

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

THE GAMBIA: STORM IN UPPER RIVER DIVISION

2 June 2004

The Federation's mission is to improve the lives of vulnerable people by mobilizing the power of humanity. It is the world's largest humanitarian organization and its millions of volunteers are active in over 181 countries.

In Brief

This Information Bulletin (no. 1/2004) is being issued based on the needs described below reflecting the information available at this time. CHF 50,000 has been requested from the Federation's Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF). Based on further updates and details from assessment reports, or should the situation deteriorate, the Federation may consider international support through an Emergency Appeal.

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All International Federation assistance seeks to adhere to the [Code of Conduct](#) and is committed to the [Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Disaster Response](#) in delivering assistance to the most vulnerable. For support to or for further information concerning Federation programmes or operations in this or other countries, or for a full description of the national society profile, please access the Federation's website at <http://www.ifrc.org>

The Situation

On Monday 24 May 2004 at 20:40, the Upper River Division (URD) of the Gambia suffered a storm at a speed of 33 knots and rainfall of 28mm. The storm hit Basse and its surroundings, Allunhari, Kanubeh, Nyakoi Kerewan, Nyakoi Taibatu, and other villages on the North Bank of URD. This resulted in the destruction of 883 houses, affecting 6,025 people within Basse and its surroundings.

This kind of storm usually happens at the end of the rainy season; this year it occurred earlier. According to the Basse Hydro-meteorological Institute, the storm came in from the ocean and made landfall in the Basse area and its surroundings. They also forecast more storms this year during the rainy season. There is panic in Basse and the surroundings due to the massive destruction caused by this storm; two deaths and injuries have been recorded. The meteorological forecasts more storms during the rainy season this year.

Although the destruction was felt by many, the most damaged properties were the houses, with partial or total destruction of the roofs. In some cases, walls broke and bricks fell on people, resulting to the injuries and homelessness. Those in serious situation were referred to Bansang Hospital for further treatment.

Red Cross and Red Crescent action

The [Gambia Red Cross Society](#) branch office mobilized a team comprised of the program manager and two volunteers from the headquarters and local volunteers to carry out a rapid assessment. The team was divided into six groups of four volunteers each. The Division's Commissioner requested the national society's cooperation in the data collection and information sharing in order to bridge differences. The National Disaster Committee has met and is yet to inform the national headquarters of their decision.

Immediate Needs

- Roofing materials (corrugated iron sheets, nails, 'rulm' palm, and cement);
- Bed nets;
- Clothing; and,
- Food stuffs.

No disease outbreaks have been reported. The Gambia Red Cross headquarters has not yet given assistance to those affected, due to lack of stock.

National Society Capacity Building

In connection with national society national headquarters monitoring missions, a refresher course in Disaster Management is needed. The team on the ground during the initial assessment had difficulties in working due to lack of computer, printer and photocopier; the branch will benefit from such equipment since the Basse hydro-meteorological institute forecasts such incidents to occur again. There was also a communication breakdown; the satellite phone at URD branch office needs a battery for it to be functional.

In addition, most of the national society's vehicles were broken down. Mobilization and movement of volunteers to different locations was facilitated by the national society's ambulance, which is only meant for ambulance services only. This slowed the data collection processing because the villages covered in the initial assessment are geographically far apart. In the absence of a new vehicle to facilitate the in-depth analysis, the repairing of the existing ones would go a long in alleviating the problem currently being faced by the Gambia Red Cross.

Co-ordination

At the time of the initial assessment, only the Gambia Red Cross which was on the field; the commissioner's office is relying on the national society. Coordination with NGOs is yet to be negotiated. The results are yet to be forwarded to the National Disaster Relief and Resettlement Committee.

Monitoring and Evaluation

The Gambia Red Cross is in a transition period and has therefore not formed a Disaster Committee which would have been responsible for the procurement outside Basse. As a result, the national headquarters has appointed the programme manager to be responsible for monitoring, reporting and supervision of the operation. On the ground in URD, the Gambia Red Cross has a sufficient number of volunteers capable of carrying out the planned activities.

The following pages contain a table the shows damage suffered as a result of the storm. There are also pictures of affected individuals and impact on infrastructure.

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Table 1: Statistical data of damage suffered from the storm

District	Villages	Houses Damaged	Heads of Family	People Affected	Food Stuff Damaged				Injuries	Deaths
					Rice	Coos/ Maize	Sugar	G/Nuts		
Fulladu East	Manneh Kunda	120	200	700	300	200	-	160	30	-
	Koba Kunda	91	169	601	240	110	-	90	20	-
	Basse	278	348	981	444	231	20	160	60	-
	Allunhari	190	166	2,080	805	765	252.50	596	N/A	1
	Mansajang	4	4	47	2	11	1	2	-	-
	Basse Layout	10	10	142	15	4	-	-	-	-
	Basse Angalfuta	6	6	50	5	-	3	-	-	-
	Kanubeh	36	36	150	23	34	2	24	-	-
	Kabakama	9	9	56	13	10	-	2	-	-
	Kobakunda Layout	22	22	322	37	24	11	14	-	-
Sub-total		766	970	5,129	1,884	1,389	289.50	1,048	110	1
	Basse Santusu	7	7	72	15	12	-	4	-	-
Sandu	Chanyally	21	21	163	43	61	8	66	2	1
Wuli West	Nyakoi Kerewan	49	49	305	61	186	4	160	-	-
	Nyakoi Taibatu	12	12	49	7	13	-	13	-	-
	Farato	7	7	100	2	2	-	-	-	-
	Madina	10	10	96	8	24	-	14	-	-
	Sutukonding	11	11	111	4	27	-	70	-	-
Sub-total		117	117	896	140	325	12	327	2	1
Grand Total		883	1,087	6,025	2,024	1,714	301.50	1,375	112	2

The mother of a grade 9 student, killed during the storm, is assisted by a Gambia Red Cross volunteer.



Picture 3



A head of family whose house was destroyed in the storm.



Picture 5



The above pictures represent the type of houses that were affected by the storm.