

# MINOR EMERGENCY



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

## HONDURAS: TROPICAL STORM GAMMA

21 November 2005

*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

**CHF 111,000 (USD 84,117 OR EUR 71,731) HAS BEEN REQUESTED FROM THE FEDERATION'S DISASTER RELIEF EMERGENCY FUND (DREF) TO RESPOND TO THIS OPERATION.**

**UNEARMARKED FUNDS TO REPAY DREF ARE ENCOURAGED.**

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

- In Honduras: Honduran Red Cross, Tegucigalpa; [honducruz@datum.hm](mailto:honducruz@datum.hm), phone (504) 237-8876, fax (504) 238-0185
- In Panama: Nelson Castañó, Head of Pan American Disaster Response Unit; email [nelson.castano@ifrc.org](mailto:nelson.castano@ifrc.org), phone (507) 316-1001, fax (507) 316-1082
- In Geneva: Luis Luna, Federation Regional Officer, Americas Department, Geneva; email [luis.luna@ifrc.org](mailto:luis.luna@ifrc.org), phone (41 22) 730-, fax (41 22) 733-0392

*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

Tropical Storm Gamma, the 24<sup>th</sup> named storm of the record breaking Atlantic hurricane season, killed 14 people in Central America, including 11 in Honduras and 3 in Belize. Another 15 people have been reported missing in Honduras. Gamma brought winds of 45 mph and torrential rains to Honduras on Saturday, 19 November, cutting off several communities on the country's Caribbean coast. According to the Honduran government, the storm destroyed 48 homes, damaged 264 and forced more than 11,000 people to evacuate. Authorities estimated that more than 50,000 people were cut off as bridges were damaged or destroyed, leaving several cities and towns isolated. Helicopters from a U.S. military base joined Honduran aircraft in ferrying aid to hard-hit areas, but authorities said that dozens of coastal communities remained cut off.

In Belize, search teams blamed bad weather associated with Gamma for the crash of a private plane belonging to an exclusive jungle resort. The crash killed the Belizean pilot and two passengers who have been identified as U.S. citizens.

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The storm weakened into a tropical depression Sunday and was expected to dissipate on Monday; however, the storm was still expected to bring steady rain to northern Honduras and central Cuba. Forecasters said Gamma's projected path would carry it south of Jamaica by Wednesday, but it might not even be a tropical cyclone by then.



Residents stand behind a damaged bridge over Guaymon River in northern Honduras November 19, 2005. Honduran officials said more than 5,000 people were evacuated along the Atlantic coast and authorities estimated more than 50,000 were cut off as bridges were damaged or destroyed, leaving several cities and towns isolated.

*Photo courtesy of Reuters*

### Red Cross action taken so far

The Honduran Red Cross (HRC) branches in the north of the country have been activated and are working in close coordination with local emergency committees. Personnel from the National Society's Disaster and Emergency Administration Office (OPADE) have been mobilized to the Red Cross branches in the departments of Cortes and Yoro in order to support the branches and assess the damages in the area.

Red Cross branches in the department of Cortes are working together under the direction of the departmental president to carry out relief activities with the assistance of local volunteers and relief workers from the area. In San Pedro Sula, evacuations have been completed and 25 members of the water rescue team have been deployed to the branches in Lima and Chamelecon.

In Pimienta, 15 volunteers specialized in water rescue, damage and needs assessments and shelter management have been activated. Volunteers are working to rescue and evacuate people from flooded areas, move affected persons to shelters in coordination with local authorities, carry out surveys of damages, and maintain links between the Red Cross branch and the local emergency management committee.

In Progreso, in the department of Yoro, activities are being coordinated by members of the National Intervention Team (NIT) who, along with 46 Red Cross volunteers, are working with local fire fighters to carry out rescue activities and move affected persons to shelters. At the request of the local emergency committee, Red Cross volunteers from the Progreso branch have begun conducting surveys of the shelters in the area.

### The needs

The most urgent needs are for food and non-food relief items, shelter and medicines. According to the plan of action drawn up by the Honduran Red Cross, 1,000 families affected by the floods in the northern, southern and eastern regions of the country (departments of Colon, Atlantida, Yoro and Cortes) will receive relief items. The National Society will carry out an evaluation to determine the families most seriously in need based upon level of vulnerability, with priority given to families that have sustained damage to their property (house, crops and/or

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livestock) and families staying in shelters. Each family will receive a 100-pound food parcel, one hygiene kit and one kitchen set. The food parcels will be procured locally and are designed to feed a family of five for one month.

**Coordination**

The Honduran Red Cross is a member of the Permanent Commission for Contingencies (COPECO) and works in close coordination with the Honduran government. At the local level, the HRC is coordinating with municipal and community leaders as well as with non-governmental groups working in the field. Since the onset of this emergency, the HRC has been maintaining close coordination with the Federation's Pan American Disaster Response Unit (PADRU), based in Panama, to assess the situation and formulate an adequate response. A disaster management delegate from PADRU will be deployed to Honduras to assist with the relief operation.

**Budget outline**

<b>Description</b>	<b>Quantity</b>	<b>Total in CHF</b>
Hygiene kits	1,000	23,744.00
Kitchen sets	1,000	25,550.00
Food parcels	1,000	38,400.00
International Transport		3,840.00
NS operational costs: distribution, logistic support, and visibility		15,360.00
Field deployment of 1 IFRC staff		4,000.00
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>110,894.00</b>

[\*Click here to return to the title page and contact information.\*](#)