

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

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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 181 countries.

In Brief

This Bulletin (no. 02/2006) 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

As of mid January 2006, serious flooding is once again affecting Guyana; the worst-hit regions are the coastal areas of Pomeroon, Mahaica, Michoney and Abbary. The government has declared a state of emergency in regions 2 - Pomeroon and 5 - Mahaica. Three shelters are in operation in region 5 with 79 people housed there at present. In region 9, Rupununi, on the border with Brazil, flooding has also been reported due to unseasonable heavy rainfall. The Civil Defence Commission has overall responsibility for the coordination of emergency relief activities and the Ministry of Health has declared that 35,000 persons are affected by the floods in regions 2, 3, 5 and 6. There are reports of cases of leptospirosis which have been confirmed, but which do not seem to be directly associated with the flooded areas; this is being further investigated. 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. The government is providing a cash grant to up to 5,000 persons for cattle farmers and for rice farmers. There is a need for seeds and agricultural tools which is being addressed by NGOs in the country, and a need for clean up kits is anticipated.

Heavy rains continue in the country and the forecast is for continual rain for the next 12 days.

Red Cross and Red Crescent action

A Disaster Management Delegate from the Pan American Disaster Response Unit reached Guyana on Monday, 30 January and is working with the Guyana Red Cross Society (GRCS) in the carrying out of assessments and identification of needs. Regional Intervention Team (RIT) members are on standby, should they be required. In addition, the Port of Spain Sub Regional Office is in constant communication with the Guyana Red Cross Society.

The Guyana Red Cross Society is preparing to support the government in the distribution of antibiotics for the treatment of leptospirosis. The National Society has distributed 200 food hampers in shelters from national donations and has provided treated mosquito nets in region 1. The GRCS is now distributing hygiene kits and mosquito nets to families with young children in regions 2 and 5, and is attending to people who are housed in shelters. Transportation costs related to the distributions are high since many of the roads to the flooded communities are in bad condition and, in some cases, remote areas can be reached by boat only. The PADRU Disaster Management Delegate accompanied National Society staff on a mission to region 5, yesterday, 31 January and visited Jacob, Esau and Mortice, approximately 75 km. south of Georgetown along the Maichoni river. The GRCS distributed hygiene kits in two shelters. Conditions in these shelters are good and people are calm; however, there are people in remote areas who have not reached shelters and whose numbers are not yet known.

The Guyana Red Cross Society/Federation are liaising closely with OFDA/USAID, OXFAM, OCHA, DfID and ECHO in relation to the flooding in Guyana. Furthermore, the Guyana Red Cross Society is working with UNICEF in psychosocial support activities and hopes to develop these further to meet the needs of children.

Assessments are on-going in order to determine full details of the situation in isolated, flooded areas and to assess needs more fully. At this stage, the Guyana Red Cross Society does not expect to undertake significant relief distributions as those in need are being assisted through available aid mechanisms and community initiatives. However, information-gathering regarding the full extent of the effects of the flooding is continuing.



A shelter in Mortice which is under water

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