

DREF operation



International Federation
of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

Caribbean: Tropical Storm Hanna

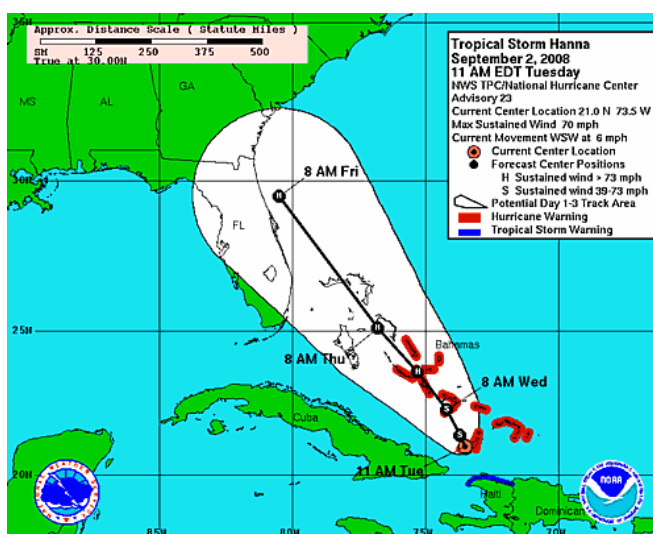
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The International Federation's Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF) is a source of un-earmarked money created by the Federation in 1985 to ensure that immediate financial support is available for Red Cross and Red Crescent response to emergencies. The DREF is a vital part of the International Federation's disaster response system and increases the ability of national societies to respond to disasters.

CHF 25,000 (USD 22,727 or EUR 15,480) has been allocated from the Federation's Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF) to support the National Societies in jump starting the operation. Unearmarked funds to repay DREF are encouraged.

Summary: On 1 September, Hurricane Hanna closed in on south-eastern **Bahamas** and the **Turks and Caicos Islands**. On 2 September, the hurricane was downgraded to a Tropical Storm but has nevertheless dumped heavy rains in Bahamas and Haiti. This DREF support will provide the National Societies of Bahamas, and **Haiti** with the assistance needed to preposition relief items and to prepare for initial damage and need assessments. Close coordination is maintained with the British Red Cross in support of the Turks and Caicos Overseas Branch.

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Tropical Storm Hanna's projected path.
Source: National Hurricane Centre

The situation

On 1 September 2008, Hurricane Hanna, the fourth hurricane of the season, closed in the south-eastern Bahamas and the Turks and Caicos Islands. Consequently, the government of Bahamas issued a hurricane warning for the central Bahamas.

The eye of Hurricane Hanna passed over **Turks and Caicos Islands** at approximately 7p.m. on 1 September producing strong winds. The government opened the emergency shelters at 4p.m. and the population was advised to stay indoors until the hurricane passed. As of 2 September, approximately 500 people are in the shelters, many of who have lost their homes in the storms. Severe winds and rains are still affecting the Islands causing quite severe local flooding. This is leading to some residents being evacuated from their homes as they were at risk of becoming cut off. More detailed assessments will be provided once evaluations are performed in the island.

On 2 September, Hanna downgraded to a Tropical Storm and is producing heavy rains over south-eastern **Bahamas** and Hispaniola. A tropical storm warning has been extended from the northern border of **Dominican Republic** to Port au Prince in **Haiti**. The Haitian provinces of Antiboite and Nord-Ouest are completely flooded and latest reports indicate the deaths of ten people. The city of Gonaive also woke up to find itself completely flooded, possibly affecting some 240,000 people. It has continued raining to date. Currently, there is no access by road or air to the affected areas. This made (aerial) assessments impossible. Through telephone calls received it became clear that people climbed to the roof tops of their houses and were still only two to three meters away from the flood waters.

