

OPERATIONS UPDATE



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

CARIBBEAN: HURRICANE IVAN

12 September 2004

The Federation's mission is to improve the lives of vulnerable people by mobilizing the power of humanity. It is the world's largest humanitarian organization and its millions of volunteers are active in over 181 countries.

In Brief

Appeal No. 21/2004; Operations Update no. 03; Period covered: 11 - 12 September, 2004; Contributions Lists will be attached to future updates.

Appeal history:

- Launched on 10 September 2004 for CHF 1,752,697 (USD 1,389,560 or EUR 1,137,899) for 6 months to assist 10,000 beneficiaries (2,000 families).
- Disaster Relief Emergency Funds (DREF) allocated: CHF 300,000.

Given the developing nature of this disaster, the preliminary appeal will be revised to respond to the actual needs arising from the continued trajectory of Hurricane Ivan in the Caribbean. The Federation's approach to this operation and the strategy outlined in this appeal are intended to be flexible; donors are encouraged to provide timely support, with minimum earmarking.

Outstanding needs : CHF 1,268,815

Related Emergency or Annual Appeals: Caribbean Annual Appeal (Appeal 01.52/2004), Pan American Disaster Response Unit (PADRU) Annual Appeal (Appeal 01.51/2004)

Operational Summary: The plane chartered by the Federation through an agreement with DHL carrying relief supplies from the Pan American Disaster Response Unit (PADRU) to Grenada composed of hygiene kits, plastic sheeting, tents, jerry cans, bed sheets, generators, lamps, water filters, water bottles, electric adaptors, tool sets, first aid kits, canned foods, clothing and phones, landed this morning in Grenada. Also travelling on the flight were the regional IT coordinator from the Panama Regional Delegation and a water and sanitation regional intervention team (RIT) member from the Red Cross Society of Panama. The British Red Cross Logistics Emergency Response Unit (ERU) has now reached Grenada as have the Field Assessment and Coordination Team (FACT) members, with the exception of the team leader who is scheduled to arrive this evening or tomorrow morning. A further FACT team is being deployed to Jamaica and it is hoped that the airport in Kingston will be opened tomorrow morning. FACT team members will be reinforced by two Federation logisticians who are on the way to Jamaica.

Initial assessments in Jamaica indicate that damage in the wake of Hurricane Ivan may not be as severe as feared, although full details from more isolated areas are, as yet, unavailable. Preparedness measures were effective on the island as 285 shelters were opened, housing 11,836 persons during the storm. Hurricane Ivan is now bearing down on the Cayman Islands and is expected to hit western Cuba on the morning of Monday, 13 September.

PADRU has loaded a plane with relief goods including blankets, hygiene kits, plastic sheeting, flashlights, jerry cans and plastic sheeting which is due to fly into Kingston tomorrow, 13 September. The Federation has released CHF 300,000 from its Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF) to help National Societies in the Caribbean respond to Hurricane Ivan. The Federation's Sub Regional Office in Port of Spain, Trinidad, the Panama Regional Delegation and PADRU are ensuring close coordination with the National Societies on the islands affected by Hurricane Ivan.

In Grenada, there are major needs for shelter and food and initial assessments point to a lack of water together with distribution problems as water systems appear to have been severely damaged.

The Canadian Red Cross has pledged CAD 495,000 (approximately CHF 483,882) to the Hurricane Ivan operation and the American Red Cross has donated relief goods warehoused in PADRU for the airlifts to Grenada and Jamaica.

For further information specifically related to this operation please contact:

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All International Federation assistance seeks to adhere to the [Code of Conduct](#) and is committed to the [Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Disaster Response](#) in delivering assistance to the most vulnerable. For support to or for further information concerning Federation programmes or operations in this or other countries, or for a full description of the national society profile, please access the Federation's website at <http://www.ifrc.org>

Background

Hurricane Ivan, the most powerful hurricane to hit the Caribbean in ten years, has been moving across the region for several days, damaging homes, buildings and infrastructure, and causing at least 20 deaths thus far. Ivan was a category 3 hurricane on the Saffir-Simpson scale when it passed by Barbados, St. Lucia, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, and Trinidad and Tobago on Tuesday, killing one person in Tobago and one in Barbados. The storm also damaged hundreds of homes and cut off utilities.

Ivan then strengthened into a category 4 hurricane as it hit Grenada on Tuesday evening, bringing sustained winds of 220 kilometres per hour. Several hundred people from low-lying area of Saint George's, the Grenadian capital, were evacuated in anticipation of potential flooding. Ivan also flooded parts of northern Venezuela, killing at least one person. In addition, there are reports that four youths in the Dominican Republic were swept away by a giant wave Thursday, even though the storm was still around 300 kilometres away at the time.

