

# Emergency appeal



International Federation  
of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

## Cuba: Hurricane Season 2008

Emergency appeal n° MDRCU001  
GLIDE TC-2008-000143-CUB  
8 September 2008

This Preliminary Emergency Appeal seeks CHF 6,417,524 (USD 5,834,112 or EUR 3,973,699) in cash, kind, or services to support the Cuban National Society to assist 8,000 families for nine months.

CHF 150,000 (USD 136,363 or EUR 92,879) was allocated from the Federation's Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF) to support the National Society in Cuba in starting their early damage and needs assessments caused by Hurricane Gustav. Unearmarked funds to repay DREF are encouraged.

### In Brief:

After Hurricane Gustav passed through Cuba on 31 August, the National Society, along with other actors, started damage and needs assessments. Based on the situation, this *preliminary emergency appeal* responds to a request from the Cuban National Society, and focuses on providing support to take an appropriate and timely response in delivering assistance including logistical, shelter, health support and relief items and to strengthen and scale up the disaster risk reduction programmes.

This operation is expected to be implemented over nine months, and will therefore be completed by 1 June 2009; a Final Report will be made available by 1 September 2009 (three months after the end of the operation).

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[<click here to view the attached Emergency Appeal Budget;](#)  
[or here to view contact details>](#)



A house completely destroyed by tropical storm Hanna in Municipality of La Palma. Source: International Federation

## The Situation

Hurricane Gustav is already considered to be the strongest storm to strike **Cuba** in the past 50 years. On 31 August, Gustav struck the Isla de Juventud (Isle of Youth) as a category four hurricane. Waves measuring five meters in height lashed the Isle, reaching two to seven kilometres inland.

Gustav then proceeded to mainland Cuba where it hit the province of Pinar del Rio. A meteorological station located in Paso Real de San Diego, Cuba recorded a hurricane squall clocked at 340 kilometres an hour, a record for the hurricane-prone country.



Debris caused by the storm in Municipality of Los Palacios. Source: International Federation

Four hours later, Gustav left the country and entered the Gulf of Mexico after having left severe destruction in its path in Cuba.

More than 60 percent of the Cuban territory was directly affected by the hurricane. Mainland province Pinar del Rio suffered the biggest impact of the storm; in particular the municipalities of Los Palacios, La Palma, Bahía Honda, San Cristóbal, Viñales, Consolación del Sur and Candelaria were severely affected. The Isla de Juventud was also gravely affected by hurricane winds and flooding caused by the storm.

No fatalities were recorded in Isla de Juventud or Pinar del Rio as preparedness measures were implemented by the Civil Defence Command. 19 injuries were reported, but none of them are life-threatening. Approximately 467,000 persons benefited from these preventive measures. Over 61,000 people were housed in shelters; an estimated 77 percent of those evacuated live in the Pinar del Rio, Isla de Juventud and in Havana provinces.

The considerable impact of hurricane Gustav is still being assessed by national authorities and National Civil Defence Command officials. The government began a recuperation phase in all affected areas and has launched a massive reconstruction and rehabilitation effort.

Damage noted thus far includes the housing, education, poultry, fishing, electricity and telecommunication service sectors. No health needs have been identified at this time. The lack of electricity in many areas has made it impossible to cook or boil water, given that most of the population uses electric stoves. The National Electrical Union reports initial damage estimates to infrastructure in the western region of Cuba and the Isla de Juventud to have a value of 15 million Cuban pesos (approximately CHF 12.5 million). In addition to collapsed high-tension towers, 4,500 posts are reported down, 530 transformers damaged, and 5,000 street lights destroyed and 38,700 electrical isolators and 800 tons worth of conductors are beyond repair.

In Pinar del Rio, 75 to 80 percent of the population was affected, 55 educational centres sustained damage in addition to 19 health centres. Commercial buildings were also affected: some 479 small businesses suffered damage. Over 25,900 metric tons of agricultural crops were lost, which might affect the food security situation in the longer term. Over 55 km of the primary and secondary electrical network were affected. Finally, the tobacco sector suffered serious damage as 420 of the tobacco houses were affected (95 percent of the tobacco houses in the province). In Pinar del Rio and the Isla de Juventud, approximately 100,000 houses lost roofs or collapsed completely.

