

EMERGENCY APPEAL



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

BELIZE: HURRICANE

Appeal no: 33/01
12 October, 2001

IRIS

***THIS APPEAL SEEKS CHF 655,000
IN CASH, KIND AND SERVICES
TO ASSIST 4,800 BENEFICIARIES FOR THREE MONTHS***

The Situation

On the evening of 8 October 2001, Hurricane Iris, a Category 4 hurricane with wind speeds as high as 225 kilometres per hour, made landfall on the coast of southern Belize, tearing apart houses and communal buildings, ripping up trees and electricity lines, and flattening standing crops across an arc of coastal plain some sixty kilometres long and thirty kilometres wide. Over twenty people were killed, many of them in a boat which capsized at a pier near the town of Big Creek when its moorings tore loose. The centre of the storm devastated large areas of Belize's southernmost district, Toledo, before dissipating hours later over the Maya Mountains which parallel the coast. The hurricane damaged substantial buildings in the towns of Placencia, Independence, and San Antonio, and totally destroyed countless houses (most of them constructed of local materials) in small villages throughout southwestern Belize. Government and personal food stocks were lost, and roads cut by flash-flooding. Following initial surveys by the Belize government, local media reported up to 14,000 people homeless in Toledo and its neighbouring district, Stann Creek, and a total of 35 villages and settlements in which over 95% of houses and other buildings were destroyed. With the national electricity grid disrupted in the two affected districts, public water supplies rapidly failed, forcing inhabitants to resort to wells served by hand-pumps, which in many instances had fallen into disrepair; this circumstance forced people to drink polluted river water as the only remaining alternative. Many of the inhabitants of the district belong to the Mayan ethnic group, and are subsistence farmers living in poverty and with no personal resources on which to fall back in time of need. Deprived of their food stocks, and having lost their homes in the ferocious winds of Hurricane Iris, this vulnerable population faces increasing threats of sickness and disease as the rainy season continues, and an uncertain future in which the hurricane's after-effects threaten their food security pending the next harvest, which is still three months away.

The Needs

Immediate Needs w

Early on 9 October, when it was clear that Hurricane Iris would impact the Belize coast, the Belize Red Cross Society (BRCS) alerted all its branches and mobilized its volunteers. National Society personnel and leadership also attended a meeting of the overall disaster response coordinating body, the National Emergency Management Organization (NEMO). In the areas most threatened by the hurricane, BRCS volunteers assisted in evacuation

procedures and prepared to help manage shelters for the displaced. The Federation's Regional Delegations (RD's) in Guatemala City and Santo Domingo remained in close contact with the BRCS, and also liaised with the Pan-American Disaster Response Unit (PADRU), and Federation delegates and vehicles were pre-positioned for access to Belize as soon as possible after the passage of the hurricane.

Hurricane Iris passed over Belize on the night of 8 October, and on the morning of 9 October two Federation delegates specialized in disaster response and water and sanitation activities arrived in Belize City to provide ongoing support to the BRCS. On the same day the BRCS sent two container-trucks loaded with food and relief items to the affected areas in the south of the country. On the morning of 10 October, the BRCS, along with the Federation, undertook an initial airborne and ground survey of Toledo and Stann Creek districts. First results from this appraisal substantiated initial government figures for property and crop damage, and loss of life.

Priority needs emerged clearly from these survey visits and from data supplied by relevant government departments and other agencies. In the two southernmost districts of Belize, between 10,000 and 14,000 people have been made homeless, and there is therefore a pressing need for tarpaulins and plastic sheeting with which to construct temporary shelter and undertake emergency reinforcement of damaged roofs. Food stocks and crops have been lost or damaged, and the next harvest is three months away - immediate inputs of basic foodstuffs are therefore vital, particularly in remote and resource-poor subsistence farming villages away from transport arteries. A substantial portion of the population has also lost household goods and has no reserve income with which to fund their replacement. Exact water and sanitation needs have yet to be assessed, but post-hurricane flooding may occur, and a watsan element is therefore included in this Appeal. A small feasibility study for a food security programme to encourage agricultural reactivation is also included.

