



## NAMIBIA: MARIENTAL 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

**CHF 90,000 HAS BEEN ALLOCATED FROM THE FEDERATION'S DISASTER RELIEF EMERGENCY FUND (DREF) TO RESPOND TO THIS OPERATION FOR THREE MONTHS. UNEARMARKED FUNDS TO REPLACE DREF ARE ENCOURAGED IN SUPPORT OF THE NATIONAL SOCIETY ACTIVITIES IN WATER AND SANITATION AND EMERGENCY RELIEF.**

#### 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.

#### *For further information specifically related to this operation please contact:*

- **In Namibia:** Razia Essack-Kauaria, Secretary General, Namibia Red Cross, Windhoek; Email: [secgen@redcross.org.na](mailto:secgen@redcross.org.na); Phone +264.61. 23.52.16; Fax +264.61.22.89.49
- **In Zimbabwe:** Françoise Le Goff, Head of Southern Africa Regional Delegation, Harare; Email: [ifrczw02@ifrc.org](mailto:ifrczw02@ifrc.org); Phone: +263.4.70.61.55, +263.4.70.61.56; Fax: +263.4.70.87.84
- **In Geneva:** Terry Carney, Federation Regional Officer for Southern Africa, Africa Dept., Geneva; Email: [terry.carney@ifrc.org](mailto:terry.carney@ifrc.org); Phone: +41.22.730.42.98, Fax: +41.22.733.03.97

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### The Situation

Heavy rains in central Namibia on 22 and 23 February 2006 caused three rivers in the Mariental constituency catchments areas to swell, raising the level of the Hardap Dam to 108% full. Due to risk of collapse of the dam by the pressure of water, Nam Water (local water supply parastatal) opened the gates of the dam. The water was released in the 'Fish River' situated between Hardap Dam and the town of Mariental (14,000 residents). The river flooded Mariental, displacing 2,100 people (330 households), submerging 122 houses, 80 businesses, invading 30

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irrigation schemes and damaging WatSan systems. National roads became impassable. Two people drowned and a third person is still reported missing.

Mariental is located 273 km south of the capital Windhoek. It is the capital of the Hardap region (67,998 inhabitants), the third most populated city in Namibia and is situated along a key road and railway corridor linking Namibia and the Republic of South Africa.

The Namibian Emergency Management Unit (EMU) was alerted by the Mariental Municipality on 25 February 2006 and a rapid needs assessment was conducted on the same day. The Ministry of Agriculture, Hardap regional Council and Mariental Municipality are coordinating the response operation. Food and transportation needs are being provided to the area by various ministries. Military and police teams conducted search-and-rescue operations and facilitated the evacuation process with a rescue helicopter and a boat.

As rains continued during on February 25 and 26 2006, the situation worsened. As of March 1 2006, the water level in the dam went back to 80% and people have started relocating back to their houses to assess the situation after the damage done.

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

The Namibia Red Cross Society, as part of the EMU, conducted an assessment on 25 February 2006. The local branch, coordinating with the national society's response teams, provided initial relief items, including: 120 blankets, 240 collapsible jerry cans, 100 Insecticide Treated Mosquito Nets (ITNs), 20 tarpaulins and 2 first aid kits.

The Federation's regional delegation in Harare, Zimbabwe established a disaster management task force to support the national society in responding to the crisis. Two Regional Disaster Response Team (RDRT) and WatSan experts have been deployed in Namibia to support the national society in its humanitarian response.

The national society is delivering assistance to the affected population with regards to shelter and water and sanitation humanitarian needs. Water testing and purification kits are deployed in the affected areas.

