

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

UNITED KINGDOM: FLOODS

Information Bulletin no. 02/2007
(Glide no. FL-2007-000111-GBR)
25 July 2007

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 185 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.

For further details related to this operation, please contact: in Geneva, Linda Stops, Operations Coordinator, International Federation; phone +41 22 730 4300; mobile: +41 79 217 3376; email: Linda.stops@ifrc.org

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.

The Situation

Over a month of torrential rain has led to severe flooding across the United Kingdom (UK), bringing despair to hundreds of thousands of people by destroying homes and some livelihoods, cutting off access to drinking water and electricity, and causing major disruption to travel routes. The Severn, Avon, Thames, and Great Ouse (see map) are the major rivers that have reached critical levels. The situation continues to evolve, and the adverse weather conditions are expected to continue to threaten further flooding.



Map: locations where severe flood warnings remain in place (courtesy BBC).

The British Red Cross response

The British Red Cross Society (BRCS) released £100,000 (*CHF 248,814, USD 205,145, EUR 149,376*) from its Disaster Fund to deliver immediate assistance, and launched an urgent national appeal on 24 July 2007 for people affected by the unprecedented and devastating floods. The BRCS has been working in all affected areas since the flooding began, with volunteers managing rest centres, supporting the emergency services, and providing emergency goods and bedding to those evacuated from their homes. Thousands of homes are reportedly still without power and water. A BRCS team has started delivering drinking water to homes without a water supply in Gloucestershire.

The British Red Cross National Floods Appeal reportedly raised over £300,000 (*CHF 746,371, USD 615,425, EUR 448,092*) in the first hour after its launch. Funds raised from the appeal will go to help communities in hardship rebuild their lives. The BRCS will work closely with affected communities, local, regional and UK government to ensure the money goes to those who have been hardest hit. The Fund will target vulnerable people most in need.

There have been generous contributions from the private sector, and the appeal's launch was welcomed by the UK government. Flood Recovery Minister John Healey said: "We have a massive job ahead of us and it is only right that we should all be pulling together to ensure that aid gets to the most vulnerable communities as fast as possible. The Red Cross initiative is a welcome addition to the work we are already doing with local authorities to support the victims of the floods. The British are always generous and this is a way for people and companies to show their support for those affected."

The Red Cross has been working in all affected areas since the flooding began. More than a hundred volunteers have run rest centres, supported the emergency services, and provided emergency goods and bedding to those evacuated from their homes. The BRCS plans to continue with the assistance as long as it is needed.

As a leading voluntary organization for emergency response, the Red Cross has thousands of specially trained volunteers who provide a range of services to people in emergencies, including practical and emotional support and first aid services. The Red Cross also has well-equipped Fire and Emergency Support Service (FESS) vehicles which play a vital role in supporting local fire and ambulance services.

Before the flooding began, the Red Cross launched a coordinated response to help vulnerable people across areas threatened by flooding in England.

More specifically, the BRCS response has included:

Evacuations: Volunteers helped evacuate patients from Tewkesbury Hospital after torrential rains led to flooding in the area. Care home residents were also evacuated in Oxfordshire. In Tamworth, Staffordshire, teams of volunteers worked with fire crews to evacuate residents by boat, made sure that people who didn't want to be evacuated had enough food and medication, and secured people's properties overnight.

Staffing rest centres: The BRCS has supported emergency rest centres in Abingdon, west Berkshire, Buckingham, Henley-on-Arden, Helmdon, Oxford (at the Kassam Football Stadium), Stratford-upon-Avon, Doncaster, Wakefield, Sheffield, and Wellsborne. Volunteers have provided clothing, refreshments, emotional support, therapeutic massage, and practical advice on a range of topics including filing insurance claims.

Support to the statutory services: BRCS ambulances have supported the local ambulance service in Berkshire, Birmingham, Gloucestershire, Sussex and Warwickshire. Help has also been provided at non-emergency situations in Lincolnshire, Herefordshire, Shropshire, Warwickshire, Worcestershire and Barry in south Wales.

Distribution of emergency provisions: From the BRCS warehouse in Warmley near Bristol, bottled water has been provided (supplied by local supermarkets). In Gloucestershire, where up to 350,000 people have now lost their water supply, Red Cross volunteers are preparing to distribute more than 23,000 litres of water donated by

Tesco. In Castlemead, the Red Cross' all-terrain UNIMOG vehicle is on hand to provide 2,500 litres of water for local residents.

Supplies: The BRCS provided medical equipment and bedding in Doncaster (30 beds for elderly people), Birmingham (beds, blankets and pillows), Tewkesbury (duvets and sleeping bags), Warwickshire (beds, blankets and pillows) and Wellsbourne (wheelchairs).

Information: In Tamworth and Elford volunteers set up residents' meetings where community members were given the latest news and an opportunity to ask questions. Thanks to volunteers in Lincolnshire, residents received flood information packs offering advice from a range of agencies on what to do before, during, and after a flood.

[Click here to return to the title page or contact information.](#)