

OPERATIONS 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

BAHAMAS: HURRICANE JEANNE

5 January 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

Appeal No. 23/04; Operations Update no. 2; Period covered: 30 October to 23 December, 2004; Appeal coverage: 80.9%; ([click here to go directly to the attached Contributions List, also available on the website](#)).

Appeal history:

- Launched on 4 October 2004 for CHF 958,000 (USD 759,046 or EUR 617,165) for 3 months to assist 15,000 beneficiaries.
- Disaster Relief Emergency Funds (DREF) allocated: CHF 70,000.

Outstanding needs: CHF 182,876 (USD 156,496 or EUR 117,988)

Related Emergency or Annual Appeals: Caribbean Annual Appeal 01.51/2004

Operational Summary: To date, a total of 843 families have received assistance on Abaco Island. On Grand Bahama, a total of 1146 families have received assistance. In addition to food and non-food items, on Grand Bahama, the BRCS has been distributing building supplies that have been purchased with a grant from a local business. Additionally, on the other islands, over 900 families have received assistance, including food parcels and health kits. Currently, efforts are focused on preparing for the upcoming ECHO-funded distribution of food, tarps, hygiene kits and water containers. The upcoming distributions will be focused on the most vulnerable groups affected by Hurricane Jeanne, including undocumented migrants, the elderly, single mothers, multi-children families, low income families and the disabled. In addition to the distribution of relief goods, a mapping of the National Society's telecommunications capabilities has been conducted. The information obtained from the mapping will be used to design the HF and UHF telecommunications systems. An office to house the Red Cross branch on Abaco Island, which previously did not have an office, has also been located and rented, strengthening the Red Cross' presence in that area and facilitating the ongoing relief operation.

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All International Federation assistance seeks to adhere to the [Code of Conduct](#) and is committed to the [Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Disaster Response](#) in delivering assistance to the most vulnerable. For support to or for further information concerning Federation programmes or operations in this or other countries, or for a full description of the national society profile, please access the Federation's website at <http://www.ifrc.org>

Background

Hurricane Jeanne made landfall in the Bahamas on Saturday, 25 September, damaging several hundred homes. Jeanne, a category 3 hurricane, struck the Bahamas just three weeks after another category 3 storm, Hurricane Frances, which caused two deaths and affected more than 8,000 people in Grand Bahama Island. There are no reports of deaths or serious injuries in the wake of Hurricane Jeanne, but flood waters rose to more than six feet in some areas and roofs were blown off of houses. Hurricane Jeanne impacted the north-western Bahamas, including Abaco, Andros, Berry, Bimini, Eleuthera, Exuma, Grand Bahama and New Providence islands.

Hurricane Jeanne has caused the most significant damage on the Grand Bahama and Abaco islands. Representatives of the Bahamas Red Cross Society (BRCS) and a disaster management delegate from the Federation's Pan American Disaster Response Unit (PADRU) travelled to Grand Bahama and Abaco Islands and conducted a preliminary assessment. Based on this survey, it became clear that damage from Hurricane Jeanne is much greater than that caused by Hurricane Frances. Almost all of the areas affected by Hurricane Jeanne are the same that were struck by Hurricane Frances, and many homes that were weakened by Frances have now been more seriously damaged by Jeanne. All along the coast of Grand Bahama Island, homes have been flooded by the storm surge. Electricity services have been cut and water supplies are limited in many areas. The vulnerability assessments are still in progress.

In 8 Mile Rock, the largest community on Grand Bahama Island, over 75 percent of the homes have suffered serious structural damage, with roofs partially or completely torn off. All shelters in 8 Mile Rock sustained structural damages and/or flooding. The eastern half of the island has been cut off by storm surges and reports



A Red Cross volunteer inspects a house in one of the many affected communities in the Bahamas. Flood waters rose to more than six feet in some areas and roofs were blown off of houses.

indicate significant flooding of homes, particularly along the coastline. In the city of Freeport on Grand Bahama Island, the airport was flooded but was reopened the following day.