Grenada was seriously affected by the hurricane; at least 17 people have died and approximately 90 percent of the country's homes have sustained damage. There is currently no water or electricity, and limited cell phone coverage on the island. Approximately 60,000 people were left homeless and there are currently between 5 and 8 thousand people accommodated in 47 official and ad hoc shelters. The hurricane caused structural damage to nearly every major building in the Grenadian capital of Saint George's, including the island's emergency operations centre, prime minister's residence, several schools, the main hospital and a nearby prison. Also among the damaged buildings was the Grenada Red Cross Society headquarters. Given the situation of chaos following the hurricane strike, there are major problems of looting. Local law enforcement authorities, supported by the Regional Security

System, are seeking to bring the internal security situation under control and there is now a dusk-to-dawn curfew in effect until further notice.

The storm's projected path had the eye of the hurricane passing directly over Jamaica on Saturday. Fortunately, the storm turned westward at the last minute, avoiding a direct hit with the island. However, the country was still pounded with winds nearing 250 kilometres per hour, heavy rains and tidal surges. At least 11 people were killed as homes were washed away, roofs were blown off and trees were downed. Jamaica's prime minister declared a state of emergency. Officials had urged 500,000 people to evacuate high-risk areas, but many residents chose to stay because of fears of looting.

The hurricane strengthened into a category 5 storm as it moved away from Jamaica, but weakened slightly to a category 4 storm before it began battering the Cayman Islands on Sunday. As of 2PM local time, the eye of the storm was passing close by Grand Cayman Island, bringing winds of almost 250 kilometres per hour. The Cayman Islands are generally much better prepared than many of the other countries in the Caribbean, but there are reports of roofs being blown off and downed trees, and the airport's runway has been flooded. Most residents and visitors in high-risk areas had been evacuated or relocated to shelters. In Grand Cayman, 18 shelters were opened, one of which is managed by the Cayman Islands Red Cross, which have an overall capacity of around 3,000 people. In every shelter, at least two Red Cross volunteers are providing assistance. Four 40 foot containers with relief supplies have been pre-positioned in strategic areas on the island with stocks of blankets, hygiene kits, water containers, flashlights and shovels. A more complete assessment of the damage will be possible once the storm has passed.

On its current course, Hurricane Ivan is expected to hit Cuba early Monday and heavy flooding is anticipated. The Cuban Red Cross is keeping the population constantly informed through a television spot entitled "What to do in case of a Hurricane". Eight provinces: Pinar del Río, Habana, Ciudad Habana, Matanzas, Villa Clara, Cienfuegos, Sancti Spiritus and the Municipality of Isla de la Juventud are on hurricane alert. Over 9,000 volunteers are active in assisting the government with evacuation of the population in risk areas and providing psychological support, health assistance and distributing food in shelters to which over 200,000 people have already been evacuated. Red Cross search and rescue teams have been activated and are ready to intervene. The Cuban Red Cross is coordinating its activities with the government, the Ministry of Health, the Civil Defence and other organizations.

In Haiti, temporary shelters were set up in Nippes and in the North West Department ten houses were damaged. In the South Department, 830 people were evacuated as a result of flooding from rivers in spate and temporary shelters set up for 1,600 persons in five communes. The Haitian National Red Cross Society distributed hygiene kits to those evacuated.

Operational developments

In Jamaica, the Jamaica Red Cross (JRC) had estimated that tens of thousands of people would be threatened by Hurricane Ivan. Voluntary evacuations were carried out in all high risk areas. In coordination with the government's Office of Disaster Preparedness and Emergency Management (ODPEM), the JRC is responsible for managing all 1,000 community shelters opened across the island. In addition, all 14 Red Cross branches, 12,000 volunteers and Red Cross Community Disaster Response Teams (CDRT) were placed on alert. The JRC also purchased food locally (rice, cooking oil, powdered milk, canned sardines and dried soup mix) and pre-deployed it in the north of the country prior to the storm.

The Federation team in Jamaica reported that, as of 18.00 hours on Saturday, 11 September, the government had provided information that 109 communities had been affected throughout Jamaica. A total of 285 shelters were in operation, accommodating 11,836 people. 34 roads were blocked, 25 of which are main roads. The most heavily damaged area is Portland Point, together with St. Thomas Parish. Housing in low-lying areas in the south of the island has also been affected and some landslides are reported in mountainous areas. Health facilities are running smoothly and there are no shortages of personnel or medical supplies at present. Water supply systems continue to function normally. Electric power was shut down for security reasons and will be restored gradually, following assessments. Some looting is taking place, but these are sporadic incidents and the government does not expect this to be a major problem.