At the time of writing this preliminary emergency appeal, Hurricane Ike has reached eastern Cuba and is expected to exacerbate the impact of Hurricane Gustav. The Cuban government has started preventive activities in preparation for Ike's arrival in Guantanamo province. The Civil Defence estimates that 1.5 million people need to be evacuated, of which 800,000 have already been evacuated at the time of publishing this appeal. Early warning systems have been activated, shelters are open and several hospitals have been evacuated, and more than 4,300 volunteers are supporting the ongoing operation in response to Ike.

## Coordination and partnerships

The Red Cross Movement has been coordinating efforts both internally and externally from the onset of the emergency. The Federation Secretariat has been in regular contact with the Cuban Red Cross through the Federation's **Pan American Disaster Response Unit (PADRU)**. One regional shelter delegate, one disaster

management delegate and one information officer were deployed to Cuba to support the National Society assessing the initial needs.

In Cuba, the Cuban Red Cross (CRC) coordinated early relief actions with local authorities. International Federation disaster management delegates and the CRC participated in an inter-agency meeting led by the United Nations Development Program (UNDP).

The UN's Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) regional advisor and the OCHA national officer from Nicaragua arrived in Cuba to support the UN agencies to prepare a request for the Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF). Additionally a Bureau for Crisis Prevention and Recovery (BCPR) – UNDP advisor arrived in Cuba to offer support during the recovery phase.

The CRC and the International Federation have provided the Partner National Societies (PNS) from Spain, United Kingdom, Norway and Italian with available information on hurricane Ike.

## Red Cross and Red Crescent action

The **CRC** activated the National Coordinating Committee for disasters, consisting of 448 operation groups made up of 1,572 volunteers. These volunteers participated in evacuation activities in high risk areas prioritizing families that had been previously affected by floods. Over 1,376 CRC volunteers are providing support in the emergency shelters. Activities include distributing food items, delivering first aid care, providing psychosocial support and activating the family link service.

The International Federation, through PADRU sent a first cargo plane with emergency kits for 3,300 families from Panama.

In preparation for hurricane Ike, the CRC, with support of the disaster management delegates in the field, have been tracking Ike's path and preparing various scenarios and possible responses. An assessment mission – already deployed and operating in the field - has been arranged between the International Federation, the Cuban government and the Cuban Red Cross

### The needs

#### Immediate needs:

Hurricane Gustav caused serious damage to homes, infrastructure and communities. Based on the previous information and initial assessments immediate needs include reestablishment of electricity services in affected areas, family kits that contain jerry cans, kitchen kits, mosquito nets as well as mattresses, sheet sets, towels, and water filters. As a large number of homes and roofs have been destroyed, there is an urgent need for zinc sheeting to replace or repair roofs as well as shelter kits for those that lost their homes.

### The proposed operation

This Emergency Appeal seeks to support immediate response activities in Cuba that require Federation support. Objectives and planned activities will be adjusted in line with more detailed information resulting from damage and needs assessments, including possible clean up operations, health, shelter and water and sanitation needs and **strengthen disaster risk reduction activities in affected communities to contribute to building community safety and resilience for the future.**

Longer terms needs are currently being assessed. More information will be provided in a following Revised Appeal.

#### Relief distributions (basic non-food items)

<b>Objective: 8,000 families (40,000 people) affected by the hurricane will benefit from the distribution of non-food items (7,000 families in Pinar del Rio, 500 families in Cienfuegos and 500 Sancti Espiritu) in order to help them recover from the effects of the hurricane.</b>	
<b>Expected results</b>	<b>Activities planned</b>
Approximately 40,000 people will receive essential non-food	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conduct rapid emergency needs and capacity assessments.</li> <li>• Develop beneficiary targeting strategy and registration system to</li> </ul>

items to help them recover.	<p>deliver intended assistance.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Distribute relief supplies and control supply movements from point of dispatch to end user.</li> <li>• Monitor and evaluate the relief activities and provide reporting on relief distributions.</li> <li>• Develop an exit strategy.</li> </ul>
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The International Federation, through the Federation's Americas Zone Regional Logistic Unit (RLU), is coordinating the shipment of:

- 8,000 kitchen kits (1 per family).
- 8,000 mattresses (1 per family).
- 16,000 Jerry cans (2 per family).
- 16,000 mosquito nets (2 per family).
- 8,000 towels (1 per family).
- 8,000 sheet sets (1 per family).

The RLU coordinated the first relief activity for this operation by shipping the first part of the relief items by air on 7 September:

- 3,330 kitchen kits.
- 6,600 mosquito nets.
- 6,600 jerry cans.

