

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

DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO: SEVERE STORMS

22 October, 2003

Information Bulletin N° 1/03

This Bulletin is for information only. The Federation is not seeking any funding or other assistance from donors for this operation at this time

The Situation

On Thursday, 9 October 2003 severe thunderstorms occurred in and around the town of Bikoro, Equateur Province (located some 120 kms from Mbandaka). A school with at least 200 students in Bikoro was struck by lightning. Eleven students died immediately, while 73 were injured, of whom 25 were either severely burned or in a state of shock.

Government and Red Cross and Red Crescent action

Doctors at the Reference General Hospital of Bikoro immediately responded to the disaster by assisting the victims with first aid, shelter, and psychological support. A joint team composed of the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), a Federation Field Delegate based in Mbandaka, and the DRC Red Cross assessed the situation and provided immediate medical assistance and psychological support to the victims and their families. Other humanitarian organisations such as MSF, WHO and UNFPA also helped the victims with medicine. The local Red Cross Bikoro branch responded by providing first aid and evacuated the injured. The Federation supported the local committee with medicines (estimated value of US 600) to assist those injured.

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

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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>.