

INFORMATION BULLETIN



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

PAKISTAN: GILGIT EARTHQUAKE

22 November 2002

Information Bulletin N° 1

This Bulletin is being issued for information purposes only. The Federation will issue additional updates if the situation changes and if additional assistance to local efforts is required.

The Situation

Only two weeks after an earthquake struck the remote and inaccessible area of Gilgit, with 11 people killed and several thousands displaced to temporary accommodation, another earthquake struck the same area early 21 November. The epicentre was 45 kilometres south of Gilgit town and the affected area is again Diamer District.

The quake measured 5.5 on the Richter scale and struck at around 0235 hours. This time, initial reports state that 30 people have died (including 18 children), more than 100 people were injured and 100 houses have been destroyed, while a further 1,100 have been damaged. Around 6,000 people are homeless. Livestock, the main means of income in this area, has also been badly affected although losses are not known. Casualty figures may rise further, as the authorities have not been able to access all areas. The Government is in charge of rescue and relief. Military helicopters are the only means of transport as roads, including the main artery the Karakoram Highway, have been cut off. It is not clear whether the same people have been affected again or if the quake struck different communities. The authorities are again relocating those affected to safer areas and the Pakistan Army is working to clear blocked roads.

As with the previous earthquake, the area is very remote and difficult to reach. The National Society does not have any presence on the ground in this area, and thus the capacity to respond and to monitor is limited. However, the National Society will discuss further with the authorities today as to possible further needs.

Red Cross/Red Crescent Action

As with the last earthquake, Pakistan Red Crescent Society responded immediately to a request from the Government for assistance. There is already a close working relationship between the Emergency Relief Cell of the Cabinet Division, and the Ministry responsible for the Northern Areas is coordinating transport and distribution in the area. The following was dispatched from Islamabad at 2030 hours last night through Government distribution means and should reach Gilgit today :

Relief Item	Quantity
Tents	150
Blankets	2,000
Jumpers for males	300
Woollen socks	1,000 pairs
Used clothing for females	20 bales

This relief operation was covered on the country's main television news bulletin at 0700 hours this morning.

Possible further needs :

Following the earlier earthquake, CHF 29,000 was made available through the Humanitarian Crisis appeal to replenish the items that the National Society provided at that time. However a total of CHF 75,000 was agreed between the Delegation and the Secretariat to be made available if further needs were identified. This turned out not to be necessary. The main rehabilitation of housing etc. in the area will be undertaken next spring, as winter has already begun and those affected are being accommodated in temporary housing near Chilas.

The relief items listed above will need to be replenished (at a cost of around CHF 30,000) and pending further assessment of needs today and more general information, additional funding support for this operation may be required. However, as indicated above, the ability of the National Society to operate in this area, and to follow up and monitor, is limited and further assistance would probably also have to be channelled through the Government.

For a full description of the National Society profile, see www.ifrc.org

For further details please contact :

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All International Federation Operations seek to adhere to the Code of Conduct and are committed to the Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Disaster Response (SPHERE Project) in delivering assistance to the most vulnerable.

For support to or for further information concerning Federation operations in this or other countries, please access the Federation website at <http://www.ifrc.org>

For longer-term programmes, please refer to the Federation's Annual Appeal.

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