A hurricane warning remains in effect for central Bahamas, south-eastern Bahamas and the Turks and Caicos Islands. Hanna is moving west-northwest at 6 mph and it is expected to turn north-west on 3 September. Hanna will move over south-eastern Bahamas on 2 September and into central Bahamas on 3 September. The maximum sustained winds are near 110 km/hr with higher gusts and rainfall accumulation of approximately eight inches is expected.

Coordination and partnerships

The British Red Cross (BRC) has been in constant communication with the International Federation's Pan American Disaster Response Unit (PADRU) and the Caribbean Regional Representation Office in Trinidad and Tobago providing information on the situation in Turks and Caicos Islands.

Currently, a Disaster Management delegate from PADRU who is in Jamaica responding to another emergency, is in constant communication with the Bahamas Red Cross Society (BRCS) and will possibly be deployed to the Bahamas on 3 September.

A Field Assessment Coordination Team (FACT) including members from the Partner National Societies from Germany, Finland, Norway, United States and Switzerland has been alerted for deployment to Haiti. The Team is expected to arrive in Haiti on 3 September. There is also an Emergency Response Unit (ERU) alert and a Regional Intervention Team (RIT) alert for Haiti.

Red Cross and Red Crescent action

The Turks and Caicos Islands, Overseas branch of the British Red Cross distributed sand bags and assisted people secure some of their roofs before the onset of the hurricane. Since Hannah passed the National Society has been busy providing food, blankets, clothing and tarpaulins to houses as well as advising on preparedness for potential oncoming storms. Following further assessments additional stocks maybe required.

The **Bahamas Red Cross Society (BRCS)** has alerted their Disaster Committee and Red Cross trained Community Disaster Response Teams are prepared and on standby to assist. Shelter training for Social Services staff was conducted on 1 September in preparation for the opening of emergency shelters. The BRCS headquarters has been in contact with volunteers on the islands and has made contact with suppliers should procurement of basic relief items be needed.

The Bahamas Red Cross Society (BRCS) and the Turks and Caicos Overseas Branch have been in close contact with the Pan American Disaster Response Unit (PADRU) and the Caribbean Regional Representation Office in Trinidad and Tobago. A Regional Intervention Team (RIT) member is on stand-by in case the situation worsens. The Haitian National Red Cross Society (HNRCS) has been in constant communication with PADRU and a Disaster Management delegate in the field is providing information about the current situation.

Hanna further stretches the capacity of the **Haitian National Red Cross Society** which is currently managing the relief operation for hurricane Gustav. Further Movement coordination meetings will continue on a daily

basis, in which the International Committee of the Red Cross participates as well as representatives of the Partner National Societies from Canada, France, the Netherlands, Spain and the United States. A German Red Cross representative and a French Red Cross-PIRAC delegate have also arrived in Haiti to determine how they can contribute to the operation. Finally, the Dominican Red Cross headquarters have contacted the president of the HNRCS; volunteers and supplies are being deployed to the border areas and are on stand by.

This preliminary DREF seeks to support immediate response activities with an initial focus on Bahamas and Haiti, while maintaining close coordination with British Red Cross for support to Turks and Caicos. Depending on more in depth assessments, the path of Tropical Storm Hanna and future impact, other islands may be assisted with the same DREF funding.

The needs

This DREF operation will support initial costs for the **Bahamas Red Cross Society (BRCS)** and **Haitian National Red Cross Society (HNRCS)** to perform initial preventive activities as well as initial damage and need assessments. Once all evaluations are completed and immediate needs are identified, a DREF update with detailed objectives will be published. This may include additional countries that have been affected. Additional DREF funds might be requested depending on the scope of the emergency.

How we work

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 \(NGO's\) in Disaster Relief](#) and is committed to the [Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Disaster Response \(Sphere\)](#) in delivering assistance to the most vulnerable.

The International Federation's activities are aligned with its Global Agenda, which sets out four broad goals to meet 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.

Contact information

For further information specifically related to this operation please contact:

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