

DREF operation



International Federation
of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

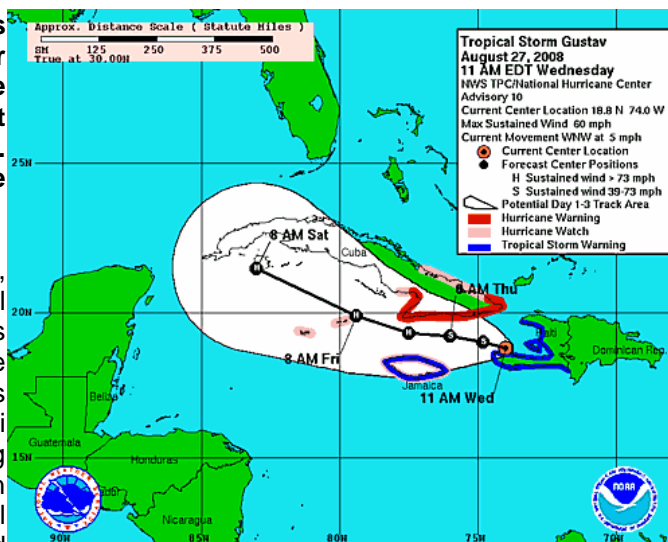
Haiti: Hurricane Gustav

DREF operation n° MDRHT005
GLIDE No. TC-2008-000143
27 August 2008

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 23,809 or EUR 15,291) has been allocated from the Federation's Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF) to support the National Society of Haiti in order to jump start their early relief and assessments activities. Unearmarked funds to repay DREF are encouraged.

Summary: The National Societies of Haiti, Jamaica, Cuba and Dominican Republic, as well as the overseas branch of the British Red Cross in the Cayman Islands have been in close contact with the International Federation as Hurricane Gustav is affecting the region. Haiti and the Dominican Republic are experiencing heavy rains. This DREF Bulletin is focused on providing initial support to the Haitian National Red Cross Society (HNRCS). More detailed information will be available once damage and need assessments are completed.



Hurricane Gustav's track.
Source: National Hurricane Center

[<click here for contact details,](#)
[or here to view the map of the affected area>](#)

The situation

On 25 August 2008, a tropical depression in the Caribbean strengthened into Tropical Storm Gustav; on 26 August it rapidly became a category one hurricane on the Saffir-Simpson scale, causing heavy rain in the south-eastern part of **Haiti**. The eye of hurricane Gustav made landfall on the south west peninsula of Haiti, approximately 10 miles west of Jacmel, on 26 August shortly after 13:00. Airports, sea ports and public offices have been closed and evacuation activities have begun. The government has opened some 76 emergency shelters in the southern part of the country and has maintained a red alert in the central and southern departments (South East, South, Nippes, West, Grand-Anse, Artibonite and Centre Orange). Local authorities (local civil defence) and local Red Cross branches have been actively coordinating the information and relief activities. Regular information bulletins were provided by the government officials.

Gustav is moving northwest at approximately 5 mph with a west-northwestward motion. If the hurricane follows this track, it should pass between Jamaica and the south eastern coast of Cuba on 28 August. Gustav's maximum sustained winds are near 60 mph with higher gusts and will likely weaken as it moves over Haiti; however, it will re-strengthen as it moves away from Haiti. Gustav is expected to produce total rain accumulations of six to twelve inches of rain over Hispaniola, eastern Cuba, Jamaica and the Cayman Islands. These rains will likely produce life threatening flash floods and mud slides.

The civil defense in **Cuba** ordered a preventive evacuation of some 13,000 people and livestock that are at most risk, especially in the eastern provinces of Santiago de Cuba, Granma, Holguin and Las Tunas. The government has opened 184 emergency shelters. There is a hurricane warning in effect for the provinces of Guantanamo, Santiago de Cuba and Granma, while a hurricane watch is in effect for the provinces of Las Tunas and Holguin.

On 26 August, the government of the **Dominican Republic** issued a red alert for the provinces of Barahona, Pedernales, Independencia, Elias Pina, Santo Domingo, among others. According to data provided by the Emergency Operations Center (Centro de Operaciones de Emergencia – COE), 871 houses were damaged and one house was destroyed in the south east region of the country forcing approximately 4,360 people to evacuate as a preventive measure. Approximately 15 emergency shelters have been activated in the southern region of country, housing 1,888 people. A red alert is in effect for the provinces of Barahona, Pedernales and Independencia.

