

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

SUDAN: FLOODING IN KASSALA STATE

4 August 2003

Information Bulletin N° 2 /2003

Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF) allocated: CHF 200,000.

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

This document is being issued based on the needs described below reflecting the information available at this time. Based on further updates and details from assessment reports, or should the situation deteriorate, the Federation will consider international support through an Appeal.

The Situation

Heavy rains in Sudan's Kassala Province on 28 July provoked severe flooding, particularly affecting Kassala town. New flooding on 29 July broke through the banks of the Gash River that divides the town into two, sweeping away flood barriers built in 1988 to protect the town. The flooding inundated the town center, including a bridge, submerging the town market, government buildings, schools, and other buildings, including the Sudanese Red Crescent Society (SRCS) branch office. The town's largest hospital was also totally flooded and was subsequently evacuated.

Approximately 12 people have been confirmed dead, while 70 houses and 100 schools have been extensively damaged in Kassala town. An estimated 327,000 people have been affected by the flooding; most are now sleeping outside in the open on higher ground. There are only 15 tents and 1,000 plastic sheets available. Water levels had been decreasing until the town was hit by a fresh flash flood on Saturday, 2 August. The water supply system and all communications (including cell phones) are still down. The road from Kassala to Khartoum remains cut off, but the airstrip is functioning.

Official government statistics state the town has a population of 450,000 people, in addition to 59,294 internally displaced persons (IDPs) from a civil conflict last year, and 24,000 Eritrean refugees. These IDPs and refugees however have not been affected by the floods due to their location on higher ground.

The Governor of Kassala State declared the disaster to be beyond their resources on Friday 1 August, and requested Government assistance from Khartoum. Relief goods from Khartoum have been distributed to those initially affected, and the SRCS has been appointed lead agency to coordinate the relief operation.

A joint Government team led by the Minister of Interior, the Minister of Humanitarian Affairs, and the SRCS undertook a joint assessment on Friday. Initial reports from the team indicate that shelter materials including tents, plastic sheets and blankets as a priority need. Water and sanitation services, including water trucking and purification tablets, are also required since the few functioning wells in the town are largely inaccessible or contaminated. The town faces a severe shortage of food, and the little that has been coming in is from neighbouring districts. Other needs include medicine for the clinics, communication equipment (radios,

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megaphones) and tools (spades, shovels, generators). Details from the assessment will be available shortly, and will form the basis of the appeal.

Red Cross and Red Crescent action

The SRCS Kassala branch has mobilized 1,000 volunteers and 263 staff members who have been evacuating people to higher grounds. The volunteers are distributing locally-donated food, and further volunteers from the Halfa and Girba Provinces arrived in the morning of 3 August to complement and reinforce the team.

The SRSC has established two emergency clinics at the Kassala teaching hospital, which is also being managed by volunteers. The hospital has suffered structural damage and has very limited medical supplies. Any potential outbreaks of water borne diseases such as typhoid or malaria would result in an influx of patients, which would easily exceed its 12-bed capacity.

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>

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

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