

DREF Bulletin Update



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

HAITI: FLOODS FROM TROPICAL STORM ERNESTO

**DREF Bulletin
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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 185 countries.

In Brief

This DREF Bulletin is being issued based on the situation described below reflecting the information available at this time. CHF 90,000 (USD 72,137.23 or EUR 56,817.08) was allocated from the Federation's Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF) to respond to the needs in this operation. This operation is expected to be implemented over three months, and will be completed by 10 December 2006; a Final Report will be made available three months after the end of the operation (by 10 March 2007). Unearmarked funds to repay DREF are encouraged.

This operation is aligned with the International Federation's Global Agenda, which sets out four broad goals to meet the Federation's mission to "improve the lives of vulnerable people by mobilizing the power of humanity".

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 Haiti: Haitian National Red Cross Society, Dr. Michaële Amédée Gédéon, President, Port-au-Prince; email drgedeonm@yahoo.com, phone (509) 510 4097/222-5554, fax (509) 221 2838.*
- *In Haiti: Jean Pierre Givel, Head of Delegation, Port-au-Prince; email: jp.givel@ifrc.org, phone (509) 510 2628/452-2301, fax (509) 257-1685.*
- *In Panama: Leon Prop, Head of Regional Delegation, Panama; email leon.prop@ifrc.org, phone (507) 317 1300, fax (507) 317 1304.*
- *In Panama: Stephen McAndrew, Coordinator of the Federation's Pan American Disaster Response Unit (PADRU), Panama; email stephen.mcandrew@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, phone (41) 22 730 4274, fax (41) 22 733 0395.*

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 \(NGOs\) 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>

Background and current situation

Tropical Storm Ernesto passed over Haiti's Southern coast on the night of Saturday, 26 August 2006. On the morning of Sunday, 27 August Ernesto became a category 1 hurricane as it started to leave Haitian territory. The very powerful rains that accompanied this system considerably affected the coastal areas of the regions of Sud and Grande Anse, and caused lesser damage in l'Ouest, Les Nippes and l'Artibonite.

Gusty winds and heavy rains reaching 150 to 300 mm, hammered the peninsula and the department of l'Ouest, causing flooding in certain coastal villages of the south-west, the south, Nippes, Grande Anse and the west. The flooding of the Quinte River in Haut-Artibonite, obliged authorities to evacuate communities in Nan Manmye, near Passereine, some 15 kilometres from the city of Gonaïves. Lesser rains and winds were observed in Aquin, Cavaillon, Chantal, Arniquet, Saint-Jean du Sud, Ile à Vache and Port Salut.

According to the Haitian National Red Cross Society's (HNRCs) Disaster Management Department, there were five deaths as a result of the storm, six homes were destroyed and 53 suffered damages, although definitive data on affected families is not available. The bridge that links the capital, Port au Prince, with the south of the country was destroyed and has not yet been repaired, trees were uprooted and cattle were lost. Damages such as partially destroyed homes, clothes and shattered furniture can be still seen in the affected areas. However, by 12 September, most of the families evacuated had returned to their homes, as roads had been cleared. The majority of the rivers located in the southern peninsula saw a rise in their water level.

Whilst damages were observed throughout most of the departments affected, certain areas suffered much more than others as a result of this storm, as is the case of Grande Anse and Sud. Because of Haiti's vulnerability to natural disasters of this type and the precarious situation in which 90 percent of Haitians live, a storm such as Ernesto is bound to leave behind many affected families. Previous to Ernesto, on 30 and 31 July, tropical storm Chris had left heavy rain which led to extensive flooding in the Bas Artibonite area of Saint-Marc Commune.

Red Cross action

To date, the following activities highlighted in the plan of action developed by the Haitian National Red Cross Society in coordination with the Federation have been achieved:

Objective 1: 600 of the most affected families (around 3,000 persons) benefit from the distribution of non food items to boost recovery from the effects of the floods.

Following the Plan of Action, relief goods were distributed in the most affected communities in the departments of Sud, Grande Anse, Nippes, Sud-Est and Ouest.

