

# Information bulletin



International Federation  
of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

## Tropical Storm Olga: Dominican Republic and Haiti

Information bulletin n° 1  
12 December 2007

This bulletin is being issued for information only.

According to the National Hurricane Centre, on 12 December Tropical Storm Olga is moving west at close to 19mph, heading towards Cuba. Along its path it has affected from the south-eastern coast of Hispaniola (Dominican Republic) to Le Mole St. Nicholas in Haiti with strong precipitations. There are 17 provinces in the Dominican Republic in a state of alert and in Haiti an orange alert was issued in the northern region. At this detailed information on the amount of people affected is not available. The National Societies of the Dominican Republic and Haiti are taking the necessary precautions in case the situation worsens through the activation of their regional committees and placing volunteers on standby. The International Federation is supporting this emergency with a Regional Intervention Team (RIT) member in the Dominican Republic and a Pan American Disaster Response Unit (PADRU) Disaster Management delegate in Haiti.



Satellite map showing Olga's path. Source: National Hurricane Center.

The National Societies of the Dominican Republic and Haiti, with the support of the Federation, have determined that external assistance is not required at this time, and are therefore not seeking funding or other assistance from donors at this time.

## The Situation

According to information obtained by the National Hurricane Center, on 12 December the centre of Tropical Storm Olga was located about 65 miles (105 km) south-east of Cuba and about 110 miles (175 km) north-west of Port au Prince in Haiti. Olga is expected to move towards the west and reach the southern coast of Cuba later on today.



Floods in Santiago, Dominican Republic. Source: listindiario.com

In the **Dominican Republic** in the area of Barahona, streets were flooded due to the heavy precipitation and preventive evacuation activities have taken place especially in the low sector of Bajo Yuna, on the borders of the Yaque river. Approximately 24,595 people have been evacuated and 4,929 houses have been affected according to the Emergency Operational Committee (Comité Operativo de Emergencia – COE). There are 17 provinces on alert: Santiago, Puerto Plata, Espaillat, Hermanas Mirabal, Duarte, Maria Trinidad Sanchez, Samana, Montecristi, Valverde, Sanchez Ramirez, El Seibo, Hato Mayor, La Altagracia, La Vega, Montelplata and Monsenor Nouel.

On 11 December, Olga was 400 km east of Port au Prince in **Haiti**, moving rapidly west at 24 km per hour with sustained gust winds of 75km per hour. This situation is seriously threatening Haiti with

strong precipitations and as a consequence the Direction of Civil Protection issued an orange alert in the provinces of Nord, Nord Est, Nord Ouest and Artibonite. There are several Red Cross teams in country ready to provide assistance such as the American Red Cross and the Spanish Red Cross.

## Red Cross action

The **Dominican Red Cross (DRC)** emergency response teams are on alert and 2,000 volunteers are waiting for the situation to evolve in order to provide assistance. The NS also has 10 coordination centres and more than 117 operative centres waiting for further instructions if needed. There is one Regional Intervention Team (RIT) member already positioned in country supporting another emergency and is available if further assistance is needed. There are several Partner National Societies (PNS) present in country who are informed and alerted of the situation in order to provide further assistance if the conditions worsen. The Operation Centre has been activated and is in contact with all pertaining agencies in country.

The **Haitian National Red Cross Society (HNRCS)** regional committees are in state of alert and volunteers are in stand-by for mobilization. The NS has installed a HF radio to follow the evolvement of the situation and a member of the Risk Reduction National Plan System is the liaison agent with the HNRCS. The local committees have warned residents who live in high risk areas so they are aware of the situation and aware for evacuation if necessary. There is a PADRU RIT in Port au Prince who will provide further assistance if required.

Currently, the HNRCS has relief items for 1,500 families which have not yet been cleared by customs, but will be shortly in order to distribute if needed. The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), the American Red Cross and the Spanish Red Cross can provide vehicles and drivers to the HNRCS if required. The French Red Cross' Plateforme d'Intervention Regionale Amerique-Caraibes (PIRAC) is also in alert and is ready to mobilize their volunteers.

A meeting was held between the International Federation and the Latin America and the Caribbean Network of Environmental Funds (REDLAC) in order to share information about this emergency and other recent ones in the region.

All United Nations agencies present in the Dominican Republic have stated to be working at full capacity at the time in response to recent emergencies; therefore no further assistance has been requested from them.

PADRU is in contact with the NS of the Dominican Republic and Haiti and together with the Federation Representative for the Dominican Republic and Haiti, will monitor the development of the situation.

## 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

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