

# 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

## ***MEXICO: EARTHQUAKE***

26 January 2003

*Information Bulletin N° 04/03*

- *This bulletin is being issued based on the needs described below reflecting the information available at this time.*

### ***The Situation***

At 20.08 hours on 21 January, a major earthquake of magnitude 7.8 on the Richter Scale, struck off the coast of Colima state in the west of Mexico, 50 km east of Manzanillo and 500 km west of Mexico City. This is the strongest earthquake to hit Mexico for seven years and significant tremors were also felt in Mexico City, however, no major damage was reported. The government declared a state of emergency in six towns in Colima state on the morning of 22 January: Colima city, Armería, Coquimatlan, Ixtlahuacan, Villa de Alvarez and Tecomán.

### ***Red Cross/Red Crescent Action***

A total of 100 volunteers from the Colima branch, 45 from the Jalisco branch, and 200 external volunteers are currently engaged in provision of assistance to the disaster victims. Four urban rescue units, and two specialized rescue units in collapsed structures were deployed and emergency operation centres were established in Colima and Jalisco to coordinate activities. Furthermore, Mexican Red Cross (MRC) personnel continue to provide psychological support and first aid care. (Please see information bulletins 2 and 3 for further details).

The National Society's relief coordinator, together with five members of Mexican Red Cross staff, travelled to Colima on 22 January to support the damage and needs assessments taking place. On the morning of 24 January, initial results of assessments carried out in Colima state by the Mexican Red Cross, the national school of engineers and OFDA were issued.

Preliminary findings indicate that approximately 8,820 houses were damaged by the earthquake, of which some 2,005 were destroyed, 3,400 were partially destroyed and 3,415 incurred minor damage. These figures represent findings throughout the state of Colima. The city which incurred most damage is Villa de Alvarez, located in the environs of Colima city, in which 10% of homes were destroyed or damaged. Fortunately, the impact on the livelihood of those who lost their homes does not appear to be severe.

There are currently no immediate emergency relief needs, neither are temporary shelters required since families who lost their homes are being housed and assisted by friends and relatives. Rubble has been

successfully cleared from the city of Colima and seriously damaged housing has been condemned and is now being pulled down.

Full, detailed assessment reports including the official report of the national school of engineers, are expected to be released on Monday, 27 January.

The Federation, represented by the regional communications delegate based in Mexico City and a Pan American Disaster Response Unit (PADRU)/American Red Cross disaster management delegate, and PNS, including the American Red Cross and the German Red Cross Societies, which have disaster response personnel on the ground in Mexico, are liaising with the Mexican Red Cross, as are the Panama regional delegation and PADRU. Based on findings to date, an overall plan focusing on rehabilitation needs of those whose homes have been destroyed, is currently under consideration. A number of Participating National Societies: the Canadian Red Cross, the Italian Red Cross the Japanese Red Cross, the Spanish Red Cross, together with the British government's DFID, have expressed interest in provision of assistance. The American Red Cross has been granted a USD 100,000 contribution from OFDA and the German Red Cross has committed to the rehabilitation of 100 houses. This assistance will be coordinated with additional support to be provided.

A global Red Cross rehabilitation plan targeting the most vulnerable families affected by the disaster will be drawn up based on the results of findings from the assessments and taking into consideration initiatives to be undertaken by the government and other agencies.

Further, more detailed information will be released early in the coming week as soon as it becomes available.

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

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

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