Items included in the family kits were locally procured by the Federation's Delegation in Haiti and provided to the Haitian National Red Cross Society for assembly and distribution. Beneficiary selection was carried out by regional Branches of the Haitian National Red Cross Society in coordination with the local authorities.

Department of Sud-Est

In Sud-Est relief goods were distributed in the communities of Bord de la Mer and La Plaine, in the outskirts of the city of Baintet. 80 families benefited in total, 30 more than initially identified. At the time of beneficiary identification, 20 families were deemed to have been directly affected and 60 indirectly, but were very much in need of help. It was decided to provide assistance to all of them; the most affected 20 will receive complete family kits (a combination of hygiene and kitchen items) and the other 60 will receive half of the content of the kits, as the initial target was of 50 families.

Haiti: Floods from Tropical Storm Ernesto: MDRHT001; Update no. 2

Three National Intervention Team (NIT) trained volunteers, members of the HNRCS's "Relais Communautaires" (community relay volunteers) taking part in the Kouri di Vwazin'W risk reduction project and five volunteers from the local Red Cross Branch of Bainet, participated in the distribution, supported by two Federation delegates. Local authorities were actively involved in the identification of beneficiaries and the distribution of relief goods.

Department of Sud

The Les Cayes Branch of the Haitian National Red Cross Society coordinated with the civil defense (DPC) which provided a vehicle, to carry out the distributions. In total, 250 families affected by hurricane Ernesto have benefited in:

- Ile A Vache – 130 families
- Aquin – 20 families
- Saint-Louis du Sud – 55 families
- Camp-Perrin – 45 families

Department of Grand Anse

The Haitian National Red Cross Society negotiated with the local coast guards to transport the relief goods from Port au Prince to Jeremie, the department capital, by boat since road infrastructure is very deficient. Distributions will take place on Saturday 21 October 2006.

Department of Nippes

Distributions in Nippes took place on 12 October targeting 100 families.

Department of Ouest

Goods have not yet been distributed in the Ouest Departement, but there are plans to deliver the goods by 22 October.

Constraints

The inaccessibility of certain areas during the hurricane season makes it challenging to deploy intervention teams rapidly enough to conduct immediate damage and needs assessments, which is key to prompt and efficient response. This situation and other factors have made the response to hurricane Ernesto slower than desired.

Objective 2: 3,000 families (around 15,000 persons) directly or indirectly affected by Tropical Storm Ernesto benefit from water and sanitation activities that will enable them to quickly recover from the damages suffered.

The Federation procured the following items for volunteers of the five regional Branches of the HNRCS affected by hurricane Ernesto to enable them to work with communities in basic water and sanitation activities.

| Item | Amount |
|--------------|--------|
| Wheelbarrows | 10 |
| Shovels | 15 |
| Picks | 15 |
| Gloves | 25 |
| Boots | 25 |

In addition, the HNRCS will be contributing with 100 masks for each regional Branch.

Regional Haitian National Red Cross Society Branches are expected to develop a plan of action regarding water and sanitation activities and will begin implementation of the plan by the end of October.

Objective 3: The Disaster Management Department at the Headquarters and the Regional HNRCS Branches receive a fund for the implementation of emergency activities and vehicle repair in order to speed up the response and intervention timeframe.

After careful consideration by the Federation, in coordination with the HNRCS, it was decided not to go ahead with the emergency relief funds for HNRCS Branches. After assessing the situation, the National Society decided to concentrate its efforts and prioritize the repair of the ambulance of the Les Cayes Branch. This will enable the Branch to transport NITs to carry out immediate needs and damage assessments, as well as to transport victims to hospitals in case of emergencies. The ambulance has already been repaired.

International Coordination and advocacy

After the impact of hurricane Ernesto, the HNRCS invited local and national media to the field to see the damages caused by Ernesto. In total 2 journalists travelled to the field.

An information delegate was deployed from the Pan American Disaster Response Unit in Panama to the field in order to provide support to the operation by improving visibility and assisting with reporting. Special sections on hurricane Ernesto have been developed on the two regional websites - www.cuzroja.org and www.caribbeanredcross.org. In addition, one article on the relief distributions and a photo gallery of the activities carried out for the operation has been published on the global Federation website – www.ifrc.org.

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