



Appeal no:29/2000
6 October 2000

BELIZE : HURRICANE KEITH

***THIS PRELIMINARY APPEAL SEEKS CHF 2,022,472
IN CASH, KIND AND SERVICES
TO ASSIST 9,500 BENEFICIARIES FOR 4 MONTHS***

Summary

Hurricane Keith has crossed from the Caribbean, across Belize and the Yucatan Peninsula in Mexico, and is presently a tropical storm, once more gaining hurricane strength and heading for Northeastern Mexico. So far it has left considerable damage in Belize and the Belize Red Cross Society is requesting international assistance. Effects of the hurricane have also caused flooding in Nicaragua, Panama, Costa Rica, El Salvador and Venezuela. In response to the devastating impact of Hurricane Keith and the subsequent flooding in the districts of Orange Walk and Belize, the Federation is appealing for contributions in support of the Belize Red Cross's emergency relief operation and disaster mitigation activities. (Full details of the Hurricane Keith's development and Belize Red Cross and Federation action to date can be found in Information Bulletins "Hurricane Keith" #1-3 on the Federation web site noted at the end of this document).

The Disaster

From Friday 29 to Saturday 30 September, tropical storm Keith developed into a rapid and unpredictable category 4 hurricane. From Saturday 30 September until Monday 2 October, it continued to hover off the coast of Belize battering the offshore cays and bringing heavy rains to Belize and neighbouring Guatemala. The impact of the hurricane was felt most severely on the islands of Ambergris Caye, particularly the town of San Pedro and on Caye Cauker. The eye of the hurricane is reported to have passed over the town of San Pedro twice. The fact that Keith strengthened so quickly prevented the evacuation of the cays, causing a situation of great danger and concern for the residents and for their families. While only three deaths have been reported on the cays, large scale destruction of homes and infrastructure is visible throughout both San Pedro and Caye Corker. Homes, businesses, piers, boats, airplanes and airport, water and sewage systems, electric power grid and telephone systems have all

been severely damaged. The cays are both without water, sewage facilities, electricity and telephone at the present time. Water levels continued to rise in many rural areas throughout the next few days and, more importantly, are still rising along several river systems. In these regions, numerous communities have been cut off from access and are in danger of being entirely flooded. With water levels still rising, many of these communities will be isolated for several weeks. The flooding presents three major problems: lack of access to food; lack of water and contamination of the water supply with its attendant health risks; and the loss of income through loss of employment, crops and access to the land. This has resulted in export and domestic crop losses estimated at roughly USD 50 million. In Belize scores of shelters were quickly opened to cater to thousands of people. Shelter residents have been provided with food, blankets, cots and mattresses, clean water and sanitation, and first aid assistance. Treatment has been given for cases of diarrhoea, coughs and colds. Those shelter residents who are able to return home are finding severe flood damage, lost crops and lost tools. Detailed damage assessments are underway by a number of response agencies. The Belize Red Cross Society (BRCS) is an active partner in the National Emergency Management Office (NEMO) assisting with the evacuations and shelters.

The Response so far

Government Action w

NEMO was activated at 10:00 hours on Saturday 30 September and a state of emergency declared by the Prime Minister at 14:00 hours on Monday 2 October. The government National Emergency Management Organization (NEMO) has co-ordinated the relief operations in conjunction with government ministers of Human Development and Health. The Belizean Defense Force (BDF) has been active supplying medical attention, food and clean up on the cays. The Food and Distribution Committee of NEMO has also continued to provide food relief. The British Army which had been on manoeuvres has also been mobilized in support of the above actions. State institutions of water and sanitation, health and electricity have provided a concerted effort to restore services, and international organizations such as PAHO and small NGOs and church groups are beginning to appear. On both of the cays this mobilization is allowing for rapid clearance of the major structural damage and for provision of short term food and water supplies.

The Belize Government has carried out search and rescue activities, opened shelters and provided shelter items. It is also undertaking a damage assessment. Electricity is being repaired as well as 'phone lines and sanitation facilities, expected to take several weeks.