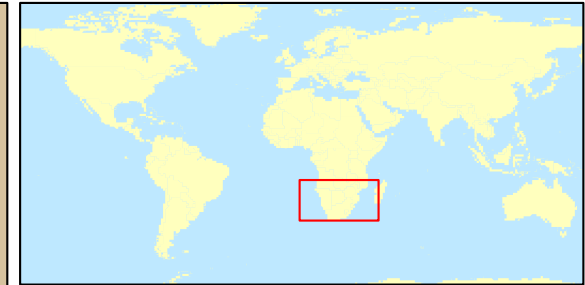
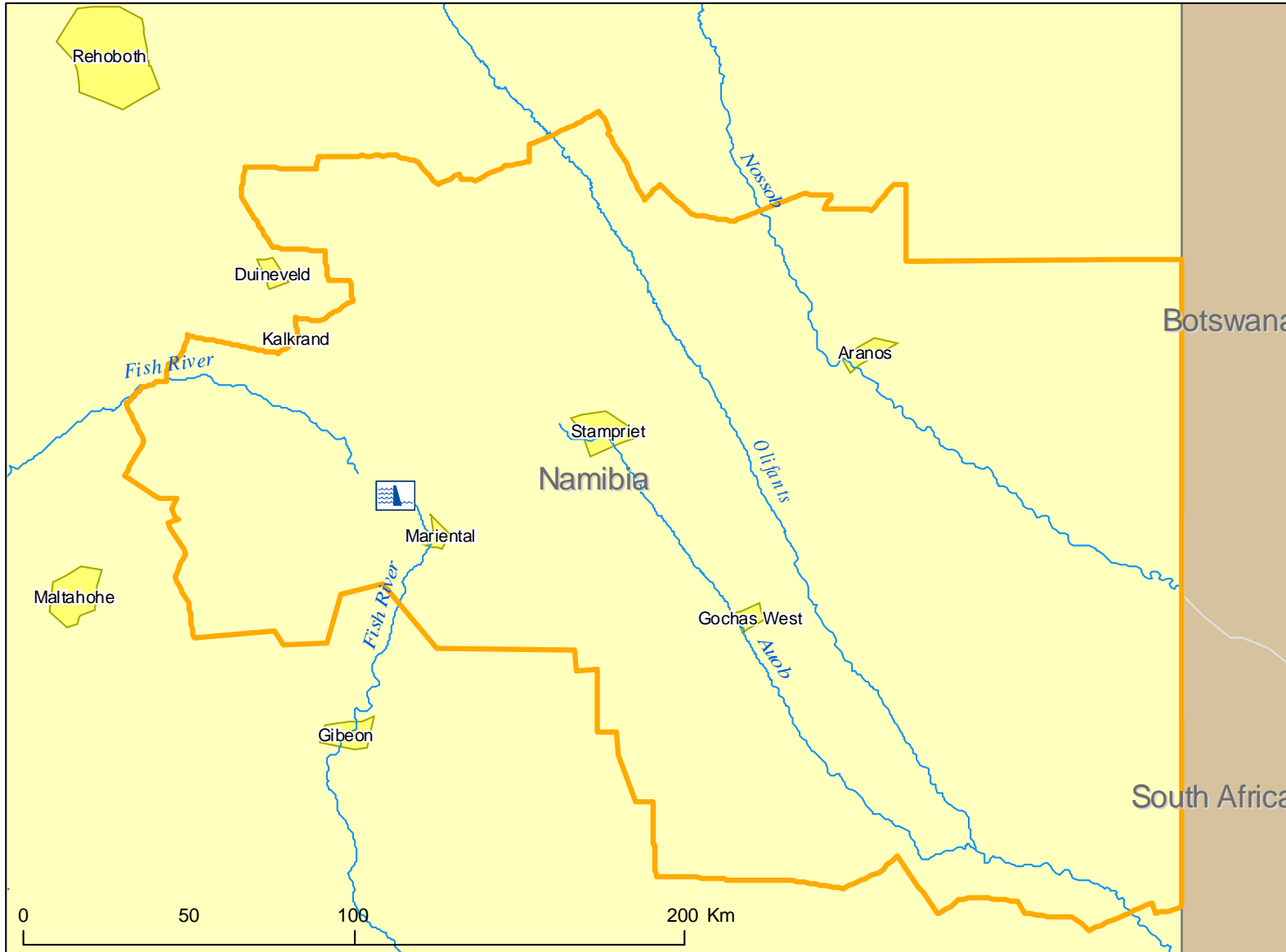
### **The needs**

- Supplies: water purification kits; sanitation materials; tarpaulins; jerry cans, and ITNs;
- Relief items: blankets; tents.
- Deployment of WatSan RDRT support;
- Support to the volunteer's response and ad hoc training.

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# Namibia: Floods



Hardap Dam



Main rivers



Urban areas



Mariental



Namibia

The maps used do not imply the expression of any opinion on the part of the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies or National Societies concerning the legal status of a territory or of its authorities.

Map data sources: ESRI, SAHIMS, CIPOTATO