

# ***CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC: FLOODS IN BANGUI***

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## ***The disaster***

During the first half of August, 1999, serious flooding provoked by torrential rains affected Bangui, the capital of the Central African Republic (CAR), resulting in numerous injuries and extensive damage to homes and infrastructure. Approximately 2,500 families (12,000 people) are without shelter. Eight hundred houses were completely inundated. Some 4,500 water tapstands or wells have been polluted, and the availability of potable water is a serious concern.

Responding to the situation, a crisis committee was organised by the authorities. With the Central African Red Cross Society (CARCS) playing a key participatory role, the crisis committee is constantly evaluating the evolving situation as the rains continue.

## ***Red Cross-Red Crescent Action***

To respond to the disaster, the CARCS reacted immediately in assessing the situation, and by placing volunteers in schools, churches, and tents to assist with the victims forced from their homes. Some 1,200 persons, primarily the most vulnerable, have been assisted with items released from the existing National Society emergency stocks.

Red Cross Volunteers also visited the affected neighborhoods to review and assess the number of polluted water points and the need for sanitation and repair measures.

## ***Needs***

The CARCS foresees assistance to 1,200 persons during a four month period. To improve the living conditions of the victims, it is planned to distribute the following items:

- { 50 tents;
- { 100 plastic sheets;
- { 600 blankets;
- { Used clothes for 1 200 persons;
- { Kitchen utensils for 500 families;

{ basic medication;

{ Disinfectants.

Teams of volunteers will be organised to inform the affected population on basic hygiene and sanitation measures. Once the initial emergency phase has passed, it is planned to undertake cleaning of the standing pools of water and sewer networks in the affected neighborhoods affected. In order to carry this activity out, the CARCS requires the following:

{ 40 shovels;

{ 40 picks;

{ 20 wheelbarrows;

{ 40 rakes;

{ 100 pairs of boots;

{ 100 pairs of gloves;

{ 100 respiratory masks.

The CARCS relies on an extensive human resource (volunteer) base, with 300 emergency workers immediately available. In addition, trained staff are available to manage the operation.

The total amount required to carry out this operation is CHF 77,500, which has been allocated from the Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF) to initiate the emergency actions.

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