Communications were cut off with Abaco Island after Jeanne's eye passed directly over the island on Sunday 26 September, bringing 115 mile per hour winds and heavy rains. Preliminary reports indicate that the most populated town of Marsh Harbour has been significantly flooded. Officials report that on this island 758 people had taken refuge at an emergency shelter that was set up in a local school. The primarily Haitian settlements of Pigeon Pea and the Mud were completely submerged in four to five feet of water. Families in these areas are staying in shelters or with relatives. Cooper's Town and Dundas Town have also been greatly damaged.

Operational developments

The Bahamas continue to recover from the affects of Hurricanes Jeanne and Frances. Telecommunications have been restored on all of the islands, although a number of houses still need to be reconnected to services. Electrical services are functioning as well. In the illegal Haitian settlements water remains a problem with some residents reporting no water services to date. In both Grand Bahama and Abaco there is an on-going need for food and construction materials. At this time all airports and seaports are functioning normally.

Surveys by local health officials give no indication that there has been an increased incident of communicable disease as a result of the hurricanes. Most common health problems affecting vulnerable populations on the island are not related to the disaster, but rather result from poor nutrition and living conditions (especially in the Haitian settlements) —these health problems include diabetes, hypertension, acute respiratory infection, and AIDS.

In terms of nutritional problems, food is generally available on all islands although access is a problem for some of the more vulnerable families, especially those with multiple children or that are temporarily unemployed as a result of the hurricanes. With the exception of seafood and some locally grown fruits and vegetables, all food on the islands is imported which results in high costs for even basic food items. There appears to be little malnutrition; however diabetes and hypertension are major nutrition-related concerns.

Haitian immigrants make up the largest vulnerable population in the Bahamas. The actual number of Haitians living in the Bahamas is unknown. It is widely recognized that the majority are illegal immigrants. Most live in unregulated, illegal settlements and reside in poorly constructed wooden shanties. While both Bahamian and Haitian communities were affected by the hurricanes, the Bahamian communities have begun recovering more quickly. Most have already repaired their homes and are back to work, and are well on the road to recovery. However, there are a number of vulnerable Bahamian families which are still in need of assistance, particularly those with elderly family members, single mothers and unemployed heads of household. Both the Haitian and Bahamian communities have expressed strong gratitude to the Bahamas Red Cross as one of the few organizations that has provided them with immediate assistance following the hurricanes.

Red Cross and Red Crescent action - objectives, progress, impact

Emergency relief (food and basic non-food items)

Objective 1: Immediate needs of at least 3,000 families are met through the distribution of appropriate food and non-food items.

Progress/Achievements (activities implemented within this objective)

The Bahamas Red Cross Society supported shelter operations during and in the days following the hurricanes. They distributed food and non-food items in the immediate aftermath of the hurricanes, including food parcels, mattresses, blankets, plastic sheeting and hygiene kits. To date, on Abaco Island, a total of 843 families have received assistance. On Grand Bahama, a total of 1146 families have received assistance. In addition to food and non-food items, on Grand Bahama, the BRCS has been distributing building supplies that have been purchased with a grant from a local business. On the other islands affected by the hurricane, over 900 families have received assistance including food parcels and health kits.

Two of the three containers sent from PADRU containing tarps, water containers and hygiene kits arrived in the Bahamas on 18 December. The third container is expected to arrive by 25 December. All containers were delayed in Miami due to customs inspections. Food items have been procured and are being delivered to the BRCS warehouse in small shipments due to the limited amount of space. Food items are being re-packaged at the BRCS warehouse and then will be shipped along with non-food items to the affected islands for distribution.

Currently, efforts are focused on preparing for the upcoming ECHO-funded distribution of food, tarps, hygiene kits and water containers. The upcoming distributions will be focused on the most vulnerable groups affected by Hurricane Jeanne, including illegal immigrants, the elderly, single mothers, multi-children families, low income families and the disabled. The majority of the relief goods will go to beneficiaries in Grand Bahama Island and Abaco Island, but other hurricane-affected islands will receive smaller shipments as well. The first shipment of ECHO-funded distribution goods is scheduled to be sent to the islands before January 2005. Shipments to the islands are sent by mail boats. Based on availability of containers and space on the boats, Grand Bahama and Abaco islands may require up to three shipments each from Nassau.