### Shelter

**Objective: To provide adequate shelter for 8,000 families; 7,000 families with the reconstruction damaged roof tops and 1,000 families with temporary reparation of damaged roof tops using shelter kits.**

Expected results	Activities planned
8,000 families will have adequate shelter assisting them to return to their daily lives.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identification of communities and specific beneficiaries coordinating with local government authorities.</li> <li>• Procurement of materials (zinc sheeting, nails and wood) for the reconstruction of damaged roofs.</li> <li>• Supervision in the repairing of the damaged houses by CRC staff and volunteers.</li> </ul>

### Cuba

7,000 families will receive zinc sheeting, nails (each family receives 30 zinc sheets and one box of nails) and materials in order to repair their homes.

1,000 families will receive shelter kits and additional material for setting up the roof (timber or other available material). The shelter kits contain the following items:

Specifications	Quantity per kit	Units
Tarpaulins	2	Pc
Rope	1	Roll
Hand saw	1	Pc
Roofing nails	0.5	Kg
Shovel	1	Pc
Hoe	1	Pc
Machete	1	Pc
Tin Snips	1	Pc
Nails	0.5	Kg
Tie wire	1	Roll
Claw hammer	1	Pc
Woven sack	1	Pc

## Water and Sanitation

<b>Objective: 1,000 families in the affected communities receive a specialized water filter.</b>	
<b>Expected Results</b>	<b>Activities planned</b>
Specialized water filter is provided to the most affected communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identification of communities and specific beneficiaries coordinating with local government authorities.</li> <li>• Procurement of materials (procurement will take place in Brazil).</li> <li>• Distribution of water filter and supervision of their installation</li> <li>• Hygiene promotion campaign.</li> </ul>

## National Society Capacity Building

<b>Objective 1: The capacity of the Cuban Red Cross (CRC) in disaster response and preparedness will have been strengthened.</b>	
<b>Expected Results</b>	<b>Activities planned</b>
The Cuban Red Cross local branch volunteers will be adequately identified and prepared for this and future emergencies.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Procurement of visibility materials (T-shirts, caps), computers, office equipment.</li> <li>• Disaster preparedness workshop for volunteers.</li> <li>• Procurement of 20 tents, 100 stretchers, 200 radios for volunteers.</li> <li>• Procurement of a laptop.</li> <li>• Procurement of two Toyota Land Cruisers and three motorcycles.</li> </ul>

The two Land Cruisers will be used to perform evacuation, search and rescue activities among other relevant operations. The three motorcycles are to be used for volunteers to perform follow up activities on the distributions in the affected areas.

## Early Recovery

**Objective: Early recovery activities are assessed, planned and implemented together with the affected communities and key local, national and international stakeholders.**

Relief assessments will determine early recovery needs. According to the initial assessments carried out by the Cuban Red Cross together with the Federation delegates and to United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and OCHA situation reports the majority of affected families suffered damaging impacts on their livelihoods. These include damage to home gardens, family livestock and small-scale family business. This leads to increased needs especially on the short and medium-term. A detailed joint assessment between the Cuban Red Cross and the Federation's Zone/Regional Representation Office and PADRU will be carried out in the coming weeks. Options including small unconditional cash grants and cash-for-work for debris clearing will be considered following a rapid market survey.

## Communications – Advocacy and Public information

Maintaining a steady flow of timely and accurate information between the field and other major stakeholders is vital for fundraising, advocacy and maintaining the profile of emergency operations. During an operation, communications between affected populations and the Red Cross and Red Crescent, as well as with the media and donors, is an essential mechanism for effective disaster response and the cornerstone to promote greater quality, accountability, and transparency.

The communications activities outlined in this appeal are aimed at supporting the National Society to improve their communications capacities and develop appropriate communications tools and products to support effective operations. These activities are closely coordinated between the Cuban Red Cross and the Federation communications team in the Americas and Geneva. Support will be provided to the Cuban Red Cross to increase the visibility of their humanitarian actions for this operation.

At the onset of the operation the International Federation's PADRU information officer was deployed to Cuba to assist, to set up media interviews and to increase visibility of the Red Cross and Red Crescent in the field. A detailed communications plan of action is forthcoming.

Information on the emergency will be published on the following web sites: [www.cruzroja.org](http://www.cruzroja.org), [www.ifrc.cruzroja.org](http://www.ifrc.cruzroja.org) and [www.ifrc.org](http://www.ifrc.org). This will include press releases, articles and photographs from the field.

