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Information bulletin

Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia: Flash floods and landslides

 International Federation
of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

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Information Bulletin

This bulletin is being issued for information only, and reflects the current situation and details available at this time. The Red Cross Society of the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia has determined that international assistance is not required at the moment, and it is therefore not seeking funding or other assistance from donors at this point in time.

A. Situation analysis

Description of the situation

Heavy rainfalls affected the western part of the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia in the late evening hours on 3 August 2015. The heavy rains resulted in the overflow of the water of the river Pena in the city of Tetovo and had disastrous consequences for the mountain villages of Shipkovitsa (2,826 residents), Dzepciste (4,051 residents), Mala Rechitsa (8,353 residents), Golema Rechitsa (1,659 residents) and Poroj (2,677 residents) in addition to the city of Tetovo (65,000 residents). The mountain villages were also affected by landslides caused by the heavy rain. On basis of the data obtained from the initial assessment, about 500 buildings with 700 families were badly damaged by the extreme weather. The affected population was evacuated from the flooded villages until the houses are cleaned and repaired and become suitable for living again.



Red Cross team in action after the flash floods.
Photo: Red Cross of the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia

This disaster is probably the second biggest in the history of the country after the devastating earthquake of 1963 that struck Macedonia, a state of the Yugoslav Federation at that time. Unfortunately the flash floods resulted in the death of six persons. Thirty persons have been provided with medical care to treat the injuries they suffered during the storm. One person is declared missing. In some places of the affected mountain villages, the mud layers are as thick as three meters. The whole city of Tetovo was flooded with water and is still under debris.

The Red Cross teams of the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia immediately responded to the disaster and rushed to the affected villages and the city of Tetovo. The village of Shipkovitsa still does not have electricity, and the water of the

¹ This information bulletin is the first one related to this particular disaster, and the third one in 2015 issued on behalf of the Red Cross of the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia.

wells in the affected region is contaminated. The Red Cross immediately provided food assistance for the affected population in Shipkovitsa.

The region was also inspected by the Prime Minister of the of the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and other high ranking state officials. Officers of the Civil Protection and Rescue Directorate are working actively to clean the affected terrains from debris and mud. The initial results indicate that there are a lot of dead animals and ruined farmlands in the villages. Debris removal in the affected villages is difficult since the heavy machines cannot pass through many mountain roads.

Activities of the Red Cross Society of the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia

Immediately after the disaster, the Red Cross teams rushed to the affected region to make an assessment and to provide immediate assistance. In the first phase the Red Cross Society of the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia delivered 10 tons of drinking water, 200 hygiene parcels, 200 food parcels, 800 blankets, 50 mattresses, 200 disinfection sets, and 50 sleeping bags. The Red Cross teams continue to monitor the situation on the ground.



Needs assessment over a collapsed building.

Photo: The Red Cross of the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia

The assessment of the involved specialized agencies shows that much time will be required before the houses of the affected population in the villages are repaired and life can return to normal in these flooded villages. Given the high temperatures in the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia for the last three weeks, the carcasses of the dead animals represent a potential danger of infectious diseases in the affected region which might also spill over into the neighbouring communities around Tetovo.

The Red Cross actively contributed for the alleviation of the consequences of the disaster in the affected region. The Red Cross Branch in Tetovo and the Red Cross Branch of the capital city of Skopje contributed with 40 volunteers working on the ground. Most probably, additional assistance will be required by the affected

population in the days to come. The Red Cross Society of the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia is actively following up on the situation.

Contact information

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How we work

All IFRC assistance seeks to adhere to the Code of Conduct for the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and Non-Governmental Organizations (NGO's) in Disaster Relief and the Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Disaster Response (Sphere) in delivering assistance to the most vulnerable.

The IFRC's vision is to inspire, encourage, facilitate and promote at all times all forms of humanitarian activities by National Societies, with a view to preventing and alleviating human suffering, and thereby contributing to the maintenance and promotion of human dignity and peace in the world.

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The IFRC's work is guided by Strategy 2020 which puts forward three strategic aims:

1. Save lives, protect livelihoods, and strengthen recovery from disaster and crises.
2. Enable healthy and safe living.
3. Promote social inclusion and a culture of non-violence and peace.