

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 STATES: HURRICANE KATRINA

4 September 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

This Bulletin (no. 06/2005) is being issued for information only. It is based on updates from the American Red Cross (ARC), reflecting the status of the situation and information available at this time. The Federation is not seeking funding or other assistance from donors for this operation at this time. The American Red Cross webpage (www.redcross.org) contains additional information on the evolving situation, the relief response to Hurricane Katrina, a tracing link, as well as information on donating to the National Disaster Relief Fund. To access information in Spanish please refer to the ARC Spanish webpage www.cruzrojaamericana.org

For further information specifically related to this operation please contact:

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- In Geneva for all enquiries from National Societies:
- Linda Stops, Operations Coordinator, Operations Support Department, Geneva; email linda.stops@ifrc.org, phone 41-22-730-4300, fax 41-22-733-0395 or Luis Luna, Federation Regional Officer, Americas Department, Geneva; email luis.luna@ifrc.org, phone 41-22-730-4274, fax 41-22-733-0395
- In Geneva, contact the Media and Public Relations Unit, phone 41-22-730-4357, fax 41-22-740-0275

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

Almost one week after Hurricane Katrina hit and devastated coastal areas of the U.S. Gulf coast (the States of Louisiana, Alabama, and Mississippi were the hardest hit, but others further north have also suffered), media reports indicate that rescuers continue to scour New Orleans for survivors in what has been called the largest emergency airlift in U.S. history (action on the ground picked up Saturday and Sunday as authorities evacuated over 42,000 people from the city, including all of those who were gathered in the Superdome). The relief assistance (food and non-food item distributions), shelter, and medical efforts and operations continue to build.

Red Cross and Red Crescent action

The enormous challenge of providing relief in the wake of Hurricane Katrina is testing the spirit, determination and cooperation of the American public, government agencies, and disaster relief organizations. Thousands of Red

Cross volunteers (over 4,200) are committed to assisting every step of the way. The following provides a summary of the American Red Cross Mass Care activities over the course of 3 September, 2005:

- Shelters – 356 ARC shelters are open in 9 states: Alabama, Mississippi, Louisiana, Texas, Tennessee, Arkansas, Florida, Missouri and Georgia, with many more on standby.
- Evacuees – More than 107,400 evacuees are being sheltered (these figures fluctuate daily).
- Emergency Vehicles – 249 Red Cross Emergency Response Vehicles (ERVs) are now in Louisiana, Mississippi and Alabama, with additional ERVs en route to the affected area. The Red Cross is working to engage additional vehicles for food distribution to survivors.
- Relief Workers – Thousands of Red Cross staff and volunteers across the country and from every part of the organization are working around the clock to serve the public need. More than 4,200 Red Crossers have left their families to serve in affected areas already, and the Red Cross is moving more than 600 additional workers into affected areas every day.
- Feeding – The Red Cross is working closely with several partners, including the Southern Baptist Convention, the Adventists and Second Harvest to provide emergency food to survivors and responders. In coordination with the Southern Baptists, preparations are underway to serve nearly 500,000 hot meals each day. Nearly 137,600 meals have been served in the last 24 hours. Based on reports turned in last night (3 September), the preliminary cumulative numbers for feeding are 2,298,112 meals and 2,194,098 snacks.
- Houston Astrodome Shelter – The Red Cross is supporting government officials in the relocation and sheltering of more than 23,000 hurricane survivors travelling over 300 miles from New Orleans to Houston. In Dallas-Ft. Worth and San Antonio, the Red Cross and local partners are working to find dozens of facilities in which thousands of evacuees will find a safe, clean and comfortable environment.
- Health & Preventative Care – The Red Cross is working with government and health services partners to develop health strategies and preventative measures to help the public and relief workers cope with the serious public health emergency.

Reuniting Families: the Red Cross, with support of the worldwide Red Cross Movement, has launched a Web site and hotline to help reunite relatives, friends, and loved ones.

- Online – Persons looking for loved ones can go to www.redcross.org and click on “Family Links Registry” to register oneself, a missing relative, or to view the existing list of registrants. Within the first 24 hours, more than 20,000 people had registered on the "Family Links" Web site.
- Hotline – Those who do not have Internet access should call 1-877-LOVED-1S (1-877-568-3317). (This is only toll-free in the U.S).

How to Help: due to the generosity of the American people, the American Red Cross stands ready to meet the monumental challenge of helping to rebuild lives.

