

# OPERATIONS UPDATE



International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies  
Fédération Internationale des Sociétés de la Croix-Rouge et du Croissant-Rouge  
Federación Internacional de Sociedades de la Cruz Roja y de la Media Luna Roja  
الاتحاد الدولي لجمعيات الصليب الأحمر والهلال الأحمر

## CENTRAL AFRICA REPUBLIC: FLOODS

ME no. 05ME048  
7 September 2005

The Federation's mission is to improve the lives of vulnerable people by mobilizing the power of humanity. It is the world's largest humanitarian organization and its millions of volunteers are active in over 181 countries.

### In Brief

Operations Update no. 01; Period covered: 23 August to 7 September, 2005

This Minor Emergency Update no. 1 is being issued based on the situation described below reflecting the information available at this time. CHF 46,000 (USD 36,170 OR EUR 29,610) was allocated from the Federation's Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF) to respond to the needs in this operation or to replenish disaster preparedness stocks distributed to the affected population. Replenishment of DREF by un earmarked contributions is welcome and needed.

For details concerning this operation, please contact :

- In the Central Africa Republic: M. MBAO BOGO Antoine, President of CAR Red Cross, Telephone. (236) 50 14 11 / (236) 09 18 00 Fax : (236) 61 42 10
- In Cameroon: Daniel K. SAYI, Acting Head of Regional Office for Central Africa, Yaoundé email: [ifrcm06@ifrc.org](mailto:ifrcm06@ifrc.org) telephone (237) 221 74 37, (237) 950 12 44 / fax (237) 221 74 39
- In Senegal: Alasan Senghore, Head of Delegation West and Central Africa, Dakar; Email: [ifrcsn21@ifrc.org](mailto:ifrcsn21@ifrc.org); Tel. (221) 869 3641; Fax: 22 860 2002
- In Geneva: Helene Ruud, Regional Officer for Central Africa, International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies ; Email : [Helene.ruud@ifrc.org](mailto:Helene.ruud@ifrc.org) Tel. 41 22 730 49 14 / +41 79 217 33 81; Fax: 41 22 733 03 95

All International Federation assistance seeks to adhere to the [Code of Conduct](#) and is committed to the [Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Disaster Response](#) in delivering assistance to the most vulnerable. For support to or for further information concerning Federation programmes or operations in this or other countries, or for a full description of the national society profile, please access the Federation's website at <http://www.ifrc.org>

### The situation

A nine-hour torrential rain fell in Bangui during the night of 6 to 7 August 2005 causing floods which destroyed a considerable quantity of materials. Initial reports indicated some 9,000 were affected, but by 18 August 2005 close to 2,160 families were reported to be affected (a total of over 14,000 people). The rain continues to fall throughout Bangui, and floods continue to affect all the neighbourhoods. At the current time close to 4,388 families are reported affected. The houses partially destroyed or the ones that were still standing are collapsing on a daily basis. The neighbourhoods mostly affected by the disaster do not have potable water points. Consequently, the populations use water from wells that are located closer to latrines for cooking, drinking and any other housework. This means that inhabitants consume infected water and are exposed to water borne diseases such as typhoid, cholera, diarrhoea, and hepatitis E. In addition, the waste and stagnant waters that are found throughout those localities constitute breeding places for mosquitoes that are responsible for malaria -- the first cause of infant mortality in the CAR.

**CAR: Floods; ME no. 05ME04801; Operations Update no. 1**

Since 25 August 2005, the towns of Bambari and Bakala (respectively located 386 km's and 506 km's from Bangui) are also reported to be affected -- an estimated 160 families in Bambari, and 25 in Bakala.

**Present situation**

The following table summarizes the casualties as reported by the CAR Red Cross following an evaluation of the situation.

Table: numbers and of location of those affected (as of 25 August 2005).

Localities	Nber of family heads	Number of dependents	Men	Women	Children	Houses completely destroyed	Houses partially destroyed
1 <sup>st</sup> subdivision	50	94	44	44	6	10	40
2 <sup>d</sup> subdivision	261	2,349	466	708	1,175	87	174
3 <sup>d</sup> subdivision	136	1,442	364	156	790	60	76
4 <sup>th</sup> subdivision	243	1,527	313	213	755	81	162
5 <sup>th</sup> subdivision	1,110	4,659	830	607	2,430	370	740
6 <sup>th</sup> subdivision	1,194	5,833	1,383	1,345	2,567	569	625
7 <sup>th</sup> subdivision	444	1,791	361	368	885	169	275
8 <sup>th</sup> subdivision	358	2,600	485	561	1,276	120	238
BEGOUA	152	917	215	59	470	61	91
CHE – BOEING	108	797	177	118	335	36	72
BIMBO	332	1789	356	315	895	111	404
TOTAL	4,388	23,798	4,925	4,494	11,584	1,674	2,897

Source: CAR Red Cross Secretariat

**Possible evolution of the situation**

According to weather services, the rain will continue to fall until September – October. More damage is expected in neighbourhoods that are already affected, and the disaster will likely extend to new localities.

**Red Cross Action**

**Distribution of non-food items:** The results of the evaluation carried out by Red Cross volunteers on 18 August 2005 have been used for the distribution of non-food items to floods victims. Out of the 2,610 families affected, 800 have been identified to benefit from the non-food items offered the NS by the Federation, and the 500 blankets donated by ICRC. Priority was given to families whose houses were completely destroyed and to families with a lot of members.