Red Cross/Red Crescent Action w

Red Cross volunteers have been active in co-ordination with NEMO in attending to people in shelters. The branches have provided food in the shelters, particularly those near Belmopan and in Orange Walk, as well as to the population of San Pedro. Throughout the storm, members of the Belize Red Cross were active in getting people to temporary shelters and providing for their needs. Since the end of the hurricane, the Red Cross branches of Corozal, Orange Walk and the national headquarters have provided food support to Caye Cauker, villages in the Orange Walk district and the rural Belize district. They have also been active in the assessment of damage as well as in continued medical attention. The Belize Red Cross distributed its emergency stocks of food, blankets and mattresses and provided volunteers to assist in the shelters.

Members of the Disaster Committee and the BRCS executive have been working continually to provide immediate relief to vulnerable individuals and to prepare a preliminary assessment and plan of action. These members also participated in an assessment of the needs in Belize rural, San Pedro and Caye Cauker. They have additionally been in close contact with NEMO. A five member Federation Regional Intervention Team (RIT) of delegates arrived in Belize on 2 October, following a request for assistance from the BRCS and are providing support to the National Society. Four of these delegates were mobilized to northern Belize through Chetumal on the Mexican border with Belize. These delegates

carried out assessments, along with the BRC, from Corozal as far as Orange Walk. They proceeded to Belize City as soon as the northern highway was passable and participated in an assessment. An American Red Cross team of four arrived on Wednesday 4 October and has joined up with the Federation team. The Belize Red Cross and Federation Delegates are now attempting to reach the most isolated areas that are cut off by landslides and flood waters. The Mexican Red Cross provided vital support to the RIT delegates that were placed on standby in Mexico prior to arriving in Belize and many other National Societies have expressed willingness to support the operation as soon as an appeal is launched.

Other Agencies' Action w

The US Agency for International Development disaster assessment team has begun working in Belize and is delivering emergency supplies including plastic sheeting. Distributions will be carried out with assistance from Peace Corps members. Two British naval vessels are in the area to assist with relief efforts. PAHO/WHO, CDERA's (Caribbean Disaster Emergency Response Agency) rapid assessment teams, and the World Food Programme (WFP) are assisting with the assessment of food needs.

Co-ordination w

The Federation Secretariat is closely coordinating action with the BRCS and the American Red Cross. In addition, the BRC is co-ordinating on the ground and at a management level with NEMO and has close relations with the Executive Coordinating committee.

The Intended Operation

Assessment of Needs •

The initial assessments are complete, however more detailed assessments are being carried out. The Belize Red Cross is attempting to reach isolated areas, but progress is hampered by lack of four wheel drive vehicles.

Immediate Needs •

The Belize Red Cross is focusing on emergency response and emergency reconstruction. The National Society plans to provide food aid and relief supplies to communities identified as the most vulnerable and which are cut off from any other assistance. There will be a need to replace supplies distributed. Water and sanitation activities will be carried out including the provision of clean water, latrine construction and rehabilitation, and community health brigades will be set up. Agricultural rehabilitation will be carried out through provision of tools to farmers. It will be necessary to promote national disaster mitigation efforts by introducing appropriate technology to ensure that the reconstructed homes become hurricane and flood resistant. Appropriate training materials and methodology will need to be developed. National Society capacity building and volunteer training will also be carried out.

Red Cross Objectives •

- { To meet the immediate emergency needs of the beneficiaries as regards clean water, food, shelter and health.
- { To contribute to mitigating any further deterioration of the conditions of the affected population.
- { To apply appropriate regionally developed technology to ensure that the reconstruction of homes that were destroyed or damaged by the hurricane are significantly more resistant to strong winds and high floods. This includes the training and equipping of technical staff for house repairs and reconstruction.
- { To contribute to recommencing farming activities in the neighbourhood of the damaged houses with the provision of seeds and agricultural tools.

