

# 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

## MEXICO:HURRICANE JOHN

*Information Bulletin*  
**no. 3/2006**  
**2 September 2006**

*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 183 countries.*

### In Brief

**This Bulletin is being issued for information only, and reflects the situation and the information available at this time. The Federation is not seeking funding or other assistance from donors for this operation at this time.**

**The International Federation undertakes activities that are aligned with its Global Agenda, which sets out four broad goals to achieve the Federation's mission to "improve the lives of vulnerable people by mobilizing the power of humanity".**

#### **Global Agenda Goals:**

- **Reduce the numbers of deaths, injuries and impact from disasters.**
- **Reduce the number of deaths, illnesses and impact from diseases and public health emergencies.**
- **Increase local community, civil society and Red Cross Red Crescent capacity to address the most urgent situations of vulnerability.**
- **Reduce intolerance, discrimination and social exclusion and promote respect for diversity and human dignity.**

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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 Organizations \(NGOs\) 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 John passed over the southern Baja Peninsula late on 1 September, having slowed to 13km/hour during the course of the day, thereby delaying the predicted landfall. During the afternoon of 1 September, a hurricane warning had been in effect for the Southern Baja Peninsula from San Everisto southward on the east coast, and from Bahia Magdalena southward on the west coast. State authorities in Southern Baja California had opened 45 shelters and some 15,000 people were reported as having been evacuated in the hours leading up to the storm's impact. The port in Cabo San Lucas was officially shut down to maritime traffic as of 1 September. Hurricane John was a Category 2 storm with 100 mph (160 kph) winds when it finally struck land north east of Los Cabos on the night of 1 September, sparing the resorts of Cabo San Lucas and San Jose del Cabo. Some 5,000 people are reported to have spent the night of Friday – Saturday in shelters.

Continuing its course, in the early morning of Saturday, 2 September, the storm weakened to a category one hurricane as it hit the state capital of La Paz, some 200 kilometres from San Jose del Cabo, and home to some 200,000 people, bringing heavy rains, felling trees and knocking out electricity. By Saturday afternoon, John's intensity had dropped to that of a tropical storm with winds of 70 mph (112 kph).

At 8.00 pm PDT on Saturday 1, September, the centre of tropical storm John was located some 35 miles (55 kilometres) south west of Loreto, Mexico and about 40 miles (65 kilometres) north of Ciudad Constitucion. John is moving towards the north west at some 8 mph and it is expected that the centre of the storm will be over central portions of the Baja California peninsula tonight and during Sunday, 3 September.

## **Red Cross and Red Crescent action**

The International Federation's Pan-American Disaster Response Unit (PADRU), based in Panama, has been in close contact with Mexican Red Cross as Hurricane John has progressed north along the Pacific coast of Mexico, before heading NW over Baja California.

In anticipation of Hurricane John reaching Baja California on 1 September, a rapid intervention team of 5 people - with expertise in logistics and damage and needs assessment - was mobilized by the Mexican Red Cross headquarters to San Jose del Cabo, travelling to the affected areas during the early evening of 1 September, as soon as the brunt of the storm had passed and authorities had provided the all clear. In addition, the Mexican Red Cross had pre-positioned meal kits in Topolobambo, the nearest port access to the affected areas. Stocks of hygiene kits and medication were also available for dispatch by air from Mexican Red Cross national headquarters, at short notice.

The Mexican Red Cross rapid intervention team established an operations centre in San Jose del Cabo on arrival. During the early morning of 2 September, the team moved to the region of La Paz and carried out a rapid assessment of damage and needs. A meeting was held during the afternoon with government officials and the Civil Protection as well as emergency relief entities from the Baja California Sur State. No loss of life has been reported. Electricity was cut off in some 30 per cent of the capital of La Paz and there are stretches of road between San Jose del Cabo and La Paz which are flooded. The small town of Los Barriles is cut off as a result of a land slide on the road which connects the town with La Paz. In nearby towns and in La Paz itself electricity poles have been downed as well as billboards and a small number of roofs. Two shelters had been set up in the La Paz area and those who took refuge received hot food and blankets provided by the government.

The Mexican Red Cross has dispatched 2,000 food parcels, of which 1,000 will be distributed in San Jose del Cabo and 1,000 in La Paz. The government plans to sent a further 2,000 food parcels to be distributed in the same way. The Mexican Red Cross plans to carry out the distributions of food items over the next two days. No further needs are anticipated.

## ***Coordination and Information***

Mexican Red Cross branches are in regular contact with the Civil Defence, and State authorities to coordinate assessments and relief activities.

PADRU is coordinating with the OCHA Regional Office, based in Panama, and remains in constant contact with the Mexican Red Cross.

PADRU is also in regular contact with the Federation's Operations Support Department (OSD) at the Secretariat Headquarters, for possible activation of global response tools such as FACT and ERU, as the situation warrants.

A special page on the Regional Federation website at [www.cruzroja.org](http://www.cruzroja.org) has been created and is being up-dated on a regular basis. The Federation has an Information Delegate, pre-positioned at PADRU, with specific responsibility to lead international media relations during the hurricane season and support National Societies in their media relations.

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