

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

PERU: HEAVY RAINS

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

The Situation

The rainy season in the central Andean and jungle regions of Peru begins in November and lasts until March. In recent weeks, the rains have been even heavier than usual, causing several emergencies in different departments of the country, such as floods and mudslides that have blocked off roads and isolated communities.

Many of the rainstorms have also brought hail and snow, causing damage to homes, crops and cattle. The National Service of Meteorology and Hydrology (SENAMHI) has forecast an increase in rainfall in the regions located at 2300 metres above sea level during the next month.

The most affected department is San Martin, where rain has been falling non-stop since 28 December 2003. There are five rivers in this region that have flooded: Upiacuhua, Shanantina, Mamonaquihua, Shapajamarca and Michuaya. Heavy rainfall in San Martin has caused 3 deaths, and authorities estimate that 1,200 persons have been affected. Some 3,600 particularly vulnerable members of the community have already lost their homes.



The most affected departments in Peru

In the department of Cusco, the river Quirimbi flooded, dividing the community of Quirimbi in two, killing one person and leaving 70 families homeless. The roads in Cusco have also been affected.

In the department of Apurimac those most affected are farmers who have already lost 260 hectares of potatoes. In this department hail has caused the destruction of several houses and has isolated the community of Sarhua.

In the department of Puno, hail has covered the ground, causing problems for ground transportation and flooding of houses. The most affected provinces of Puno are Sandia, Lampa and Azangaro.

In the department of Madre de Dios there have been a reported 76 affected families in the communities of Monte Salvado and Puerto Pastora.

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Damage is not yet considered severe and the Peruvian government is taking action through its Civil Defence National Institute (INDECI). Humanitarian aid has been mobilized as 76 tonnes of relief items, including blankets, food and kitchen kits, have been forwarded to San Martin, while 14 tonnes have been deployed to Puno.

Red Cross and Red Crescent action

In the Peruvian Red Cross (PRC) headquarters, an emergency committee has been established, working under the authority of the National Relief Department, which is on alert. Communication among branches is being carried out through the radio network and a group of volunteers is being prepared to go to the affected regions to conduct damage and needs assessments. The PRC is in need of equipment for these volunteers, such as boots and waterproof coats.

PRC branches form part of the local emergency committees in each department and are coordinating with INDECI, SENAMHI, the Ministry of Health and the municipalities.

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.