

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

IRAN: EARTHQUAKE

25 February 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



***On hand:** Iranian Red Crescent volunteers continue to work with shattered communities to help them rebuild their lives and livelihoods after the devastating earthquake in Zarand.*

This Information Bulletin (No. 5) is being issued to provide an update on the earthquake in Zarand, southeast Iran, on Day 4 of this emergency. The Iranian Red Crescent Society (IRCS) has continued to provide timely relief assistance to affected people. At present, the IRCS does not plan to make any international or national appeal. However, to facilitate ongoing relief distributions and disaster preparedness stock replenishment, the national society welcomes voluntary contributions from donors. Cash contributions are preferred as all needed goods can be bought locally but appropriate in-kind help will also be considered. As an emergency appeal has not been launched, the Federation's secretariat cannot handle donations and interested partners are urged to contact the IRCS direct via its website [<click here for IRCS website>](#) or contact the national society by phone (see below). The next bulletin is due to be released on Monday February 28 unless there are any major developments on Saturday or Sunday.

For further information specifically related to this operation please contact:

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All International Federation assistance seeks to adhere to the [Code of Conduct](#) and is committed to the [Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Disaster Response](#) in delivering assistance to the most vulnerable. For support to or for further information concerning Federation programmes or operations in this or other countries, or for a full description of the national society profile, please access the Federation's website at <http://www.ifrc.org>

The Situation

Living conditions for thousands affected by the 22 February earthquake (6.4 on the Richter scale) around Zarand remain very difficult. Families are sheltering in the hundreds of canvas tents, covered in plastic sheeting against the severe weather, that dot the landscape amid the ruins of the quake. After cross-checking with the IRCS, local authorities and international organizations, the Federation's assessment team has concluded that official casualty figures – 490 deaths and 900 injured – are accurate. However, the final death toll may reach 700 once all people have been accounted for. The earthquake was quite deep, reducing the impact at surface level. However, poor building techniques may have contributed to a higher death toll. When the quake struck, bricks crumbled in on inhabitants, choking them with dust, and filling air pockets in which survivors might have lived for a few days. Heavy rain also turned dust and soil into a heavier mud, crushing those inside, and reducing the flow of air into the rubble. Almost all of those who were buried under the rubble for more than a few hours died there.



***Devastation :** the earthquake caused brick houses to crumble inwards trapping and killing hundreds in their own home.*

By Thursday evening, the figures of those affected were as follows:

- 451 families from villages damaged between 80% and 100%
- 68 from villages damaged between 50% and 80%
- 2,788 from villages damaged between 30% and 50%
- 2,728 from villages damaged up to 30%

Frozen ground and poor weather, including heavy mist and hailstones, have made rescue and relief conditions dangerous. Nevertheless, IRCS search and rescue workers and soldiers worked hard, digging through rubble to recover bodies. In Houdkan village, IRCS volunteers carried the corpses to the village entrance to be identified or tagged before being taken for burial in Zarand. After three days of round the clock work, the search and rescue operation wound down on Thursday.

The IRCS relief operation, however, continues. Tents, blankets, food and water, from the IRCS and other sources, continue to arrive and be distributed to beneficiaries.

Affected people have already started to rebuild their new lives. Villagers are picking through the ruins of their broken homes, looking for belongings to salvage. They carry whatever items and furniture they can retrieve back to their tents.

A plane from UAE, carrying 35 tonnes of relief supplies, including field tents, blankets, food stuff and first aid kits, along with a team of relief workers, arrived in the Kerman airport Thursday. Also, a

Japanese plane carrying aid, including 4,000 blankets and 50 tents worth USD 180,000, was due to land in Kerman airport today (Friday).

Red Cross/Red Crescent Action



IRCS volunteers and rescue teams continue to provide relief assistance to the affected villages. They are busy registering RC beneficiaries to begin distribution of food baskets to 35,000 people. (see Information Bulletin No. 3 for details). [<Click here for bulletin no.3>](#)

The IRCS's psychosocial support activities are being fully implemented. Using the experience gained during the Bam earthquake operation, the psychosocial teams composed of 20 psychologists, 1 psychiatrist, 2 general practitioners and nurses, are providing counselling, sympathy and empathy to those affected. The psychosocial support programme

for children is helping youngsters to release painful memories of the disaster through play.

Since 23 February, on the outskirts of Daghoiyeh village, 20km from Zarand, the IRCS is running a psychosocial camp for local children. Inside the collection of five tents, dozens of young children busily paint with their hands. Children were given small gifts, such as a pen or toy, on arriving and then encouraged to draw what they remember of the quake.

Heavy work: poor weather and ground conditions have hampered the rescue and relief effort.



At present, the IRCS does not plan to make any international or national appeal but welcomes voluntary donations both in cash and in kind from donors. This will facilitate relief distribution and help the national society replenish its disaster preparedness stocks. The IRCS has identified the following items for replenishment:

- Tents (size 4m x 4m or 3m x 4m)
- Ground sheets for tents
- Blankets (coloured and for winter use)
- Kerosene stoves (for heating and cooking)

- Kerosene lanterns
- Cooking sets
- Rice
- High-energy biscuits
- Cereals (beans, pulses)

The Federation delegation in Iran is closely monitoring the situation. Two disaster preparedness/response delegates are on standby, in Tehran, for deployment if necessary.

The delegation will not issue an Information Bulletin on Saturday or Sunday. A new bulletin will be released on Monday, covering developments over 26 and 27 February. However, the delegation is on standby, and available to answer any queries during Saturday and Sunday.