

# 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

## GUYANA: FLOODS

26 January 2006

*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. 01/2006) 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

In 2005, three days of torrential rains which began on 14 January caused serious flooding in Guyana, affecting more than 150,000 people. This was the third time since late December 2004 that rains had caused flooding in the country's capital, Georgetown, and other coastal towns.

A year later, as of mid January 2006, serious flooding is again affecting Guyana and rain is continuing to fall throughout the country. The most affected regions are the coastal areas of Pomeroon, Mahaica, Michoney and Abbary; in addition, as a result of heavy rains in the highlands, the East Coast water conservancy dam is under threat. The West Coast of Demerara has also reported some flooding in a number of communities. In the capital, Georgetown, there are reports of flooding in sections of Queenstown and Sophia as well as of high waters within low-lying areas of Sophia, Bourda and Queenstown. A coordination meeting was held between aid organizations including UNICEF, the Pan American Health Organization, OXFAM and the UNDP and the government on 24 January, and it was agreed that resources should be pooled. There is concern regarding the longer-term effects of the flooding on the people in the worst-affected areas and, in particular, on subsistence farmers. The most serious threat is the potential loss of thousands of acres of rice crops if waters do not subside rapidly. There are also

concerns that there may be outbreaks of leptospirosis as a number of cases have been reported; as a result, the Ministry of Health is taking preventive measures in the worst-affected areas.

### **Red Cross and Red Crescent action**

The Guyana Red Cross is focusing attention on regions 1 and 2 and estimates that 2-3,000 families are badly affected. The National Society intends to concentrate on psychosocial support, shelter, health education and awareness-raising. The National Society is contacting local businesses regarding the need for hygiene items for children and babies. The Guyana Red Cross is also distributing mosquito nets, blankets and health awareness materials which are in stock following the 2005 floods in the country. The National Society has also provided tarpaulins to the Civil Defence for use in shelters. At present, the exact number of people in shelters is not known.

Immediate needs identified by the Guyana Red Cross are for refresher training for Red Cross first aid trainers, together with blankets, stoves and hygiene items which are currently being purchased with local funding. At a later stage, there may be a need for seeds and agricultural tools.



**Assessments are taking place in the affected communities along the coast**

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