

MALI: FLOODS

28 October 1998

Information Bulletin N° 01

The Disaster

Torrential rains fell in the localities of Koulikoro and Kayes in Mali at the end of September this year. Rivers and their tributaries overflowed in the space of a few days or, in some cases, a few hours of torrential rain. In some places cereal crops were ruined, small livestock washed away, and bridges, tracks and houses destroyed. The floods have left 4,650 people homeless and negatively impacted the livelihood of farmers, stock breeders and fishermen.

Flood victims are now at risk of contracting malaria, dermatitis, respiratory diseases and intestinal parasites as a result of deteriorating hygiene, pools of stagnating water and a proliferation of mosquitoes.

Red Cross/Red Crescent Action

Initial response to the flooding has been limited. The government provided cereals and tents to the victims in Kayes. The ICRC, UNHCR and other NGOs provided some aid as well.

The Mali Red Cross, through its regional branches in Koulikoro and Kayes, provided relief supplies for the victims. The Society also undertook a comprehensive needs assessment to estimate the full scope of damage from the floods and the resulting needs of the victims.

The Mali Red Cross has concluded that targeted support - relief, rehabilitation, and prevention - is needed to alleviate the suffering of the flood victims. The Society has developed, with the support of the International Federation's relief delegate, a plan to: provide targeted food assistance; provide household items such as blankets, clothing and mosquito nets for the most vulnerable; lend tools to help the communities rebuild their housing; and increase the population's awareness of how to prevent epidemics and flood-related diseases.

Needs

The Mali Red Cross requests donations in cash and kind to carry out its operation. It particularly needs:

- { 50 family tents (4x3 metres)
- { 10,200 m² rolls of Monarflex
- { 2,000 cotton blankets (regional purchase)
- { 45 bales of second-hand clothing (local/regional purchase)
- { one lot of medicaments to treat respiratory diseases, dermatitis, diarrhoeal diseases, intestinal parasites and malaria (local/regional purchase)
- { 112 tonnes of millet and 4,650 litres of oil (local purchase)
- { tool kits to rebuild huts (local purchase)

The regional logistics centre in Abidjan will provide technical assistance to identify the most competitive suppliers in the region, in particular for the blankets, mosquito nets and second-hand clothing. A vehicle from the Federation's regional fleet will be assigned to the operation. The International Federation has released CHF 50,000 from its Disaster Relief Emergency Fund to allow the Mali Red Cross to begin the operation. For further information, please contact Barbara Petersen at the Africa department, +41 22 730 4312 or by e-mail: petersen@ifrc.org.

Peter Rees-Gildea
Director
Operations Funding and
Reporting Department

Bekele Geleta
Director
Africa Department