, an initial assessment has taken place in four communities over

which the eye of the hurricane passed. Each was made up of approximately 120 bamboo, mud and thatch houses. Results indicate that all were destroyed.

Preliminary information confirms that the most severe impact of the hurricane was in isolated villages. 90% of the trees in the impacted area have fallen, 200,000 hectares of maize crops in the region have been lost, 40,000 hectares of fruit trees have been damaged and pig rearing, bee keeping and poultry farming, a major activity, have been severely affected. Furthermore, food rations in the region are running low.

33,000 persons are currently in shelters and are those who most require humanitarian aid. Needs are currently being met through the assistance of the Mexican Red Cross, the army, the police, the fire service and the church. The Mexican Red Cross launched a national appeal and support is also being received from the Mexican population. The National Society continues to provide first aid to the affected population through its ambulance service. Those staying in the shelters are not being permitted to return to the areas where they were living, given that conditions along the coast remain dangerous.

The Mexican Red Cross is distributing food, water, clothing, kitchen sets, hygiene kits, basic medication and blankets in the shelters. The DREF allocation provided will be used to continue providing food and non-food items to those whose houses have been destroyed, obliging them to remain in the shelters.

## *Needs*

Further results of the damage and needs assessments are expected to be available later on Thursday, 26 September, and more information concerning needs will be provided thereafter. However, since there is no electricity in the impacted area, it is not possible to pump water supplies. As a result, potable water is limited and immediate needs are therefore for drinking water, food and blankets.

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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