

MINOR EMERGENCY



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

ME no.
7 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

CHF 250,000 (USD 192,535 OR EUR 161,175) HAS BEEN ALLOCATED FROM THE FEDERATION'S DISASTER RELIEF EMERGENCY FUND (DREF) TO RESPOND TO THIS YEAR'S HURRICANE SEASON. DREF FUNDING WILL BE USED AS APPROPRIATE FOR POTENTIAL OPERATIONS IN THE WAKE OF HURRICANE DENNIS.

UNEARMARKED FUNDS TO REPAY DREF ARE ENCOURAGED.

For information specifically related to this operation please contact:

- In the Cayman Islands: Mrs. Jondo Malafa Obi, Director, Cayman Islands Red Cross; phone (1 345) 917 2345
- In Cuba: Cuban Red Cross, Dr. Luis Foyo Ceballos, Executive President; email crsn@infomed.sld.cu; phone (1 537) 269 0100
- In Haiti: Haitian National Red Cross Society, Dr. Michaèle Amédée Gédéon, President, Port-au-Prince; email croroha@haitworld.co, phone (509) 510-9813, fax (509) 223-1054
- In Jamaica: Ms. Yvonne Clarke, Director General ; email yvonneclarke@jamaicaredcross.or, phone (1 876) 984 786, fax; (1 876) 984 8272
- In Panama: Nelson Castaño, Pan American Disaster Response Unit; e-mail ifrcpa07@ifrc.or, phone (507) 316-1001, fax (507) 316-1082
- In Geneva: Luis Luna, Americas Department ; e-mail 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 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

Hurricane Dennis reached category three status this evening, 7 July, and it continues to strengthen. Dennis is currently moving north west past the northern part of Jamaica towards south-east Cuba. Hurricane warnings remain in effect for the south-western peninsula of Haiti, Jamaica, the Cayman Islands and the Cuban provinces of

Caribbean: Hurricane Dennis; Minor Emergency Bulletin no 1.

Matanzas, Villa Clara, Cienfuegos, Sancti Spiritus, Ciego de Avila, Camaguey, Las Tunas, Granma, Santiago de Cuba and Guantanamo. The remaining provinces of Cuba as well as the southern peninsula of Florida are under hurricane watch. Winds have reached close to 185 km/h (115mph), and extend 75 km (45m). It is anticipated that the south-western peninsula of Haiti, Jamaica, the Cayman Islands, and eastern and central Cuba could be hit with up to ten inches of rain, resulting in a significant threat of mud slides and flash floods. Storm surge flooding and large waves are expected in coastal areas.

The storm's outer rain-bands have reached the southern coast of Haiti, causing flooded roads. Jamaica is experiencing mudslides from the heavy rains, and residents of low lying areas as well as coastal towns – where a large part of the population lives - have been advised to seek higher ground. The Jamaica Red Cross states that 760 people have been moved to shelters, mostly in the south-central part of the island. Schools have been closed, and supermarkets are experiencing shortages as people rush to stock up on essential supplies. Airports at Kingston and Montego Bay have been closed, and Air Jamaica has suspended its flights in and out of the country. Dennis is expected to intensify further as it moves towards Cuba.

Red Cross and Red Crescent action taken so far

The Federation has established contact with the Red Cross Societies of the countries in the path of Hurricane Dennis likely to be affected in the next 48 hours. Regular communication with the Red Cross Societies will ensure continued monitoring of the storm's development and effects, as well as effective 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, a number of Red Cross disaster management personnel in the region are on standby awaiting further developments.

As part of the pre-positioning strategy, a Federation disaster management delegate from PADRU arrived in Haiti on 6 July to support both the Haitian National Red Cross Society (HNRCS) and the Federation delegation. In preparation for the storm's passage through Haiti, the Haitian National Red Cross Society has established a crisis management unit. It has been agreed with the HNRCS, the ICRC and the PNS in country that the National Society will lead an evaluation mission in the departments which are now being affected by Dennis: the South East (Jacmel); the South (Les Cayes); Grand Anse (Jérémie); and Nippes (Anse-à-Veaux) in order to assess damage incurred and the needs of those affected by the storm and to support regional and local branches of the National Society in conducting rapid assessments. Teams will be composed of HNRCS members, Federation staff and PNS delegates and will be responsible for developing appropriate plans of action, should there be a need to provide response.

Five hundred Red Cross volunteers have been mobilized through the eight local branches in the affected area. Early today, Red Cross volunteers evacuated two people in southern Haiti that were injured as gusts of wind uprooted a palm tree and sent it flying into a mud hut. The HNRCS is also preparing to deploy 25 first aid volunteers together with ambulances to cover the medical needs of affected areas. In the southern part of the peninsula, seven schools and three universities have been identified as possible shelters. A Pan American Health Organization/UNDP team mobilized to the affected area has informed that severe flooding has occurred in Les Cayes and Grand Anse and that some 254 people have been housed in shelters in Les Cayes, 100 in Port-Salut and 300 in Grand Anse. The team also reports that 17 houses have been destroyed and 16 have been heavily damaged and that the hospital in Les Cayes has been flooded, but continues treating patients.

The Jamaica Red Cross has alerted its 13 branches of the approaching storm, and is preparing to preposition stock amongst them as necessary. National Intervention Team (NIT) members are on alert for possible deployment to Portland and St. Thomas, which already experiencing flooding. A Community Disaster Response Team (CDRT) is managing one shelter in St. Thomas, and continues to provide detailed information to the headquarters.

The Cayman Islands Overseas Branch of the British Red Cross has opened a shelter in each district and has alerted 110 volunteers to prepare for assisting with disaster response. The Cayman Islands Overseas 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, as required.

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

The needs

Given the current situation, it can be assumed that the short term needs for the countries affected will be for evacuation and rescue, the provision of food and non-food supplies, and temporary shelter materials. Given that the area is already affected by flooding, it is likely that in the mid to long term there will be a need to address safe water and basic sanitation issues. Since flood waters may temporarily contaminate wells and other ground water supplies, as well as damage latrines, the distribution of information on personal hygiene and safe water may be needed to prevent the spread of waterborne diseases.

Coordination

The Jamaica Red Cross is in radio communication with the Office of Disaster Preparedness and Emergency Management (ODPEM) and a Jamaica Red Cross representative is at the Emergency Operations Centre. In Haiti, the crisis management unit of the Haitian National Red Cross Society is being reinforced by members of the Federation, the International Committee of the Red Cross, the French Red Cross, the Canadian Red Cross, the Spanish Red Cross, and the American Red Cross. The HNRCS and the Federation are participating in daily coordination meetings with various national and international organizations held at the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP).

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