

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

PAKISTAN: FLOODS/SNOWFALL

22 February 2005

The Federation's mission is to improve the lives of vulnerable people by mobilising the power of humanity. It is the world's largest humanitarian organisation and its millions of volunteers are active in over 181 countries.

In Brief

This Information Bulletin (no. 03/2005) is being issued for information only. The Federation is not seeking funding or other assistance from donors for this operation at this time.

- Based on the needs described below reflecting the information available at this time. CHF 50,000 has been allocated from the Federation's Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF). Based on further updates and details from assessment reports, or should the situation deteriorate, the Federation may consider international support through an Emergency Appeal.

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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

The severe cold wave continues to grip most parts of the country with widespread rain and record snowfalls in various parts of Pakistan. The bad weather for the past three weeks has claimed over 600 lives with tens of thousands of people affected by flooding, avalanches and bitterly cold conditions. Exact details of casualties are not available but there are reports of over 350 deaths in North West Frontier Province (NWFP), the Northern Areas and Federally Administered Areas and more than 250 dead in Balochistan.

Kashmir and the Northern Areas received almost another metre of snow over the weekend, with Muzaffarabad, Abbottabad and adjacent areas also receiving heavy snowfalls. Murree, just north-west of the capital Islamabad, received more snow, setting a record high of 4.9 metres at the hill station where routine life and economic activities have been badly affected. The previous record of 4.3 metres was set in 1976.

The provinces of Balochistan and Sindh are gripped by frigid weather with temperatures of minus 11 degrees Celsius in certain areas. The Balochistan Minister for Revenues said that 15 districts of the province have been affected by the bad weather and relief work in these areas is ongoing.

Government officials say flood-hit areas of Pakistan's southern coastal district of Gwadar in Balochistan province are facing potential food shortages and shortages of other basic necessities if the damaged road link to the area is not repaired in the next couple of days.

In Pakistan-administered Kashmir, 63 people were confirmed dead. The total number of displaced people is at least 1,850, due to landslides, avalanches and heavy snowfalls in the valleys. It is estimated that more than 200,000 people are stranded in snowbound valleys in northern districts of NWFP.

The Pakistan Army and provincial highway department has deployed heavy equipment to clear roads, but continuing bad weather has hampered their work. Four helicopters from the Pakistani Army have been participating in relief activities in NWFP's northern areas.

Water experts say the heavy snowfall in Murree and Margalla Hills adjoining the Northern Areas will raise water and catchment dam levels. The meteorological department forecasts snowfalls will continue in the northern areas for the next couple of days.

Red Cross and Red Crescent action



Relief items dispatched from PRCS NHQ, being unloaded in Karachi, for further shipment by C-130 aircraft to affected people in Gwada, Balochistan.

The Pakistan Red Crescent Society (PRCS) dispatched a consignment of relief items on Monday 21 February from the national headquarters (NHQ) in Islamabad, to flood-affected areas in Mansehra, NWFP. Distribution is expected to commence today (22 February). The consignment consists of blankets (200), tents (30), ladies shawl (200), mixed clothing (20 bales), atta (2,000 kg), rice (1,000 kg), and packs containing tea, ghee, milk, matches and sugar.

As outlined in previous Information Bulletins, relief items were dispatched to affected areas of Balochistan, NWFP and the Northern Areas, in some cases with the assistance of the military with many places inaccessible by conventional transport.

The relief items included tents, blankets, flour, rice, pulses, sugar, biscuits, tea, rusks, salt, clothing, kitchen utensils, ground sheets, drinking water, jerry cans, choroquin syrup, oral rehydration solutions (ORS), gas cylinders, normal saline drops, bandages and warm clothing.

PRCS is not planning to launch an emergency appeal for the time being. However, they are accepting offers from partner national societies which have made significant contributions already towards the national society's relief efforts. Last week, local youth wing volunteers from NWFP raised Rs. 25,000.00 for the affected/displaced people in the region.

Generous support has already been provided by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) (USD 30,000/CHF 35,480) and the Chinese Red Cross (USD 20,000/CHF 26,650). In-kind donations have been received from the United Arab Emirates. Disaster Relief Emergency Funds of CHF 50,000 were released to assist with this operation.

The German Red Cross regional delegate based at the South Asia Regional Delegation (SARD) in Delhi, arrived in Islamabad on 19 February to assist the delegation/national society with the continuing relief operations.

For longer-term programmes, please refer to the Federation's [Annual Appeal](#).

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