

# 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: VIOLENT STORM**

11 February, 2003

*Information Bulletin N° 2/03*

*Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF) allocated: N/A*

*This Bulletin is for information only. The Federation is not seeking any funding or other assistance from donors for this operation at this time. Needs identified below should be directed to the DRC Red Cross through the Federation's office in the DRC.*

### ***The situation***

On 2 February, 2003 at 11:00 PM, a violent storm struck 6 villages of the District of Yumbi, in the province of Bandundu, Democratic Republic of Congo. Latest reports indicate some 2,500 houses and ten schools have been either destroyed or severely damaged, with 17 deaths, and thousands injured or made homeless. The Ministry of Health convened a disaster crisis committee to respond to the disaster. With latrines contaminating water sources, the concern now is the risk of water borne diseases such as cholera, or malaria. The assessment team currently in the area will provide further statistics on the dead, missing and injured.

### ***Action so far***

Apart from the Médecin Inspecteur Provincial and the Médecin Chef de Zone de Santé and USAID (SANRU III), the DRC Red Cross appears to be the only organisation in a position to respond to the needs. Assistance is being provided in the form of basic drugs and searching for bodies buried under destroyed houses. Red Cross volunteers also carried out sensitisation campaigns on the consequences of using contaminated water and of mosquitoes bites.

The Minister of Health is presently in Yumbi carrying out a multi-organizational assessment mission (composed of the Red Cross, Memisa, UNICEF, OCHA, OMS delegates and a handful of medical doctors), and delivered emergency material and medicines, with the support of UN agencies, the Red Cross (Federation, ICRC, and the Belgian Red Cross).

### **Red Cross and Red crescent response -- initial action**

The DRC Red Cross local branch in Yumbi has trained volunteers in Community-Based First Aid. With at least 50 volunteers, a branch EQUIRA team (or Equipe d'Intervention Rapide) visits affected villages to assess situations. Injured persons are taken either to Yumbi or to Bolobo clinics by the Red Cross volunteers.

### **Red Cross / Red Crescent response -- projected operation**

The Red Cross operation will mainly consist of the following:

- providing medical supplies and equipment for the Yumbi and Bolobo Hospitals.

- continuing information, sensitisation and education campaigns in order to avoid the risks of epidemics such as cholera and diarrhoeal diseases.
- helping the population rebuild their public sanitary (latrines) and public water fittings.

### Needs

- Supplies for hospitals: Medicines and plasters, blood serums, physiological salt solutions, anti tetanus serums.
- For the homeless: mosquito nets, blankets and bed sheets, sheets and shelter tents, food and non food, kitchen sets.
- For the Red Cross local branch: megaphones, motorised pirogues, first-aid kits, incentive support for volunteers.

For a full description of the National Society profile, see [www.ifrc.org](http://www.ifrc.org)

*For further details please contact:*

- *the Federation's Delegation; 00 243 880 1488; or the Information and Reporting Officer: 00 243 990 33 34 / 00 243 081 812 4239.*
- *The Democratic Republic of Congo National Society in D.R..Congo ; Phone (243) (12) 34897; Fax (243) 88 04 151 ; email [secretariat@errdc.aton.cd](mailto:secretariat@errdc.aton.cd)*
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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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