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Information bulletin Croatia: Floods

 International Federation
of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

Information Bulletin HR- n° 1

30 May 2014



CRC volunteers distributing food.
Photo: Croatian Red Cross



Mobile emergency operative centre of the CRC.
Photo: Croatian Red Cross

This bulletin is being issued for information only, and reflects the current situation and details available at this time. The Croatian Red Cross Society has determined, with the support of the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC), that external assistance is not required, and is therefore not seeking funding or other assistance from donors at this point in time.

[<click here for detailed contact information>](#)

On 13 May 2014, torrential rains hit South-Eastern Europe, triggering flash floods and landslides. The large amount of rainfall that has fallen in the last period in eastern Croatia and large part of central and northern Bosnia and Herzegovina, caused a sudden rise in the water level of rivers, ground waters and backwaters, exceeding the maximum ever recorded water levels in several cities. In three days, the area recorded rainfalls equal to three months` quantities. In some areas the water levels rose by 3.5 meters over a period of just 24 hours. The probability of such high water level occurring was once in 1,000 years, and the levee system was not built to withstand it. At the peak of the crisis around 1,700 Croatian Red Cross volunteers and staff were actively engaged in day to day relief operations in the affected area and throughout the country mostly collecting, sorting and dispatching the humanitarian aid, doing tracing service activities, providing psychosocial support, engaged in meal preparation, and provision of logistics support.

The situation

Croatia managed to successfully combat the amount of water coming in until the night of 17 May, when the Sava river broke out of its levee system in two places along the 210 km line in the eastern part of the country and partially or completely flooded 210 square km of the surrounding area. The unprecedented floods caused widespread power outages, water shortages, damage to the infrastructure, livestock and livelihoods, and displacement of the affected population. The flooding caused three deaths, and, out of the estimated 15,000 people evacuated to the nearby cities and ten temporary collective centres, 7,116 were registered and looked after by the Croatian Red Cross.

On 20 May, the Croatian Government, advised by Director of the National Protection and Rescue Directorate, declared a state of disaster for the Vukovar-Srijem County, and an Operational - Communication Centre was set up in the city of Županja. Croatian Red Cross has been designated as a coordinator for receipt and distribution of the humanitarian aid.

Croatian officials have expressed concern about the impact of the flooding on the numerous mine-affected areas in the region. Many of the flooded areas are multi-ethnic border villages where mine-suspected areas from the 1991-95 conflict had been well marked but not yet de-mined. The fear is that the floods will have displaced both warning signs and the mines themselves.

Red Cross action

At the peak of the crisis 1,700 Red Cross volunteers and staff were actively engaged in day-to-day relief operations in the affected area and throughout the country, mostly collecting, sorting and dispatching the humanitarian aid, doing tracing service activities, providing psychosocial support, preparing meals, and providing logistics support to the 117 National Intervention Team members and staff on the ground. Every day there are 5,150 hot meals and 3,740 ready-to-eat meals prepared and delivered to the intervention forces on the ground, volunteers, and evacuated people in collective centers.

The Croatian Red Cross National Intervention Team is concentrating its current response efforts on the following activities:

- Organization and distribution of the humanitarian aid to the evacuated and affected people;
- Management of the local spontaneous volunteers;
- Communication with and the guidance to the local population;
- Field assessment and reporting;
- Tracing service;
- Management of the Red Cross volunteers;
- Hygiene promotion activities in collective centers;
- Mobile team to dislocated areas;
- Logistics support to the members of the Psychosocial support team;
- Ongoing needs assessment in the affected areas.

To date, the Croatian Red Cross has organized the reception, storage, and distribution of humanitarian aid of more than 1,000 pallet-loads of food and non-food items, and raised financial contributions through donations from citizens and companies in the amount of EUR 6.9 million.

The Croatian Red Cross and the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) are closely monitoring the situation. The International Federation's Europe Zone Office has offered its assistance to the Croatian Red Cross in the areas where it may be required.

Contact information

For further information specifically related to this operation please contact:

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Click here

1. Click [here](#) to see the map of the affected areas
2. Click [here](#) to return to the title page

How we work

All IFRC 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 the Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Disaster Response (Sphere) in delivering assistance to the most vulnerable.

The IFRC's vision is to inspire, encourage, facilitate and promote at all times all forms of humanitarian activities by National Societies, with a view to preventing and alleviating human suffering, and thereby contributing to the maintenance and promotion of human dignity and peace in the world.

