

# ***ROMANIA: FLOODS***

*25 June 1998*

## **Information Bulletin N° 01**

### ***The Disaster***

From 8 - 22 June Romania was hit by torrential rainfall, resulting in catastrophic flooding across much of the country. The floods and accompanying landslides have affected 28 out of Romania's 41 districts.

According to official national statistics 23 persons have died, 1,848 houses and 88 apartments have been destroyed, 10,677 damaged and some 1,000 people evacuated from their homes. Over 160,000 hectares of agricultural land are under water ruining maize, grain and sunflower crops. Some 552 village and district roads, five km of national roads, 273 bridges and 27 hydrotechnical buildings have also been destroyed, with telephone and gas networks cut. Some 600 animals have been reported missing and 200 sources of drinking water damaged.

As a result of the flooding around 12,000 people are in a critical situation requiring urgent humanitarian assistance. It is expected that in view of the material damage to homes, crops and livelihoods these people will require long term rehabilitation assistance until the end of 1998.

Romania has been hit by flooding on an almost annual basis, with the site of the flooding changing according to the season. In 1997 over 20 districts in Transylvania, the north of Moldavia and the south of the country were flooded. The current flooding is concentrated in Bacau, Vaslui and Vrancea (northern Moldavia), Salaj, Mures, Neamt, Cluj, Alba, Sibiu and Hunedoara (Transylvania).

Following a visit of the Prime Minister of Romania to the affected areas, the Romanian government provided emergency humanitarian aid (food, blankets, medicines and clothing) from national stocks valued at 2 billion Lei (USD 235,000). The investment fund at the disposal of the government for rebuilding destroyed infrastructure is 25 billion Lei (USD 2,900,000).

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

Since the start of the flooding the Romanian Red Cross has sent humanitarian aid — 500 blankets, 500 sets of bed linen and 6 tons of basic foodstuffs (oil, sugar and rice) to Neamt district, the first to be affected by the disaster.

On 20 June the Romanian Red Cross launched a national appeal to the population seeking assistance to support the victims of the floods. The national response has been excellent, thanks to extensive media coverage. Within three days 1,250 persons responded with donations to the National Society

headquarters. Large quantities of clothing and footwear have been collected along with with 224,000 Lei (USD 26,000). The funds will be used to procure 10,000 kg of rice, 10,000 kg of sugar and 10,000 litres of oil.

On 24 June 20 tons of clothing were sent to two districts - Alba and Neamt (10 tons each). Further relief distributions of clothes will be made over the next few days from donations received.

Romanian Red Cross branches have mobilised staff and volunteers, distributing blankets and bed linen to the 1,000 persons forced to leave their houses and now accommodated in schools and military units. Oil, sugar, rice and canned food has been distributed to those affected, but transportation is problematic due to damaged roads and bridges.

## *Needs*

The Romanian Red Cross seeks to assist 10,000 persons, particularly in the most affected rural areas, focusing on those whose homes have been completely destroyed or seriously damaged. Assistance will centre on covering the most urgent immediate needs for safe drinking water and blankets, while also providing long term food support over a six month period. The most pressing needs now are for blankets, bed linen sets, power generators and water filters.

Due to the destruction of crops and farmland, rural populations will continue to be affected by the consequences of the floods for some time to come. The Romanian Red Cross seeks to provide basic foodstuffs (sugar, rice, oil, milk powder and canned foods) over a six month period for 10,000 persons left without basic means of survival.

For further information please contact Leopoldo Principe, Desk Officer on ++4122 7304319, email: [principe@ifrc.org](mailto:principe@ifrc.org)

Peter Rees-Gildea  
Director  
Operations Funding and Reporting

Renny Nancholas  
Director  
Europe Department