

# 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

## ***POLAND: FLOODS***

31 July, 2001

*Information Bulletin N° 01*

*DREF Allocated: CHF 50,000*

*This Bulletin is being issued based on the needs described below. A DREF allocation of CHF 50,000 has been released, and based on further updates and details from assessment reports, or should the situation deteriorate, the Federation will consider international support through an Appeal.*

### ***The Situation***

Starting on July 9, torrential rainfall and consequent flooding has affected widespread areas in Poland along the Vistula River. The first areas to be affected were the coastal cities of Gdansk and Slupsk. In addition to the extreme damage caused by high wind and rain, flood water from the Vistula River and its tributaries tore through some of the most vulnerable sections of these cities. By the time the winds subsided, more than 300 homes were under water and more than \$1 million of damage was caused in Slupsk alone.

Torrential rains have been an everyday event throughout Poland during the month of July causing 10 deaths. The hardest hit areas are now the cities and towns of southern Poland along the Vistula where 3,000 hectares of land are under water and the city of Kielce alone has suffered an estimated \$100 million in property losses. There are currently six voivodships (districts) affected: Malopolskie, Swietokrzyskie, Lubelsskie, Slaskie, Lodzkie and Podkarpackie where bridges, sewage systems, water and gas supplies, houses and livelihoods have been destroyed. Some 15,000 people have been evacuated to date, Reports indicate many of these are temporarily sheltering in collective accommodation such as schools.

### ***Red Cross/Red Crescent Action***

CHF 50,000 has been allocated from the Federation's Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF) to start and facilitate the relief activities. Local Polish Red Cross Society (PRCS) chapters immediately sprang into action and began the distribution of food, water, clothing and health items to survivors of the floods and to those persons evacuated from their homes. Local appeals have been made for assistance by the Red Cross and a national appeal for financial support has been launched by the Polish Red Cross National Society Headquarters. Some 200 volunteers have been activated to assist in the operation.

The Polish Red Cross actions to date have included:

- the collection and distribution of relief items, specifically drinking water, food, clothes, sanitary products, disinfectants, sleeping-bags, blankets and others;
- organization of transport to the regions affected by flood;
- local (street) collections (in Gdańsk, for instance, well known persons from cultural circles were involved in collecting);
- organizing search and rescue dog teams in Gdańsk;

- Twenty-four hour first aid centers in Gdańsk.

PRCS branches have collectively sent the following:

- 1,300 blankets;
- shoes for children;
- clothes, blankets, hygiene products, and non-perishable food.

The PRCS is closely coordinating efforts with various agencies, including Governmental, non-governmental, local authorities and public institutions (e.g. fire brigade, crisis center management, the municipal guard, police and the City Center for Social Service).

Pending further needs assessments and a decision on whether an international appeal will be launched, the following items are required: 20,000 litres of disinfectant; 30,000 garbage sacks; 15,000 pairs of rubber shoes; 15,000 pairs of rubber gloves; 15,000 blankets; 10,000 sleeping bags; 15,000 parcels of hygiene items ( washing powder, towels etc.); 500 first aid kits (professional); 1,000 baby hygiene articles; 45,000 rolls of toilet paper; 1,000 camping beds, 100,000 food containers (thermos); 100 gas stoves; 200 large pots for the gas cookers.

The following national societies have provided essential support to the PRCS to date:

- German Red Cross: relief items (including disinfectant and blankets) and an assessment team;
- Netherlands Red Cross: allocated CHF 372,000 towards the procurement of relief items

For a full description of the National Society profile, see [www.ifrc.org](http://www.ifrc.org)

*For further details please contact:*

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*All International Federation Operations seek to adhere to the Code of Conduct and are committed to the Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Disaster Response (SPHERE Project) in delivering assistance to the most vulnerable.*

*For support to or for further information concerning Federation operations in this or other countries, please access the Federation website at <http://www.ifrc.org>*

*For longer-term programmes, please refer to the Federation's Annual Appeal.*

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