A summary of the upcoming ECHO-funded distribution is as follows:

No.	Island	Total # households	Total # beneficiaries	Food Parcels	Plastic Tarpaulins	Water Containers	Hygiene Kits
1	Grand Bahama	1,000	5,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000
2	Abaco	1,043	5,215	1,043	1,043	1,043	1,043
3	Cat Island	150	750	150	150	150	150
4	Exuma	40	200	40	40	40	40
5	San Salvador	200	1,000	200	200	200	200
6	Inagua	40	200	40	40	40	40

7	Ragged Island	30	150	30	30	30	30
8	Acklins Island	200	1,000	200	200	200	200
9	Crooked Islands	100	500	100	100	100	100
10	Long Island/ Fortune Island	12	60	12	12	12	12
11	Mayaguana	20	100	20	20	20	20
12	Rum Cay	20	100	20	20	20	20
13	Eleuthera	95	475	95	95	95	95
14	Andros	50	250	50	50	50	50
GRAND TOTAL		3,000	15,000	3,000	3,000	3,000	3,000

The distributions on all islands will be completed by 31 January 2005. Grand Bahama Island and Abaco Island will require additional assistance during the distributions. The Federation team leader will assist with distributions on Abaco and a Regional Intervention Team (RIT) member will be based on Grand Bahama. The local BRCS representatives in Grand Bahama and Abaco have identified counterparts to work with the team leader and the RIT member and to be trained in relief distributions. The team leader and the RIT member will arrive on Abaco and Grand Bahama before the first shipment of ECHO-funded goods arrive in order to coordinate preparations and distributions. On the other islands, the parcels will be distributed by the BRCS group leaders. Group leaders are BRCS volunteers that are responsible for identifying the vulnerable, distributing shipments from Nassau to beneficiaries and returning the proper documentation to the BRCS national headquarters.



Members of the Bahamas Red Cross Society display some of the many food and non-food relief items that have been received. To date, more than 2,889 families have received assistance, including food parcels and health kits.

General follow-up visits to the recipient communities are being conducted immediately after distributions and in conjunction with further assessments. Follow-up visits and additional assessments are used to gather information and general opinions regarding the quality and appropriateness of Red Cross assistance within the community and determine remaining needs.

Impact

Affected families are receiving much needed food and non-food items according to their needs, which is helping them to cope better and recover faster from the material losses suffered as a result of the floods. The capacity of the BRCS is also being improved through the coordination of these distributions.

Constraints

Containers of relief goods sent from PADRU were delayed in customs in Miami, which has delayed the distribution of food and non-food items. In addition, some funding for this operation was received late, forcing distribution schedules to be adjusted.

Disaster Preparedness

Objective 2: The disaster preparedness capacity of the Bahamas Red Cross Society to respond to future disasters is strengthened.

Progress/Achievements (activities implemented within this objective)

The BRCS recognize that they currently have limited capacity in disaster preparedness and disaster management. While they have experience in shelter management and providing first aid, they have limited experience with logistics and large scale relief operations. The BRCS have expressed strong interest in developing their capacity in this area and are considering the possibility of hiring a disaster preparedness and first aid training coordinator.

A mapping of the National Society's telecommunications capabilities has been conducted. The information obtained from the mapping will be used to design a telecommunications system. A PADRU telecommunications delegate will support the design and implementation of the system and ensure that the Bahamas system is connected to the Caribbean Radio Communications Network linking the National Societies in the region.

An office to house the Red Cross branch on Abaco Island has been located and rented. Previously, the branch did not have an office. The office will give the branch a more permanent presence in the community as well as provide a focal point for managing the ongoing disaster operations. Furniture has been donated from a local businessman and telecommunications and computer equipment are being shipped from the headquarters in Nassau and will be installed in the near future.

Impact

The disaster preparedness capacity of the BRCS is being improved through the establishment of an office to house the Abaco Island branch and through a mapping of the National Society's telecommunications capabilities. Most importantly, the BRCS have expressed a strong interest in improving their capacities in this area.

Constraints

During the early part of the relief operation, efforts focused on the distribution of food and relief supplies to the affected families. As such, work in this area was delayed until the immediate needs of the beneficiaries had been adequately addressed.