Coordination and partnerships

The International Federation through the **Pan American Disaster Response Unit (PADRU)** has been in close contact with the National Societies from Cuba, Dominican Republic, Haiti, Jamaica and the Cayman Islands. PADRU's high frequency radio is operative and is being used to monitor the emergency among the affected islands. In addition, two PADRU Disaster Management delegates are on stand-by for deployment to **Cuba** and two additional disaster management delegates are scheduled to leave for **Jamaica** and **Haiti** respectively, in order to support the Jamaican Red Cross (JRC) and the HNRCS. Cayman Islands have also requested additional regional support and this is being coordinated in conjunction with BRCS.

The Deputy Head of Zone for the Americas and the Regional Representative for Cuba, the Dominican Republic and Haiti are in **Haiti** supporting early damage and need assessments undertaken by the Haitian National Red Cross Society (HNRCS) and other actors present in the field (such as the United Nations Children's Fund – UNICEF – and the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs – OCHA). Local authorities (local civil defence) are coordinating activities with the HNRCS local branches and have held several meetings. Regular information reports have been provided by government officials.

A United Nations Emergency Team (UNETE) was activated and will be deployed to the **Dominican Republic**.

Red Cross and Red Crescent action

The **Haitian National Red Cross Society (HNRCS)** has held meetings with the local branches and other actors present in the field, and has mobilized 250 available NIT members. In Nippes, the local branch has non-food items for 500 families available for distribution; in addition, approximately 100 volunteers are performing early warning activities using megaphones in the main towns.

In Grand-Anse, non-food items for 500 families are ready for distribution. 150 volunteers have been mobilized; these began early warning activities on 25 August. No stocks are available in the local branch of Les Cayes, but 100 volunteers have started sensitizing the community. There were 20 volunteers in South East province performing early warning activities since the onset of the emergency. Volunteers were also mobilized in other provinces including Aïme-au-pitre, West-Gonave and West. They have been evacuating people and providing information on early warnings.

The International Federation Regional Representative for Cuba, Dominican Republic and Haiti has established contact with OCHA based in Haiti in order to coordinate relief efforts.

The National Intervention Team (NIT) members from the **Cuban Red Cross (CRC)** have been activated. There are five specialized NIT teams with a total of 107 volunteers, and 3,600 CRC volunteers are performing evacuation activities with support from the Civil Defence. The CRC is supporting the government in managing the emergency shelters.

The **Dominican Red Cross (DRC)** has activated all the coordinating operative centers and is closely monitoring the situation. All local branches issued a red alert and approximately 200 volunteers are currently preparing to provide relief activities.

The Jamaica Red Cross has been meeting with their Office for Disaster Preparedness and Emergency Management's Shelter and Care Committee, is active in the Jamaica Emergency Operations Centre and has its branches ready to respond.

The Overseas Branch of the British Red Cross in the **Cayman Islands** has been involved in two emergency council meetings and is in contact with the Overseas Branch Director in London to discuss preparation for Gustav and in coordination with PADRU, have requested RIT support

The needs

Following the Information Bulletin published on 26 August, this DREF operation will support initial costs for the **Haitian National Red Cross Society (HNRC)** to perform 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, as mentioned above. Additional DREF funds will be requested to fulfill their needs.