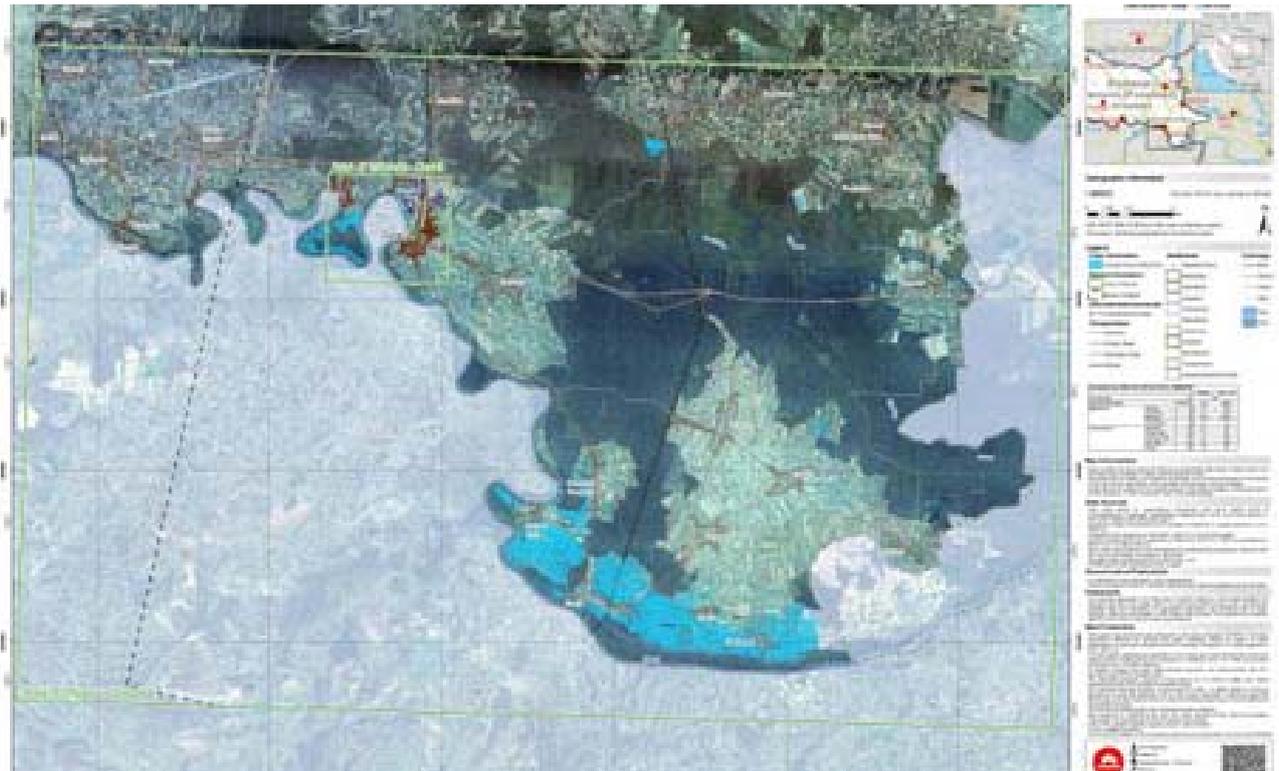
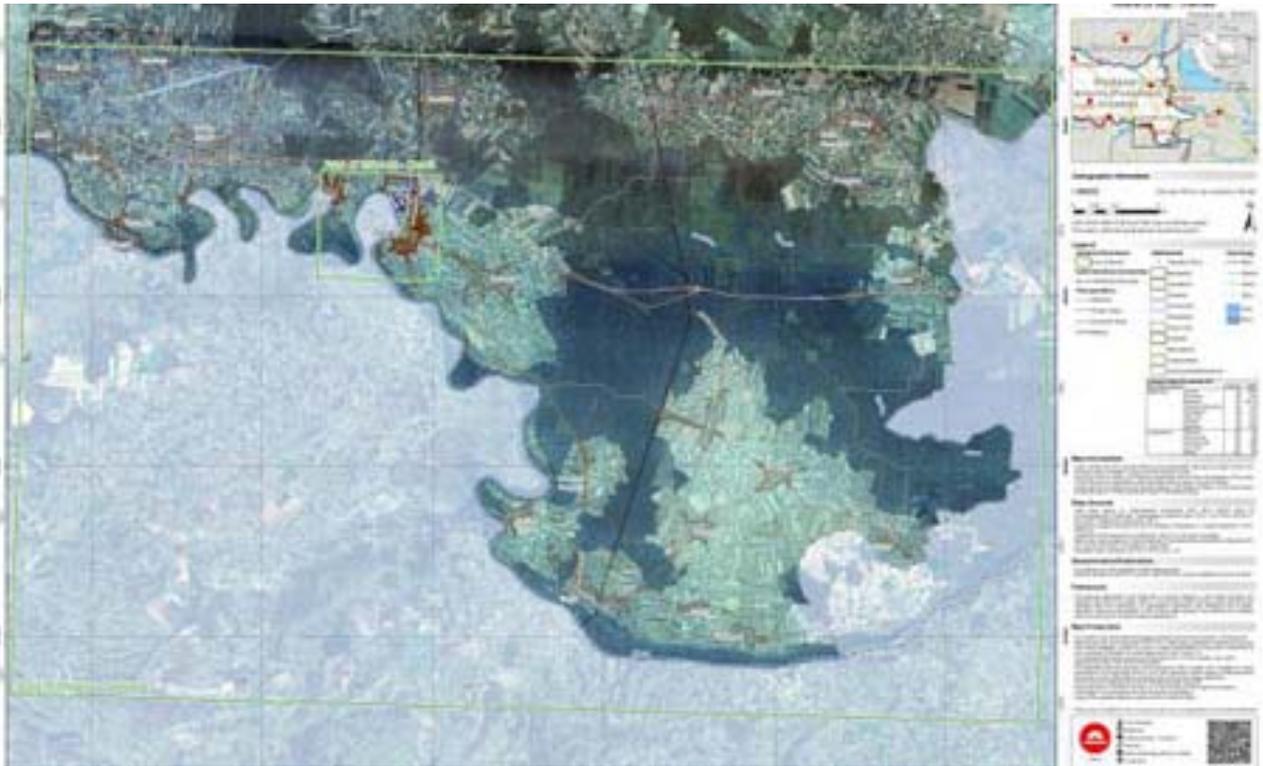
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The IFRC's work is guided by Strategy 2020 which puts forward three strategic aims:

1. Save lives, protect livelihoods, and strengthen recovery from disaster and crises.
2. Enable healthy and safe living.
3. Promote social inclusion and a culture of non-violence and peace.



Satellite images of affected area in Vukovar-Srijem County before (May 17) and after (May 19) flooding