A disaster assistance and response team (DART) deployed through the US Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance (OFDA) is on the ground and is coordinating with the Jamaican Red Cross and the Federation. The Pan American Disaster Response Unit is loading a plane with relief goods in response to initial assessments on the ground by the Federation team made up of a disaster management expert from the Secretariat and an information and reporting delegate. The plane is expected to fly into Kingston tomorrow, 13 September, with the following relief items: 5,000 blankets, 835 hygiene kits, 1,670 pieces of plastic sheeting; 167 flashlights and 241 jerry cans. More relief goods are being readied, particularly in view of the potential damage to be incurred in the Cayman Islands and Cuba as Hurricane Ivan continues its course. Detailed assessments are continuing in Jamaica and further information is expected to be available tomorrow morning, 13 September.



A Jamaican man walks in front of a Methodist church on 12 September which was destroyed by Hurricane Ivan in Lionel Town outside of Kingston.
Photo courtesy of Reuters.

The Federation’s Field Assessment and Coordination team members reached Grenada today, together with a British Red Cross Emergency Response Unit (ERU) specialized in logistics. The FACT and ERU teams join a disaster management delegate from PADRU and the disaster management officer from the Port of Spain Sub Regional Office. The regional telecommunications coordinator and a regional intervention team (RIT) member specialized in water and sanitation also reached Grenada today. They travelled on the flight chartered by the Federation through an agreement with DHL and which brought hygiene kits, plastic sheeting, tents, jerry cans, bed sheets, generators, lamps, water filters, water bottles, electric adaptors, tool sets, first aid kits, canned foods, clothing and phones to the island.

In the capital, St George’s, it is expected that the majority of the water supply systems will have been restored by Tuesday, 14 September. However, overall, water is in short supply as distribution systems have incurred severe damage. The commercial airline service started to operate once again on Saturday. Priority needs in Grenada are for food, water and improved sanitation and hygiene, together with medicines which are running short in hospitals, particularly antibiotics and diarrhoeal medication.

Red Cross and Red Crescent action - objectives, progress, impact

Emergency relief (food and basic non-food items)

Objective: 2,000 vulnerable families will have benefited from the provision of food and non-food items to assist them in recovering from the effects of the hurricane.

Progress/Achievements (activities implemented within this objective)

The flight chartered by the Federation through an agreement with DHL arrived in Grenada on Sunday, 12 September with relief goods. The shipment includes the following items:

Hygiene kits for 5 people	2,000 units
Plastic sheeting tarpaulins 4x6m	2,000 units
Tents 4x4	5 units
Collapsible jerry cans	481 units
Bed sheets sets	5 units
Generator	1 unit
Lamps with support	2 units
Water filters	2 units
Water bottles	4 units
Electric adaptors	4 units
Tool set	1 unit
First aid kit	1 unit
Canned food	10 kg
Clothing, office supplies, hygiene items	10 units
Ericsson phones R290	8 units
Ericsson phone R250	4 units
IFRC/PADRU delegate kit	1 unit

The Federation's Sub Regional Office in Port of Spain, Trinidad, has sent 600 community first aid manuals to Grenada to assist in the relief effort. The Trinidad and Tobago Red Cross Society (TTRCS) has launched a monetary appeal to assist affected persons in Tobago and Grenada. TTRCS is also working with a local NGO to bring relief goods to the port for distribution in Tobago and Grenada. Some 400 packages of clothing and truck loads of food, water and toiletries received from various donors have been packaged and transported by local Red Cross volunteers. In addition, the Dominica and St. Lucia Red Cross Societies have sent fresh water to Grenada. The Barbados, Belize, Bermuda and Guyana Red Cross Societies are also appealing for donations to assist the victims of Hurricane Ivan.

Impact

The relief goods that have arrived in Grenada will ensure that all beneficiary families receive relief assistance. In addition, the Red Cross relief effort is ensuring that shelters are available for those who have been obliged to leave their homes and is monitoring conditions. The shipment of relief goods to Jamaica will ensure that the affected population in that country also receive timely assistance following the hurricane.

Constraints

Damage to the local airport in Grenada are impeding the delivery of relief items by air. As the approach lights at the airport are down, only daylight operations are available, and there is limited fuel to refuel incoming aircraft. Aircraft safety requirements also limit the amount of relief items that can be sent during a single flight. Transportation on the island is hindered by a lack of fuel. In addition, although most of the roads in the country are in good condition, downed trees and power lines are making transportation difficult.

Shelter

Objective: 2,000 beneficiary families have been able to return home as a result of the provision of temporary shelter materials.

