

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

8 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. 09/2005) 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. As of 12 September, information on this disaster will be issued on an adjusted schedule. A fact sheet on this disaster response will be issued on Mondays, followed by information bulletins on Wednesdays and Fridays. The bulletins will highlight different response components (including sheltering, feeding, health, tracing, international support).

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:

In the United States: American Red Cross National Headquarters, Stacy Ragan, Operations Lead; email ragans@usa.redcross.org; phone 1-202-303-5089; fax 1-202-303-0059; Media and Public Affairs; phone 1-202-303-5551; Nadia Mitchem, Fundraising; email mitchemn@usa.redcross.org; phone 1-202-303-4826

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>

Background

Two weeks after Hurricane Katrina struck the Gulf Coast of the United States, the death toll is estimated to be between 100 and 300 people, but it is expected that the toll may rise into the thousands in the days ahead. Tens of thousands of people are believed to still be in the flooded city of New Orleans, Louisiana. Across the Gulf Coast, hundreds of thousands of people affected by the hurricane are in need of assistance.

The needs of those affected by the hurricane include immediate and ongoing food, shelter, and medical care for evacuees. Assistance will need to be provided to those made jobless by the hurricane, debris will need to be removed, and infrastructure will need to be repaired.

Red Cross and Red Crescent action

Overview

In the largest response to a single natural disaster in the 125 years of the American Red Cross, the organization is setting new records in its drive to bring shelter, food and safe drinking water to the tens of thousands of people affected by the hurricane.

- Since Hurricane Katrina hit, the Red Cross has housed nearly **159,000** survivors in nearly **650** shelters across **17** states.
- The Red Cross has served nearly **5.4** million hot meals and more than **5.5** million snacks to hurricane survivors.
- More than **94,000** people have registered online at the “Family Links Registry” and more than **45,000** have called the 1-877-LOVED-1S hotline.
- More than **32,000** trained Red Cross disaster relief workers from all **50** states, Puerto Rico, and the Virgin Islands have responded to provide assistance in the affected areas.
- Over **100** disaster experts from the Red Cross societies of more than **10** countries, as well as from the Federation and the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), are on the ground in the United States assisting the American Red Cross in meeting critical needs.

Amongst the employees and volunteers from Red Cross Societies around the world who have offered their help and expertise are specialists in logistics, first aid, tracing, and communications. Their valuable technical and, in many cases, language skills are being put to service to meet existing needs in locations across the affected region and at American Red Cross National Headquarters. While logisticians from several national societies and the ICRC stand positioned throughout the affected region to help with supply-chain management, shipping, warehousing fleet management and disbursement of supplies, Emergency Medical Technician-trained staff from the Mexican Red Cross are in Houston, Texas helping with first aid, medical assistance and acting as translators for Spanish speaking victims. While Tracing and Family Linking experts from several national societies and the ICRC are in the field providing valuable support to efforts to reunite family, Federation and French Red Cross communications officers provide support at American Red Cross National Headquarters in reaching out and responding to existing information needs. This timely and important help from our international partners is allowing the American Red Cross to collaboratively provide relief to those in need.

Operational Developments

- The American Red Cross has activated an Emergency Lodging Program, which covers the cost of hotel lodging for hurricane evacuees and interim financial assistance so those affected can purchase essential items including, food, clothing, and health related necessities.
- On Monday 12 September, the American Red Cross will launch the single largest domestic volunteer recruitment effort in American Red Cross history to recruit 40,000 new disaster volunteers by 30 November 30, 2005.
- Currently, 18 State Emergency Operations Centers (EOCs) are staffed by Red Cross liaisons across the United States to provide mass care support for evacuee needs across the U.S.
- As of Tuesday night, 6 September 2005, personnel from over 10 national societies, the ICRC and the Federation are on the ground and providing support in several areas. There are at least 64 logisticians, five tracing or family linking experts, 26 first aid responders, and two media communicators. In addition, there are 47 Canadian Red Crossers working mainly in Community Services.

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