

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

BULGARIA: FLOODS

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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 183 countries.

In Brief

This Bulletin is being issued for information only, and reflects the situation and the information available at this time. The Federation is not seeking funding or other assistance from donors for this operation at this time.

The International Federation undertakes activities that are aligned with its Global Agenda, which sets out four broad goals to achieve the Federation's mission to "improve the lives of vulnerable people by mobilizing the power of humanity".

Global Agenda Goals:

- Reduce the numbers of deaths, injuries and impact from disasters.
- Reduce the number of deaths, illnesses and impact from diseases and public health emergencies.
- Increase local community, civil society and Red Cross Red Crescent capacity to address the most urgent situations of vulnerability.
- Reduce intolerance, discrimination and social exclusion and promote respect for diversity and human dignity.

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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 Organizations \(NGO's\) 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

Danube River

Since the beginning of April, the water level of the river Danube has been rising to a critical level in the north western part of Bulgaria. Since 12 April, the Bulgarian Red Cross (BRC) Crisis Management Team at the national headquarters has activated the response system and is monitoring the situation. Teams are carrying out assessments in the affected areas.

Nikopol

Following a high level of 939 cm on 13 April in the Vidin region, levels reached 871 cm on 19th April in the river Danube in Nikopol municipality. The total population of Nikopol is 6000 people. On 19 April 2006, the assessment team of Bulgarian Red Cross, DM coordinator and Director of **Pleven Red Cross Branch** visited **Nikopol** municipality. They had a meeting with the mayor, deputy mayor and representative of the local civil protection.

The team visited the most affected areas: hospital, kindergarten, school and medical centre in Nikopol. The water level of the Danube River is 871 cm, increasing by 12 cm since the morning of 19 April. The river Osum has flooded 5 km of the valley - affecting mainly agricultural farmlands. The public buildings and stores are closed and private houses situated close to the river are flooded as well. The electricity in flooded areas is cut. The septic pits are over flooded. A total of 42 people from 16 flooded houses have been evacuated and accommodated in a hotel in Nikopol. The municipality is giving financial support for food to the evacuated people, on a daily basis, but this is unlikely to be sustainable over the long term.



The most affected areas in Nikopol is the hospital, kindergarten, school and medical centre

The water level at the Nikopol hospital is one meter high. The assessment team also had a meeting with the manager of the hospital, representatives from the regional medical centre in Pleven and from the National medical coordination centre – Sofia. The emergency needs were discussed – bed linen, disinfectants and food.

The primary school in Nikopol has no damage to the building but the yard is flooded. The pupils are entering the building over self-made “bridges” of sandbags and woods. There are 560 children who attend the school. There is a problem with the sewerage system, with the accompanying risk of infection. The relief needs for drinking water, will be provided by Pleven Red Cross. The kindergarten is totally flooded, the electricity is cut and the children cannot attend classes. All the food supplies, the inventory of the kitchen and laundry are destroyed.

At this stage the emergency needs of the kindergarten are for disinfectants and food stocks. There is an appeal for replenishment of the inventory. Once water has receded, humidity dryers will be needed. The medical centre in Nikopol is also flooded and is not functioning. The emergency needs are for disinfectants for cleaning of the centre.

The drinking water is controlled by the responsible authorities and tests are done on a regular basis.

The assessment team participated at a meeting of the Crisis Response Team in Nikopol. The crisis response team asked from the Bulgarian Red Cross to help with food, disinfectants and financial support. Once waters recede, the municipality will need humidity dryers for the public buildings and affected houses.

Areas/Building in Nikopol affected by the flood to date:

- Evacuated people: 42
- Flooded houses: 16
- Agricultural land: 5 km
- Hospital in Nikopol
- Medical Center in Nikopol
- Kindergarten
- Primary School, number of children: 560



The increasing level of water has flooded the harbour, houses, factories and agricultural land

Russe

The level of water in Russe is currently 9 m high. The harbour, some factories and agricultural land are flooded, but at present no private houses have been affected. The village of Rjahovo - with 2100 inhabitants - is at risk as the whole village is situated below the level of the Danube. The village is totally protected by dykes, which are observed 24 hours by civil protection and the army. A total of 700 people from the village are ready to be evacuated.

Silistra

A part of Silistra town is currently flooded, as well as the harbour, some houses and agricultural land. The villages of Nova Cerna, (population: 1,500 inhabitants) and Tutrakan, (population: 16,000 inhabitants), are protected by dykes. The most difficult situation is with underground waters and the sewage system. The level of the river is high and

therefore all dirty water, which usually goes directly to Danube, is coming back into the towns. Civil protection is trying to solve the problem with the use of pumps.

Coordination

Local authority, state, other agencies

The Bulgarian Red Cross (BRC) is in constant contact with the State Agency for Civil Protection at National level and through the regional branches with the local authorities. All changes in the situation are reported to BRC headquarters.

Exchange of information is also established with the National Crisis Center of the Government of the Republic of Bulgaria.

CARE International has provided 35 t of drinking water to the municipality of Nikopol. That quantity has been put as a reserve in case water is contaminated.

In Russe, the local Red Cross branches are participating at all crisis management team meetings and are in daily contact with the Regional branch Russe.

Red Cross and Red Crescent action

Immediate response

From the very beginning of the situation, BRC Pleven has supported the municipality of Nikopol with bed linen and blankets.

The Bulgarian Red Cross has its inter-regional warehouse situated in Russe. Relief goods have been prepositioned from Sofia to Russe, so that the branch is able to provide assistance to 500 people if requested.

Additional actions

On 19 April, after the request of the Crisis Team in Nikopol, the National Headquarters of the BRC has followed up the procedures for supporting the municipality of Nikopol. On 20 April, a bank transfer of BGN 15,000 (approx. EUR 7,500) was made and a truck with the following relief items left for Nikopol on 21 April:

No:	Articles	Quantity
1	Rusk	300 boxes
2	Ketchup	70 boxes
3	Jam	50 boxes
4	Acetilin	5 boxes
5	Food parcels	150
6	Canned vegetables	100
7	Dry soup	1 barrel
8	Cleaning cream with bleach	100 bottles
9	Washing powder	5 boxes
10	Cleaning preparation	5 boxes
11	Bed linen	200
12	Clothes – used	115 sack

Forthcoming needs

According to prognoses, the flood waters should have drained away within a one month period. After this, the municipality of Nikopol will need humidity dryers for the drying out of public buildings – hospital, kindergarten, school etc. and private houses affected by the floods.

At present the BRC is managing the situation, through assessment missions, and positioning and distribution of relief goods, as well as information sharing with key partners. No assistance has been requested through the International Federation at present.

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