

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

NEPAL: MONSOON FLOODS AND LANDSLIDES

28 July 2003

Information Bulletin N° 1/03; Period covered 10 June to 22 July 2003

Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF) Allocated: N/A

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 180 countries.

For more information: www.ifrc.org

In Brief

Although this document is being issued for purposes of information, interested parties are encouraged to contribute to the Federation's Annual Appeal for Nepal (01.55/2003), particularly in the areas of disaster management, health and the promotion of humanitarian values.

The Situation

Nepal annually faces problems with the arrival of the monsoon. The low-lying or 'Terai' region, which makes up 17 per cent of the country is prone to flooding, while the hilly regions (68 per cent of the land mass) are susceptible to landslides.

The monsoon arrived on 10 June resulting in floods and landslides affecting 31 out of Nepal's 75 districts.

According to the latest figures, compiled from a survey of Nepal Red Cross chapters, as of 28 July: some 5,000 families have been affected; 60 people have died; 134 injured; while 10 are still missing. 486 houses were destroyed and 836 damaged.

Transportation systems have been disrupted due to landslides and the collapse of bridges impeding communications and relief/rescue operations. Communications between the capital Kathmandu and some of the hill districts remain cut off.

Many bonded labourers who were rehabilitated by the government have become homeless again in the Kailali district. They have currently found temporary shelter in schools. Local branches of the Nepal Red Cross Society and the government have distributed food.

The Ministry of Home Affairs has mobilized army and police personnel for rescue operations while the Government has provided some cash assistance to disaster victims. The Government dispatched rescue teams to affected areas. Some of the local NGOs have been collecting relief material and have distributed some food items.

Red Cross/Red Crescent Action

Nepal Red Cross Society (NRCS) district chapters immediately sent assessment teams with some relief materials to affected areas. NRCS national headquarters sent relief materials to the respective regional warehouses serving the affected areas. NRCS district chapters have been mobilizing Red Cross volunteers and staff for rescue operations, first-aid and initial disaster assessment. Packages of required relief items were sent from strategically placed warehouses to the NRCS affected district chapters. Most of the district chapters in affected areas are also distributing food items they have collected themselves. With communication difficulties

Nepal: Monsoon Floods and Landslides; Information Bulletin no. 01

in some areas leading to delays, the details concerning the distribution of food and non-food items have yet to be received. The NRCS has sufficient relief materials in stock and is able to cope with the present situation.

The Nepal Red Cross is coordinating at various levels with the government, NGOs, INGOs, the Federation as well as the ICRC and other sister societies. The Disaster Preparedness (DP) Network – a network of organisations involved in disaster management/response formed in 1998 – is being utilized. The Nepal Red Cross functions as the secretariat of the DP Network.

As in previous years, the monsoon is taking a heavy toll on life and property. Coinciding with the Launch of the World Disaster Report 2003, the Nepal Red Cross organized a meeting along with the government and other humanitarian aid organizations and discussed the future preparations for such disasters.

The NRCS and Federation continue to closely monitor the situation and are prepared to act immediately according to the need in order to assist the vulnerable population. At present, the NRCS is on high alert.

At this stage, there is no need for external assistance.

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

For further details please contact

- *The Nepal Red Cross National Society in Kathmandu; Executive Director - Badri Khanal . Phone + 977-1-4270167; 4270650; Fax +977-1-4271915; 4273685; E-mail: nrcs@nrcs.org*
- *IFRC Regional Delegation, New Delhi – Bob McKerrow, HORD. Phone +91 11 26858671 and +91 98 1000 1534(mobile). E-mail: irfcin02@ifrc.org*
- *Federation South Asia desk – Ewa Eriksson Phone 41 22 730 4252; Fax 41 22 733 0395; email Ewa.Eriksson@ifrc.org*

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.