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

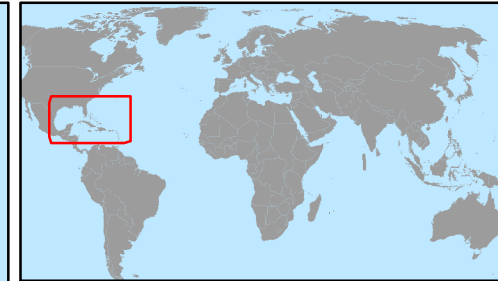
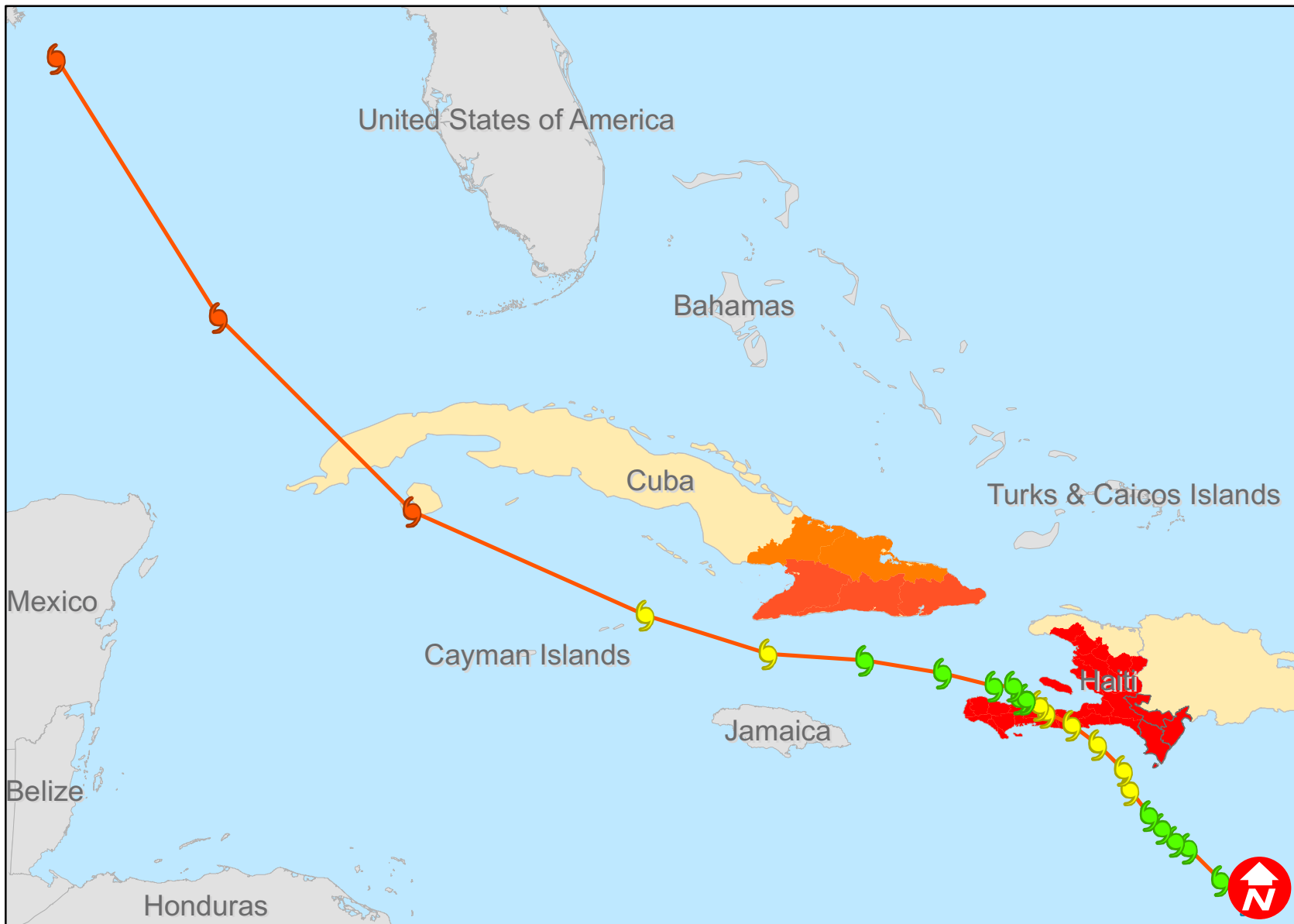
For further information specifically related to this operation please contact:








- In Panama: Ariel Kestens, Head of PADRU; phone: (507) 316 1001; Fax: (507) 316 1082; email: ariel.kestens@ifrc.org.
- In Panama: Dario Alvarez, Disaster Management Delegate PADRU; phone: (507) 316 1001; fax: (507) 316 1082; email: dario.alvarez@ifrc.org.
- In Trinidad: Tanya Wood, Regional Representative for the Caribbean; phone: (868) 624 1557; fax: (868) 627 9627; email: Tanya.wood@ifrc.org;
- In Dominican Republic: Rafael Olaya, Regional Representative for Cuba, Dominican Republic and Haiti; e-mail: Rafael.olaya@ifrc.org
- In Dominican Republic: Ligia Leroux de Ramirez, President Dominican Red Cross; phone: (809) 334 4545; fax: (809) 238-5252; email: cruzrojadom@codetel.net.do
- In Haiti: Dr. Michaèle Amedée Gédéon, President Haitian National Red Cross Society; phone: (509) 2244-9229; Fax: (509) 2222-2709; email: drqedeonm@yahoo.com
- In Geneva: Pablo Medina, Operations Coordinator for Americas region; phone: (41 22) 730 42 74; Fax: (41 22) 733 03 95; email: pablo.medina@ifrc.org

[<DREF map below; click here to return to the title page>](#)



Haiti: Hurricane Gustav



-  HURRICANE 3
-  HURRICANE 1
-  TROPICAL STORM
-  TROPICAL DEPRESSION
-  Red alert
-  Hurricane warning
-  Hurricane watch

The maps used do not imply the expression of any opinion on the part of the International Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies or National Societies concerning the legal status of a territory or of its authorities.

Map data sources: ESRI, DEVINFO, International Federation, UNISYS, MDR49003.mxd