

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

INDIA: MAHARASHTRA MONSOON FLOODS

12 August 2005

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 181 countries.

In Brief

This Bulletin (no. 10/2005) is being issued for information only, and reflects the status of the situation and information available at this time. The Federation is not seeking funding or other assistance from donors for this operation at this time.

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All International Federation assistance seeks to adhere to the [Code of Conduct for the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and Non-Governmental Organisations \(NGO's\) in Disaster Relief](#) and is committed to the [Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Disaster Response \(Sphere\)](#) in delivering assistance to the most vulnerable.

For longer-term programmes in this or other countries or regions, please refer to the Federation's Annual Appeal. For support to or for further information concerning Federation programmes or operations in this or other countries, or for national society profiles, please also access the Federation's website at <http://www.ifrc.org>

The Situation

During the last week of July, the state of Maharashtra experienced very heavy rainfall (almost one metre on 26 July 2005). This led to severe flooding especially in the city of Mumbai. Dams are overflowing in various parts of the state leading to mass evacuation of people and inundation of agricultural land. The total volume of water released from the Koyna Dam on 9 August was 40,000 cusecs.

The flood situation in Maharashtra is now improving, apart from light to moderate rains which have been reported in some parts of the state. However, there have been no rains in Mumbai and its suburbs during the reporting period. Almost all reservoirs in the state are overflowing.

According to government sources, the rivers of Koyna, Krishna, Mula and Mutha have been flooded, and have affected 8,100,000 people in approximately 5,700 villages spread across Pune, Sangli, Satara, Beed, Kolhapur and Solapur districts, forcing 500,000 people to evacuate.

The roadways are 85 percent functional and the railways are almost fully operational. The water supply has been restored in Mumbai and in some of the affected districts.

The media (Times of India, 12 August) have reported an epidemic outbreak in Mumbai with increasing cases of high fever and suspected leptosporiosis. Sixty-six people have died in the last four days.

Government action

- The central government of India gave a support of INR 1,000 *crores* (CHF 285 million) to the state, further assistance will be offered as required.
- Cash assistance is being provided to the next of kin of those who have died and to the affected. According to government sources, so far a total of 14.8 million CHF has been disbursed.
- 10 kg of wheat, rice and 10 litres of cooking fuel are being provided to each of the affected families through a government distribution system
- Within Mumbai, the Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC) has engaged sanitary teams in collecting garbage and cleaning drains. According to BMC, 100,000 metric tons of garbage has been collected in the last ten days within Mumbai only.
- A detailed survey on damages is being carried out by the government.
- The government is still running 401 relief camps throughout the state and approximately 213,000 people are in these camps. About 1,162 medical teams are providing services in the affected areas. A hygiene awareness campaign has been initiated by the government through mass media.

Spontaneous assistance

In the immediate aftermath of the flooding, local religious groups, community groups and citizens of Mumbai mobilized whatever resources they could and rushed to help those in need. There are many media reports of neighbours helping each other while water continued to rise in many places within Mumbai. In some of the severely affected areas that the Red Cross assessment team visited, certain food and milk distributions were still being carried out.

The Indian Red Cross Society (IRCS) has been monitoring the situation through its Maharashtra state branch and the response was immediate by the state and district branches. The information flow is facilitated through the following network:



Indian Red Cross staff and volunteers distributing relief items to flood-affected people.

ECHO - The mission delegation of Humanitarian Aid Department of the European Commission has been in Maharashtra state since 30 July to conduct a need-based assessment. Today, ECHO met with its partners in Delhi (attended by representatives of the Federation, Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF), Caritas, Actionaid, Danish Church Aid, Catholic Relief Services and CARE) to discuss the India floods with special focus on Maharashtra where food security can be a concern. The meeting highlighted the following issues facing Mumbai City:

1. There may be increase of migrant population into Mumbai due to loss of livelihood in the affected districts.
2. The slum dwellers of Mumbai who have no identity documents will be excluded from government aid.
3. The people of Maharashtra are not used to floods and have limited coping mechanisms, resulting in such widespread devastation.

This meeting suggested agencies to complement government efforts on food security issues. ECHO has made no decision but invited interested agencies to send a letter of intent (LOI) for funding.

United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) has initiated the inter-agency coordination role by organizing meetings in Mumbai. The first was held on 3 August chaired by BMC. In addition, it was decided to set up a facilitating group of NGOs based on the needs/requirements that would distribute relief items to the affected

community. The meeting was attended by Indian relief and rehabilitation department, NGOs, IRCS and the Federation. UNICEF has also initiated mobile teams of health and water and sanitation for Mumbai.