- { To contribute to the capacity of the BRCS to prepare for response to disasters through a programme focusing on strengthening of the National Society, branch development and promotion of the NS.
- { To review any other activities and initiatives which the Red Cross may take pending completion of detailed assessments.

The BRCS has carefully selected goals and activities that respond to the needs of the most vulnerable and those furthest from the initial support. This means that they will concentrate activities in areas other than San Pedro and Caye Cauker, which have attracted most attention. It is worth noting that the areas identified by the BRC are those which are particularly vulnerable, have considerable potential for long term impact and risk receiving less attention and support. In addition, the activities identified coincide with the goals and potential of the BRCS, while at the same time providing an opportunity for strengthening its disaster response capacity.

National Society/Federation Plan of Action

Emergency Phase: *October - December 2000*

- To provide clean water, food, relief supplies and emergency reconstruction to victims of the disaster, as well as medical assistance through community health brigades and psychological support.
- To assist in agricultural rehabilitation with the provision of tools.
- To provide families of destroyed and damaged homes with technical assistance and supplies to rebuild structures that are wind and flood resistant.
- To participate in a capacity building programme for the National Society and provide training to volunteers (450) and the development of the two branches in Caye Cauker.
- To provide telecommunications systems development to the National Society.
- To repair the roof of the national headquarters.

Capacity of the National Society •

The Belize Red Cross has 10 full time staff and 4 part time staff. There are 800 members of which 228 are active volunteers. In addition there are 250 youth volunteers.

Present Capacity of the Federation in Belize •

There are presently 5 Federation delegates in Belize supported by the Regional Delegations of Santo Domingo, with additional logistics support from the Regional Delegation in Guatemala. It is foreseen to set up a Federation team consisting of a leader, logistics, relief and finance staff, which will remain in place with possible personnel changes to reflect the final plan of action. The Federation Secretariat will carry out its role as a co-ordinator with the BRCS in respect of activities implemented by donor National Societies.

Evaluation •

The Belize Red Cross and the Federation will evaluate the operation on an ongoing basis and the anticipated amendments and adjustments resulting from the more detailed assessment reports will be reflected in situation reports to follow.

Budget summary

See Annex 1 for details.

To date, CHF 120,000 has been released from the Disaster Relief Emergency fund (DREF) and the American Red Cross has provided USD 25,000.

Conclusion

Once needs assessments have been completed, a full appeal will be issued in accordance with findings. 9,500 beneficiaries are in urgent need of support, given the impact of the hurricane, loss of houses, possessions and livelihoods.

Jean Ayoub
Acting Under Secretary General,
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This and other reports on Federation operations are available on the Federation's website: <http://www.ifrc.org>

		ANNEX 1
<u>BUDGET SUMMARY (preliminary)</u>	APPEAL No. 29/2000	
Hurricane Keith: Belize		
TYPE	VALUE	
RELIEF NEEDS	IN CHF	
Food parcels for 4 months	450,000	
Water & sanitation	200,000	
Teaching materials	70,000	
Utensils & tools	70,000	
Kitchen sets	100,000	
Hygiene kits	200,000	
TOTAL RELIEF NEEDS		1,090,000
<u>CAPITAL EQUIPMENT</u>		
Telecom. equipment	70,000	
Other equipment	90,000	
<u>PROGRAMME SUPPORT</u>		
Programme management	136,375	
Technical support	40,824	
Professional services	45,273	
<u>TRANSPORT STORAGE & VEHICLE COSTS</u>	180,000	
<u>PERSONNEL</u>		
Expatriate staff	100,000	
National staff	110,000	
<u>ADMINISTRATIVE & GENERAL SERVICES</u>		
Travel & related expenses	5,000	
Information expenses	5,000	
Administrative & general expenses	150,000	
TOTAL OPERATIONAL NEEDS		932,472
TOTAL APPEAL CASH, KIND, SERVICES		2,022,472
LESS AVAILABLE RESOURCES (-)		
NET REQUEST		2,022,472