Federation Coordination

On both Grand Bahama and Abaco islands, BRCS representatives continue to maintain good working relationships with both the local authorities and other organizations that are providing assistance to people affected by the hurricanes. In addition, follow-up meetings and continued discussions have been held with representatives of the National Emergency Management Agency and Social Services Ministry to ensure continued information sharing and avoid duplication of services.

Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement -- Principles and initiatives

- Relief activities are being carried out are based on the Fundamental Principles of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement.
- Beneficiary selection criteria focus on the vulnerability of those affected
- Relief operations are being conducted with respect for the culture of beneficiaries, ensuring gender sensitivity and prioritizing assistance to children and the elderly.
- Activities are based on the SPHERE Project humanitarian charter and the code of conduct for emergency response.
- Transparency is being ensured through the production of regular reports and news bulletins.
- All objectives put forward in the appeal are in line with Strategy 2010, as well as the Strategy for the Movement and the Principles and Rules of the Movement.

National Society Capacity Building

One staff member and one volunteer from the BRCS headquarters attended a logistics training workshop in Grenada in December. Both were very pleased with the workshop and felt that it was a good learning opportunity for them. The volunteer who attended the workshop is now serving as the counterpart for the logistics delegate and will help with the re-organizing of the BRCS warehouse, re-packaging of food items and shipment of relief goods to the islands. She will also assist with the procurement of a vehicle for the BRCS and other logistics tasks.

Counterparts for the team leader and the RIT member have been identified in Grand Bahama and Abaco islands. Both counterparts have worked with the RITs that were stationed in Grand Bahama and Abaco during the month of November and have received training in relief distributions. During the upcoming ECHO-funded distributions, this training will be reinforced and they will have additional hands-on experience. They will also lead the training of the volunteers that will help with assessments or distributions.

A memorandum of understanding (MOU) between the Federation and the BRCS has been signed. The MOU lays out roles and responsibilities for operational and administrative procedures for the operation.

Communications – Advocacy and Public Information

Local newspapers and the local radio stations are informed prior to distributions. A brief orientation is given to the agencies regarding the donors and implementing organizations and their humanitarian mission. As a result, both the Grand Bahama and Abaco branches of the BRCS have received write-ups in local newspapers.

T-shirts and polo-style shirts with the Bahamas Red Cross Society emblem have been made and distributed to volunteers. All volunteers taking part in distributions are properly attired in these uniforms. Placards which include the logotype of the Bahamas Red Cross Society, the Federation and ECHO have also been made. The placards are placed at distribution sites and beneficiaries are given a brief orientation on the different organizations. In addition, stickers with the ECHO, Bahamas Red Cross and Federation logos have been made and affixed to supplies being distributed.

[Contributions list below; click here to return to the title page.](#)

Bahamas - hurricane Jeanne

ANNEX 1

APPEAL No. 23/2004

PLEDGES RECEIVED

04/01/2005

DONOR	CATEGORY	QUANTITY	UNIT	VALUE CHF	DATE	COMMENT
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CASH

					TOTAL COVERAGE	
REQUESTED IN APPEAL CHF ----->				958,000		80.9%
CANADIAN -RC		243,390	CAD	228,300	08.11.04	BAHAMAS
ECHO (01001)		305,398	EUR	463,136	01.09.04	FOOD, NON FOOD ITEMS, HEALTH & SHELTER
JAPANESE - RC		25,000	USD	31,613	13.10.04	
SWEDISH - GOVT		250,000	SEK	41,875	26.10.04	
SUB/TOTAL RECEIVED IN CASH				764,924	CHF	79.8%

KIND AND SERVICES (INCLUDING PERSONNEL)

DONOR	CATEGORY	QUANTITY	UNIT	VALUE CHF	DATE	COMMENT
DENMARK	DELEGATES			10,200		
SUB/TOTAL RECEIVED IN KIND/SERVICES				10,200	CHF	1.1%

ADDITIONAL TO APPEAL BUDGET

DONOR	CATEGORY	QUANTITY	UNIT	VALUE CHF	DATE	COMMENT
SUB/TOTAL RECEIVED				0	CHF	