Times Foundation provided a local platform to all the NGOs to share information and represent themselves. The meeting which took place in early August also launched a Maharashtra floods resource centre. IRCS participated in the meeting and shared information on their response.

NGOs action

Catholic Relief Service (CRS) together with CARITAS are considering providing assistance in Ratnagiri, Mumbai, Thane, Raigad and Pune. CARE has released 13,000 family kits and 2,000 water tanks with a capacity of 70 litres each in schools and other public institutions. This relief was complemented by the government with dry rations and school books with each kit. A multi-agency assessment is being conducted by RedR together with Concern Worldwide. ADRA is planning a needs assessment

Red Cross and Red Crescent action

Assessment

The national disaster response team (NDRT) assessment team, deployed last week to Maharashtra, consists of IRCS assistant director from the national headquarters, Maharashtra branch disaster management (DM) coordinator and NDRT member, and two other NDRT members, Federation India delegation's disaster manager and the information assistant. The team is still in Maharashtra, visiting some of the worst affected districts of Sangli, Raigadh, Parbani and will help the branch prepare for relief distribution and other water and sanitation (watsan) related assistance. The team was joined by the watsan delegate from the Sri Lanka delegation and a watsan specialist (national consultant), and on 4 August by two IRCS honorary secretaries and a UNICEF representative. The team was assisted by the branch staff and volunteers.

The NDRT has reviewed the situation from various sources (including reports from IRCS national headquarters, United Nations Development Programme, media, website etc) and met with IRCS branch officers, government officials, the state water board, and other agencies on the ground. The team also conducted field visits and interviewed the affected people, following assessment questionnaire checklists as and when relevant.

The key observations are that many parts of north Mumbai have been affected with Kurla, Kalina, Santa Cruz, Sakinaka (Ghatkopar), Jarimari, Goregaon, Marol districts worst affected. Within these areas large pockets of people living in the slums have been severely hit. They have lost all their belongings and need support.

The assessment team has made the following recommendations, which have been presented to the national society for endorsement:



A health camp in Sablenagar slum, Mumbai

Relief

1. Procurement of 25,000 family packs in addition to the 5,000 packs already in place and will be replenished (15,000 for Mumbai and 15,000 for other most affected districts). Each family pack is comprised of one kitchen set, plastic bucket with cover, stove, bed sheet, saree, plastic mat (6' x 4'), and towel.
2. Replenishment of the 5,000 family packs mobilized from Bahadurgarh warehouse.
3. Mobilization of two IRCS national disaster response team (NDRT) members for logistics and relief support to the state branch during the relief operation.
4. Mobilization of volunteers and Youth Red Cross for the relief operation in Mumbai and districts.
5. Distribution to be carried out by IRCS volunteers through survey and identification of the most vulnerable families according to the targeting criteria established (below poverty line, single women households, temporarily displaced households, old and infirm).
6. Deployment and continuous use of three IRCS disaster water sanitation response units (DWSRU) of the trailer mounted type (LMS) each unit providing 10,000 litres of treated water per day per unit. The units are to be deployed for two months under a letter of understanding for maintenance and upkeep of the unit between IRCS Maharashtra state branch and the concerned government department. The units are to be returned to IRCS at the end of the two month period. Technical staff for successful deployment of these units to be mobilized by IRCS nationally, and if required regionally.
7. Additional mass water treatment unit (TWA6) to be mobilized from Bahadurgarh warehouse producing 12,000 liters per hour.
8. 500,000 chlorine tablets be mobilized immediately, covering drinking water needs for 71,000 people for one month.

National capacity building

9. The DM department within the IRCS national headquarters to fill the positions that have fallen vacant namely – disaster response coordinator, disaster preparedness coordinator and warehouse coordinator.
10. Indian Red Cross is now emerging with a prominent national role in water and sanitation. In view of this emerging reality, national headquarters must appoint a watsan engineer.

Branch capacity building

11. The Maharashtra state branch should immediately appoint one storekeeper for the state branch.
12. Volunteer's training in relief distribution, targeting criteria, survey methodologies to be undertaken.
13. Two IRCS relief supervisors to be hired, one each for one district in the coastal belt and one district in the Vidharbh areas of the state.
14. IRCS national headquarters/Federation to provide all necessary assistance to the branch with appointment of these personnel based on request from the branch.
15. In order to enable the branch to undertake the relief operation within the state, one of the 6-tonne carrier truck and one eight-seater passenger car to be purchased and made available at the earliest for the operation. Two additional trucks may be made available to the branch, mobilized from Bahadurgarh warehouse.
16. Procurement of IT- communication equipment (one computer with peripherals, digital camera, one fax machine)
17. In order to facilitate the procurement process, Federation logistics and procurement personnel be deployed as required.