Press releases, containing information on the Red Cross response to the emergency as well as requests assistance from the private sector and the general public, will be drafted and sent to the media during the operation.

The International Federation is supporting the Cuban Red Cross to assist the most vulnerable people affected by the Hurricane. Activities carried out in this operation are based upon the principle of humanity. Beneficiary selection is based on the level of vulnerability of those affected, respecting culture diversity and ensuring gender sensitivity.

### Capacity of the National Society

The Cuban Red Cross has extensive disaster response experience as result of several disaster response operations related to hurricanes. Their disaster preparedness initiatives are well established and known by all the volunteers and staff.

Every year, Cuba organizes the "Meteoro" simulation, where the Cuban Red Cross participates and test their early warning capacity for activation of volunteers and staff country-wise and different other elements of their contingency plan, to support national authorities in case of natural hazard threats the country.

In addition to this, during the pre-hurricane meeting that took place in Panama from 3 to 6 June 2008, National Societies from countries prone to hurricanes in the Americas participated in the revision of the contingency plan for the region that was developed in 2007. Available capacities within the region were assessed as were possible response strategies and operating procedures, which provided participants with hands-on practice.

### Capacity of the Federation

The International Federation, through PADRU and in coordination with the Zone Office in the Americas and the Regional Representative for Cuba, is providing support to the Cuban Red Cross in the response needs such as organizing the provision of initial relief items, development of a Plan of Action, resource mobilisation, logistics and human resources as needed.

### Budget summary

See attached budget (Annex 1) for details.

Thomas Gurtner  
Director  
Coordination and Programmes Division

Bekele Geleta  
Secretary General

### 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 Pan American Disaster Response Unit; phone (507) 316 1001; fax (507) 316 1082; email: [ariel.kestens@ifrc.org](mailto:ariel.kestens@ifrc.org)
- In Panama: Alberto Monguzzi, Regional Shelter Delegate, PADRU; phone (507) 316 1001; fax (507) 316 1082; email: [alberto.monguzzi@ifrc.org](mailto:alberto.monguzzi@ifrc.org)
- In Dominican Republic: Rafael Olaya, Regional Representative for Cuba, Dominican Republic and Haiti; e-mail: [rafael.olaya@ifrc.org](mailto:rafael.olaya@ifrc.org)
- In Panama: Maria Alcazar, Resource Mobilization Coordinator for the Americas; phone: (507) 380 0250; fax: (507) 317 1304; email: [maria.alcazar@ifrc.org](mailto:maria.alcazar@ifrc.org)
- In Geneva: Pablo Medina, Operations Coordinator for the Americas; phone: (41 22) 730 42 74; fax: (41 22) 733 03 95; email: [pablo.medina@ifrc.org](mailto:pablo.medina@ifrc.org)

[<Emergency Appeal budget below;  
click here to return to the title page>](#)

**APPEAL BUDGET SUMMARY**

Annex 1

Cuba: Hurricane Season 2008

MDRCU001

**ORIGINAL****RELIEF NEEDS**

Shelter	3,649,000
Construction Materials	639,000
Clothing & Textiles	406,000
Food	
Seeds & Plants	
Water & Sanitation	33,000
Medical & First Aid	6,600
Teaching Materials	
Utensils & Tools	360,000
Other Supplies & Services	

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**Total Relief Needs** **5,093,600****CAPITAL EQUIPMENT**

Land & Buildings	
Vehicles Purchase	67,260
Computers & Telecom Equipment	10,500
Office/Household Furniture & Equip.	
Medical Equipment	
Other Machinery & Equipment	

**TRANSPORT, STORAGE & VEHICLES**

Storage - Warehouse	
Distribution & Monitoring	260,200
Transport & Vehicles Costs	8,000
Service fee & recovery	255,000

**PERSONNEL**

International Staff	139,500
Regionally Deployed Staff	11,550
National Staff	12,000
National Society Staff	25,000
Consultants	

**WORKSHOPS & TRAINING**

Workshops & Training	22,000
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**GENERAL EXPENSES**

Travel	18,375
Information & Public Relations	25,000
Office running costs	13,500
Communication Costs	22,500
Professional Fees	
Financial Charges	6,000
Other General Expenses	10,400

**PROGRAMME SUPPORT**

Programme Support - PSR	417,139
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**Total Operational Needs** **1,323,924**

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**Total Appeal Budget (Cash & Kind)** **6,417,524**

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**Available Resources**

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**Net Request** **6,417,524**

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