

NEPAL: FLOODS

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The Disaster

The heavy monsoon, which has resulted in extensive Red Cross and Red Crescent relief actions throughout Asia, has now brought flooding to many areas of Nepal. Official reports indicate that at least 85 people have died so far. The situation is worsening at an alarming rate. Since 31 July, the number of districts affected has grown from 17 to 56, including Taplejung, Pyuthan, Gulmi, Darchula, Baitadi, Rasuwa and Dhading in the hills, and Morang, Siraha, Mahottaari, Rautahat, Nawalparasi, Rupandehi, Kapilvastu, Makawanpur and Banke in Terai.

Knowledgeable observers note that this flooding could ultimately become the worst in decades if the present conditions continue much longer. According to reports from various sources, thousands of families have been affected to some extent by flooding, suffering loss of livestock and crops, and damage to homes and businesses. Of these, nearly 4,000 families are seriously affected and particularly vulnerable, and hence are the focus of Nepal Red Cross relief efforts. Finally, as expected in wet seasons, landslides pose a major threat.

Nepal Red Cross/Federation Action

The Nepal Red Cross has already provided relief goods to thousands of beneficiaries from its various warehouses. The district chapters are working hard in the field and in co-ordination with local government authorities and other organisations are rescuing victims, directing them to safer areas, and providing food and non-food items. More than 1,600 families had received Nepal Red Cross relief packages as of 3 August, on top of immediate relief services such as search and rescue, first aid, and shelter. NRCS National headquarters has deployed high level assessment teams which, since the flooding is rapidly worsening, will focus as a first priority on the plains of Nepal.

Needs

Currently the NRCS is able to cope with the situation which has become a national level disaster. However their stocks are rapidly being depleted as the rain continues. The danger period is not yet over. The Secretary General has informed the Secretariat that some support from the Federation may be required to continue to meet the needs and keep stocks in the warehouses at minimum levels.

Depending on additional information from the NRCS assessment teams, support from the Disaster Response Emergency Fund (DREF) may be made available to assist the relief efforts. If the current flooding continues to worsen and spread, an appeal may be considered.

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