The Proposed Operation

Objectives and Activities planned w

The worst-affected population in the southern districts of Belize are those who have lost their homes and belongings. Out of a total population in the two districts of approximately 45,000, between 10,000 and 14,000 are thought to be homeless. In discussions with the BRCS leadership, a decision was taken to concentrate activities under this Appeal in the southern area of Toledo District, in the hinterland of the small town of San Antonio. This is an area of extreme poverty in the foothills of the Maya Mountains, difficult to reach and therefore unlikely to receive as many relief inputs as locations on the roads. It is also an area which was severely impacted by Hurricane Iris, as aerial and ground surveys revealed on 10 October 2001. While the BRCS will also carry out relief operations in other areas, specifically in the southern regions of Stann Creek District, activities covered by this operation will focus on this heavily-impacted area of Toledo District. Taking into account local BRCS capacities, it has been decided to focus on 800 families, or approximately 5,000 people, with shelter, food, and non-food relief. This represents more than 10% of the population of the two worst affected districts in the country, and over 30% of the estimated maximum homeless total. The BRCS and the Federation will liaise closely with government agencies and NGOs to harmonize the Red Cross response with inputs from those sources.

Relief distributions w

Objective 1: Food Relief To ensure adequate food supplies for 800 families for a period of three months, reducing the risk of malnutrition or reliance on survival strategies with long-term negative consequences.

Six food package distributions to 800 families will be made (a two-week ration) consisting of rice, flour, sugar, beans, salt, and lard - the staple items of the local diet in the affected area. This will involve 50 kilograms per family per distribution and should be sufficient to maintain nutritional standards for a three month period until the next harvest.

Objective 2: Non-Food Relief To ensure access to essential household supplies and implements, allowing scarce available resources to be directed towards rebuilding of homes and recovery of agricultural activity.

A one-time distribution to the 800 target families will be made of kitchen sets and hygiene kits (one per family), blankets (five per family), and jerry cans (two per family). In addition, six two-weekly distributions of bleach will be made for water purification purposes (see below, Water and Sanitation).

Shelter w

Objective 1: Emergency Shelter To address immediate shelter needs for 800 families, reducing exposure to a harsh environment during the rainy season, increasing resistance to disease, and supporting the maintenance of community and family life.

A one-time distribution to 800 families will be made of 1,000 plastic sheets and 800 tarpaulins.

Water-sanitation w

Objective 1: Water Purification. To ensure access to safe drinking water and reduce the risk of water-borne diseases.

Water purification supplies, specifically bleach (used locally) will be distributed along with food relief supplies. Water purification activities will be promoted using standards developed in coordination with the Belize Ministry of Health during the Hurricane Keith operation in 2000. Two electrical generators (already on inventory) will be provided to allow reactivation of water pumps, and hence water supplies, in two selected communities.

Agriculture

Objective 1: Agricultural Support. To assess the need for and feasibility of support in agricultural reactivation and food security to subsistence farmers who have lost crops through hurricane damage.

The BRCS with the technical support of OXFAM and in coordination with the Ministry of Agriculture will conduct a livelihood assessment training course for volunteers and carry out the assessment in hurricane-affected areas to determine the need for and possibility of developing a programme to support agricultural reactivation and food security. Based upon this assessment a proposal would be developed for related activities.

National Society Capacity Building

The BRCS has excellent potential capacity in disaster response, and strengthened this significantly during its successful implementation of the Hurricane Keith operation in 2000. Nonetheless, this Appeal contains provision for training to strengthen the ability of the BRCS to respond to disasters rapidly and effectively with an intervention team of trained volunteers and staff, and in particular to carry out damage and needs assessment based on established criteria and procedures. BRCS staff capacity will be enhanced during this operation through experience in disaster relief management. BRCS staff in Punta Gorda, the district capital of Toledo District, will particularly benefit. The intervention team model will be developed through volunteer recruitment, training in damage and needs assessment and SPHERE standards, and contingency plan preparation.