Warehousing

18. The regional warehouse at Vikhroli, close to Mumbai is serving the warehousing needs during the operation. Additionally, the warehouse will serve to help maintain a facility for maintaining stock that may be mobilized quickly, should the need arise. An assessment study should be undertaken and estimated costs of renovation and warehouse equipment are prepared. Additional funds to be mobilized for renovation of Vikhroli warehouse
19. The Vikhroli warehouse has an existing assistant store officer. In addition, a store keeper is appointed for Vikhroli warehouse.

Coordination

20. Close coordination to be maintained between Federation, IRCS national headquarters and state branch
21. Coordination to be maintained with government and other humanitarian agencies by IRCS at all levels.

State branch action

A comprehensive Maharashtra state branch action was included in the previous [Information Bulletin No. 9](#). Apart from the relief distribution undertaken, the Maharashtra state branch organized a press conference on 6 August, which was attended by the chief minister of Maharashtra, Federation vice-president and IRCS vice-chairman,

Federation's head of Asia Pacific department and acting head of delegation (India) along with representations from American and Canadian Red Cross. A private contribution of INR 5 crore (CHF 1.5 million) by Reliance Industries was announced along with a pledge of CHF 2 million by the Federation from available fund.

The state branch has set a good example in local resource mobilization. In order to further strengthen their resource mobilization process they have flashed a request for assistance through local media to the public.

National headquarters action

The IRCS national headquarters continue to monitor the flood situation in Maharashtra. A total of 5,000 family kits (consisting of tarpaulin, bed sheet, saree, dhoti, bed sheet, cotton blanket, towel, kitchen set and plastic bucket), 10,000 water purification tablets and a cash grant of INR 100,000 (approximately CHF 3,000) have been sent to supplement the relief work. Three water treatment units capable of meeting drinking water needs of 10,000 people have been airlifted for deployment in the affected areas in collaboration with the Maharashtra state water supply department. One unit has been deployed in Mumbai, while the other two have been deployed in Sangli and Parbani districts.

Presently, the national headquarters is engaged in reviewing the recommendations of the assessment team. The Federation delegation's logistics and procurement officer will be sent to Mumbai to support the IRCS national headquarters and Maharashtra branch in the procurement of relief goods.

The operation will primarily focus on procurement of 30,000 family kits of which 5,000 is replenishment of the distributed stock. The rest of the family kits will be distributed in Mumbai (10,000) and other affected districts (15,000). The three water and sanitation units have already been installed and are operational. There is a 200,000 litres watsan unit on standby if needed. Water purification tablets have been sent and more can be supplied if required. The Federation watsan delegation from the Sri Lanka delegation is providing technical support.

This operation will also address the evolving health-related needs. Community-based health awareness campaigns through the existing Red Cross volunteer's network will be reinforced. Awareness will be raised through banners, pamphlets and other forms of communication. The prime focus of this operation will be to complement the government's efforts. The operation will also build on the capacity of the Maharashtra state branch to deliver its programme in terms of providing additional human resource and support staff to the branch. Recruitment and training of Red Cross volunteers to establish long-term interaction with the community and help people restore their lives will be initiated.

The IRCS national headquarters will provide support to the Maharashtra state branch throughout the operation, assisted by the Federation country and regional delegations, Asia Pacific Service Centre in Kuala Lumpur, the secretariat in Geneva and the partner national societies. The IRCS disaster management centre will continue to monitor the flooding situation 24 hours a day and link up with other state branches for information sharing.

Regular coordination and interaction between the IRCS national headquarters and the Federation delegation has been taking place through joint meetings to deal with the disaster situation in the most effective and efficient way.

Federation Coordination

The Federation India delegation has been coordinating the response of the IRCS with other agencies through participating in various information-sharing forums like Sphere. The IRCS is a member of the managing body of Sphere. The Federation hosted a Sphere meeting on 5 August regarding Maharashtra floods. This meeting was attended by Oxfam, ADRA, Efficor, CRS, UNDP and a representative from the Sphere secretariat. The Federation has been instrumental in mobilizing the Sri Lanka watsan delegate and India delegation's logistics/procurement officer to be stationed in Mumbai.

The Federation delegation's DM team will be monitoring the situation and provide the IRCS national headquarters with back-up and technical support. Since the beginning of the disaster, the Federation has been preparing information bulletins almost on a daily basis. The Federation will provide monthly updates on the operation.

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