- Funds Received to Date – The American Red Cross estimates that, as of 3 September 3, 2005, \$302 million in gifts and pledges have been received for the hurricane relief effort.
- To Donate – Call 1-800-HELP NOW or 1-800-257-7575 (Spanish). Contributions to the Disaster Relief Fund may be sent to local American Red Cross chapters or to the American Red Cross, P. O. Box 37243, Washington, DC 20013. Internet users can make a secure online contribution by visiting www.redcross.org.
- To Volunteer – Individuals interested in volunteering for the American Red Cross should contact local Red Cross chapters.
- To Learn More – The magnitude of this disaster is bringing together the experience, expertise and resources of many organizations and agencies to meet the unprecedented humanitarian needs of the hurricane survivors. To learn more about the coordination of efforts and additional resources, visit www.usafreedomcorps.gov

Get Prepared: this disaster has emphasized the importance of taking steps to prepare for emergencies and disasters. The American Red Cross responds to more than 70,000 disasters annually, including wildfires, tornadoes and single family house fires, with some type of disaster striking every 8 minutes in the United States. The ARC is encouraging families and individuals to make a plan, build a preparatory kit, and get trained in first aid and CPR.

Individual Client Services: some 42 people have been deployed through the Partners for Effective Emergency Response (PEER) program. The FBI opted in to the program offering seven people to serve as service center managers; three of them have already been deployed. An increasing number of offers are being received for rooms from all over the US, especially in contiguous states. Small chapters are closing small shelters in states as far away as Pennsylvania. Chapters continue to call in for guidance on providing assistance. Service Areas should ensure they are communicating guidance to chapters, and a training plan and guidance for individual assistance is being developed.

Community Services

Feeding

- Mississippi: Kitchens operating: 13 Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) kitchens; one Pentecostal; Henry's Kitchen; one SBC kitchen is en route.
- Alabama: Kitchens operating: 2 SBC; one Woodsman of the World; Capital Area Chapter (Tallahassee, Florida) kitchen.
- Louisiana: Kitchens operating: 12 SBC kitchens; Spirit of America; Jefferson County chapter (Pine Bluff, Arkansas) kitchen.

Material Support Services

In-Kind Donations: screening and soliciting offers from donors is taking place to determine needs for the disaster response.

Logistics: strategic orders for follow-on operations are being issued to work with the Service Areas to identify needs for shelters that are supporting the Katrina disaster relief efforts. Information Technology (IT) donations are being directed to identify support required to implement the shelter initiative.

Organizational Support

Public Affairs: three releases were sent out on 3 September about the massive shelter operation, Red Cross activities to help those in the affected areas, and about the hundreds of incoming calls supporting other staff out in the field. Public Affairs is developing a "Katrina" page for CrossNet, supporting telethons, and giving media extensive coverage in the shelters.

Fundraising: financial and coordinating donation designations guidance is being updated and issued. Telethons, such as the BET, MTV, Oprah, Telemundo and Univision events, are being managed. Numerous in-kind donation requests are being processed for donation opportunities.

Partner Services: the Emergency Support Function-6 (ESF-6 covers feeding) dispatched a liaison to the HHS Operations Center. A meeting involving the Department of Defense (DoD), FEMA, and the Service Area Senior Vice-President was facilitated to coordinate the evacuation of displaced persons, as well as a Disaster Health Services (DHS) training at national headquarters for Red Cross staff on the National Emergency Resource Registry.

Non-Government/Voluntary Agencies: The ESF-6 mass care coordinating group was reconstituted into the three Joint Field Offices (JFOs) and the Housing Area Command. Invitations to various agencies have or are now being sent.

Community Relations Liaison: The Community Action Partnership will work with the Red Cross to coordinate services through their network of 1,100 community-based agencies focused on low-income families. Efforts are

underway to contact the NAACP, National Council of La Raza, the Urban League, and the League of United Latin American Citizen. The National Association of Hispanic Nurses and the National Black Nurses Association have been included in the PEERS Red Cross volunteer recruitment program.

Biomedical Services: the Alabama/Gulf Coast chapter is experiencing a surge of blood donors. The Birmingham site had 400 donors present; other donor centers doubled or tripled their goals. Approximately 200 critical patients from New Orleans were transported last night and early this morning (3and 4 September) to Birmingham by military planes. Biomedical staff volunteered to operate the Red Cross portion of that operation for the chapter until early this morning. The patients are being distributed to Birmingham hospitals based on their needs. Blood products were shipped yesterday to Memorial Hospital Gulfport which is still in operation. The Alabama/Gulf Coast is adding drives in September to fill the spaces of the drives lost in the Mississippi area in September. The Alabama/Gulf Coast is supporting the chapter this weekend providing volunteers to take up disaster relief funds at various locations throughout the region.

International Services: more than 80 disaster experts from Red Cross societies of more than 10 countries are already in place or are making plans to travel to the United States in response to a call from the American Red Cross to support thousands of ARC volunteers on the ground providing food and shelter to tens of thousands of people affected by the disaster. Facilitated by the International Federation (Secretariat), the Red Cross Societies deploying experts include the Belgian, British, Canadian, Finnish, French, German, Mexican, Netherlands, Norwegian, and Spanish Red Cross. The International Committee of the Red Cross is also supporting the operation with experts. The “Family Links Registry,” which was launched yesterday to link family members who are seeking news about loved ones living in the path of Hurricane Katrina, has already had 17,000 hits.

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