*Red Cross volunteers distributing items in the 8 subdivisions of Bangui and in the surrounding localities.*

**Water and Sanitation:** In addition to non-food items, Red Cross volunteers also distributed containers of 10 litres each and potable water to victims. These items were put at the disposal of the national society by the UN system. The bladders donated by the UN system have been installed in the distribution points of each subdivision. This will facilitate the distribution of 75 m<sup>3</sup> of potable water by Red Cross volunteers to victims on a daily basis (see distribution report in appendix 1).



Presently, Red Cross volunteers are preparing themselves ahead of the sanitation phase which will be launched by the Crisis Committee. A sanitation kit donated by the Federation and the French Red Cross in Bangui has been put at their disposal.

Red Cross volunteers will continue the distribution of containers, potable water and other items received from other partners after another evaluation. Evaluations are to be conducted on a weekly basis because the rain continues to fall causing new damage and affecting new people.

**Follow-up and Monitoring:** in collaboration with the national society team, the disaster management officer conducted the evaluation of 25 August 2005.

### Action of other partners

The UN system in Bangui:

- Donated 10,000 containers to be distributed to the CAR Red Cross. Water bladders have also been donated and installed in various distribution points, and Red Cross volunteers have started distributing 75 m<sup>3</sup> of potable water to victims on daily basis.
- Some 480 lamps have been provided to the CAR Red Cross. The lamps have been



stored and will be distributed to those affected.

- Some 40,000 aquatab tablets have been distributed to the CAR Red Cross for the treatment of water points.
- Incentives have been given to 120 Red Cross volunteers on the basis of 500 CFA/F per day for 1 month for the distribution of potable water in the 8 subdivisions of Bangui and the surrounding localities. WFP has also promised to offer a daily food intake for each of the volunteers during the same period.

The French Embassy in Bangui donated an emergency kit to the Government of CAR through the Ministry of Social Affairs. The donation was constituted by generic drugs worth 25,000 euros (17 million CFA/F). The drugs that are currently stored at the Drugs Distribution Unit will be put at the disposal of local NGOs to help prevent or contain diseases like typhoid, diarrhoea, parasitosis, malaria and respiratory infections. The Groupe Fotso through the Bangui branch of their Commercial Bank (Commercial Bank Central Africa) donated a sum of 40 million CFA/F to the Government of CAR to help respond to this disaster (sanitation activities). The French Cooperation in Bangui donated a sum of 5 million CFA/F to the CAR Red Cross for the purchase of drugs. After the visit of the US ambassador accompanied by the Red Cross on the field, the US Embassy in Bangui promised to donate a sum of 50,000 US dollars to the CAR Red Cross, to support in particular sanitation activities. The Japanese Embassy in Bangui donated tarpaulins, tents and blankets. The communication company "Télécel Centrafrique" supported the CAR Red Cross in its efforts to assist victims by:

**CAR: Floods; ME no. 05ME04801; Operations Update no. 1**

- Donating a pack (telephone set + SIM card + toll free number). This will enable Central Africans and well wishers at the international level to contact the CAR national society free of charge and bring in their contributions to assist victims. The telephone number is 00236 50 59 11.
- 240 prepaid cards of 2,000 CFA/F each to be distributed to Red Cross volunteers on the field.
- 4 prepaid cards of 25,000 CFA/F each to the chairperson of the CAR national society to enable contacts locally and international partners.
- 600 litres of fuel for vehicles.
- 6,400 pieces of soap and 910 sachets of powder soap.
- 120 T-shirts for Red Cross volunteers.
- 2 banners to appeal for contributions.

An association of voluntary blood donors in CAR donated shovels to the CAR national society. The Catholic parish of the Fatima neighbourhood (6<sup>th</sup> subdivision of Bangui) promised to assist victims in collaboration with the CAR Red Cross. The Member of Parliament from the Bimbo locality donated a sum of 1 million CFA/F as a personal contribution to the Crisis Committee to support the efforts of the Government in favour of vulnerable people. This donation came in as a result of the advocacy activity carried out by the CAR national society and BRAC while shopping in a supermarket belonging to the Member of Parliament.

### Government Action

The Crisis Committee laid special emphasis on sanitation activities with the participation of the Red Cross, the military engineer services, the Technical Department of municipal services, the hygiene services of the 7<sup>th</sup> health region, and the hygiene and sanitation committees of neighbourhoods. A meeting is to be held with the Crisis Committee and the above-mentioned groups to discuss the issue of recurrent floods in Bangui, sensitize the populations, and plan activities before making an intervention. Sanitation activities are expected to continue until the end of the rainy season (probably in October). The army has already set up a team of 100 soldiers to support sanitation activities.

### Needs

After the third evaluation, it is still essential to lay more emphasis on sanitation if a sustainable solution to the problem of floods is to be found. The national society will continue to advocate for the development of a community-based disaster preparedness plan with the full participation of authorities, partners, and the communities themselves. After the distribution of non-food items, more needs have been registered as the floods continue to create new victims on a daily basis. Today, the national society needs to retrain its volunteers on first aid and on disaster management (during and after the disaster).

**[Click here to return to the title page or contact information](#)**