

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

CARIBBEAN: HURRICANE DENNIS

6 July 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. 01/2005) is being issued for information only, and reflects 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.

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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 Dennis developed into a category one hurricane this afternoon, 6 July, after winds increased to 130 kph (80 mph). Dennis is currently located south-southwest of Haiti and east-southeast of Jamaica. It has been projected that the storm will pass over the north-eastern part of Jamaica in the next 24 hours, and will continue moving west-northwest in the direction of the Cayman Islands and eastern Cuba. Jamaica, Haiti and Cuba have issued hurricane warnings, and the Cayman Islands has issued a hurricane watch. A tropical storm warning has been issued for the southern part of the Dominican Republic. It is anticipated that the south-western peninsula of Haiti, Jamaica, the Cayman Islands, and eastern and central Cuba could be hit with extremely high winds and up to eight inches of rain, resulting in a significant threat of mud slides and flash floods.

The storm's outer rain-bands have already reached the southern coast of Haiti, causing flooded roads. Dennis is expected to intensify as it moves, possibly developing into a category three storm by the time it reaches Cuba. Jamaica is already experiencing thunderstorms and residents living in low lying areas as well as fishing communities have been advised to seek higher ground.

Red Cross and Red Crescent action

The Federation has established contact with the Red Cross Societies of the countries likely to be affected in the next 72 hours. Regular communication with the Red Cross Societies will continue to monitor the storm's development and effects, and to ensure progress in the preparedness measures. The Pan American Disaster Response Unit (PADRU) is prepared and capable to respond to the needs of 10,000 families with materials such as plastic sheeting, hygiene kits, kitchen kits, and jerry cans, as well as provide equipment for water treatment and purification. In addition, Red Cross disaster management personnel in the region are on standby awaiting further developments.

In preparation for the storm's passage through Haiti, the Haitian National Red Cross Society has mobilized 300 active volunteers in the eight local branches in the area to assist with the evacuation of those affected if necessary. In the southern part of the peninsula, seven schools and three universities have been identified as possible shelters. Preparations are also underway to shelter those affected in the province of Grande Anse. The Haitian National Red Cross Society is currently preparing a global contingency plan, to improve the role it plays when the country is faced with such disasters. The Federation's country delegation in Haiti is also monitoring the situation and is conducting an evaluation of its assets, in anticipation of their being deployed in the next 24 hours. PADRU deployed a disaster management delegate who reached Haiti today, and preparations are under way to send a charter flight with relief for 1,000 families, should this be necessary.

The Jamaica Red Cross has alerted its 13 branches of the approaching storm, and is preparing to preposition stock amongst them as necessary. Shelter managers, Community Disaster Response Teams and National Intervention Teams have also been placed on alert. The Cayman Islands Overseas Branch of the British Red Cross has alerted 110 volunteers to prepare for assisting with disaster response, including the possible opening of a hurricane shelter. The Branch is awaiting the arrival of a container of relief supplies this week from the British Red Cross, with hygiene kits, baby parcels and buckets. Two more containers of supplies are scheduled to arrive within the month.

A Regional Intervention Team (RIT) member from Colombia who is working with the Cuban Red Cross and members of the Costa Rican Red Cross and of the Red Cross Society of Panama are currently in Cuba for a training exercise, and therefore are in a position to assist the Cuban Red Cross if required.

The Mexican Red Cross is monitoring the development of the situation in the anticipation of possible impact in the Yucatan region.

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