Co-ordination w

The BRCS leadership regularly attends meetings of the overall government emergency coordinating body, the National Emergency Management Organization (NEMO). This Appeal was drawn up after consultations involving the BRCS, the Federation, the American Red Cross Society, the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO), Oxfam, and other agencies. Links between the BRCS and other agencies operating in Belize are excellent, having been reinforced during the Hurricane Keith operation in 2000.

Monitoring and Evaluation w

The implementation of the operation will be monitored by the Disaster Response Coordinator of the BRCS in collaboration with the BRCS Director General and Executive Board. The Federation Regional Delegation will also monitor the operation, through regular visits and through the deployment of delegates in-country. Reporting will be maintained according to normal Federation standards, with Operations Updates being issued regularly and a Final Report prepared at the end of the operation. The Regional Delegation will propose evaluation of the programme, in consultation with the Monitoring and Evaluation Department of the Secretariat, in early 2002.

Capacity of the National Society w

The BRCS is a well-functioning National Society with excellent relations with government and non-governmental agencies and donor bodies. It enjoys a good image in Belize society, recently enhanced by its successful implementation of the Hurricane Keith relief operation in 2000. It has headquarters in Belize City, and branches in all districts. Its capacity to respond to disasters was enhanced during the Hurricane Keith operation, when it worked in close collaboration with a Federation sub-delegation which was present in-country from October 2000 to June 2001. It has over 1,000 volunteers and ten staff.

Present Capacity of the Federation w

The Federation's Regional Delegation in Santo Domingo has responsibility for relations with the BRCS and assistance in disaster response and development activities. Support is also provided, as necessary, by the Federation's Regional Delegation in Guatemala City and by PADRU. In carrying out the initial response and assessment for this Appeal, three delegates from Santo Domingo and two from Central America (the Guatemala City and El Salvador operations) were involved. Santo Domingo delegates will remain in Belize until a team leader is posted to the country in the next few days. It is anticipated that the initial stage of the operation will involve two delegates to work with the BRCS, plus two local staff. One delegate may be posted in Toledo District. Overall supervision of Federation staff will be by the Santo Domingo regional Delegation.

Budget summary

See Annex 1 for details.

For further details please contact:

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All International Federation Assistance Operations seek to adhere to the Code of Conduct and are committed to the Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Disaster Response (SPHERE Project) in delivering assistance to the most vulnerable.

In line with the Minimum Reporting Standards, the first operations update on this Appeal will be issued within 30-days of the launch and the second will be issued over the course of the operation; a final narrative and financial report will be issued no later than 90 days after the end of the operation.

This operation seeks to administer to the immediate requirements of the victims of this disaster. Subsequent operations to promote sustainable development or longer-term capacity building will require additional support and these programmes are outlined on the Federation website.

For support to or for further information concerning Federation operations in this or other

		ANNEX 1
<u>PRELIMINARY BUDGET SUMMARY</u>		APPEAL No. 33/2001
Belize - Hurricane Iris		
TYPE		VALUE
RELIEF NEEDS		IN CHF
Shelter & constructions		30'000
Clothing & textiles		30'000
Food & seeds		240'000
Utensils & tools		45'000
Other relief supplies		40'000
TOTAL RELIEF NEEDS		385'000
<u>PROGRAMME SUPPORT</u>		
Programme management		44'000
Technical support		13'000
Professional services		15'000
<u>TRANSPORT STORAGE & VEHICLE COSTS</u>		66'000
<u>PERSONNEL</u>		
Expatriate staff		50'000
National staff		17'000
<u>ADMINISTRATIVE & GENERAL SERVICES</u>		
Information expenses		5'000
Administrative & general expenses		35'000
External workshops & seminars		25'000
TOTAL OPERATIONAL NEEDS		270'000
TOTAL APPEAL CASH, KIND, SERVICES		655'000
LESS AVAILABLE RESOURCES (-)		Nil
NET REQUEST		655'000

*countries,
please
access
the
Federation
website
at
[http://
www.if
rc.org](http://www.ifrc.org)*

Jean Ayoub
Director
Disaster M