Progress/Achievements (activities implemented within this objective)

The Grenada Red Cross Society is currently focusing on providing assistance in shelter management in some of the 47 shelters located throughout the island, and on providing first aid in shelters to those in need. An unknown number of Red Cross volunteers are operating in shelters, and the coordination team is seeking to contact them. Most of the shelters are not being officially managed, but management issues are being dealt with by the community. The priorities at this time are for water, food and sanitation and personal hygiene supplies. It is necessary to carry out registration of people housed in the shelters. At the moment, the total number of persons in shelters is unknown. Additionally, there are private homes that are essentially functioning as shelters for upwards of three families.

The airlift of relief items from the PADRU warehouses includes 2,000 units of plastic sheeting, which will be distributed to beneficiary families, according to their needs. An additional 500 rolls of plastic sheeting have been received from OFDA.

Impact

Between 5,000 and 8,000 people have taken refuge in 47 shelters throughout the island. Red Cross volunteers are working in these shelters, although there is currently a lack of coordination given that there is no telephone communication and limited cell phone coverage.

Constraints

Provision of relief items is hampered by the debris blocking roads, together with an increasingly acute fuel shortage.

Reconstruction (Grenada Red Cross Society headquarters)

Objective: The Grenada Red Cross Society will have been supported to rebuild their headquarters.

Progress/Achievements (activities implemented within this objective)

The roof of the Grenada Red Cross Society headquarters has been completely destroyed by the hurricane and most of the contents of the building have been ruined by the rain. The National Society is currently working from a room in one of the shelters where the emergency operations centre has relocated.

Family linking

Objective: People with missing family members will have received Red Cross assistance in family linking.

Progress/Achievements (activities implemented within this objective)

The Caribbean Broadcasting Corporation (CBC), headquartered in Barbados, has expanded its 9.00 am service to broadcasting to Grenada, at the direction of the Cabinet of Barbados. It is boosting the power of its transmitter to effectively cover the entire island. CBC has also established a toll free number for Grenadians to telephone the station and broadcast messages to their relatives and friends. The number is 1-800-744-8222. In Tobago, Radio Tambrin will also be broadcasting official information to Grenada and its dependencies.

Constraints

Although the Grenada Red Cross Society has expertise in family linking, damage sustained to the headquarters and to communications systems have so far prevented the National Society from working in this area.

Strengthening of preparedness and response

Objective: The capacity of the Grenada Red Cross Society and vulnerable communities in disaster response and preparedness will have been strengthened.

Progress/Achievements (activities implemented within this objective)

Activities towards this objective will be undertaken once the emergency relief phase of the operation has been completed and resources can be dedicated towards rehabilitation.

Federation Coordination

The Federation is working closely with the Caribbean Disaster Emergency Response Agency (CDERA) and forms part of the Eastern Caribbean Donor Group for Disaster Management. The core donor group includes the following organizations: the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO), the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), USAID/OFDA, the Department for International Development (DFID), the European Union (EU), the Caribbean Development Bank (CDB), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the World Bank (WB) and OXFAM. Support agencies include the Inter American Development Bank (IADB), the Organization of American States (OAS), the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), the International Telecommunications Union (ITU) and the Caribbean Planning for Adaptation to Global Climate Change (CPACC).

The Federation is also coordinating with Télécommunications Sans Frontières. A team of four persons from this organization left for Grenada on 11 September, with specialists in satellite telecommunications. A second team of two persons that was pre-positioned for Jamaica is moving to Grenada. Their role will be to assist NGOs and search and rescue teams with satellite communications. In addition, they will be assisting the population to allow them to communicate with their relatives abroad. In addition, communications specialists from OCHA/UNDAC are due to arrive in Grenada on 13 September to support the emergency operations centre.

Coordination is also being ensured with OXFAM which has a representative on the ground in Grenada. OXFAM will take responsibility for the water component of relief efforts and the Federation will provide support through complementary activities in the area of water and sanitation.

Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement -- Principles and initiatives

- Relief activities being carried out are based on the Fundamental Principles of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement.
- Beneficiary selection criteria focus on the vulnerability of those affected.
- Relief operations are being conducted with respect for the culture of the beneficiaries, ensuring gender sensitivity and prioritizing assistance to children and the elderly.
- Activities are based on the SPHERE Project humanitarian charter and the code of conduct for emergency response.
- Transparency is being ensured through the production of regular reports and news bulletins.
- All objectives put forward in the appeal are in line with Strategy 2010, as well as the Strategy for the Movement and the Principles and Rules of the Movement.

Communications – Advocacy and Public Information

The provision of information influencing public opinion regarding the Red Cross is a key activity under the current circumstances. From this point of view, relations with the media are particularly important in order to convey the message of the Red Cross Movement. An information and reporting delegate has been deployed to Jamaica and another information delegate has been deployed to Grenada as part of the FACT team. In addition, the regional information delegate from the Lima Regional Delegation is being deployed to Cuba. This information network will work to ensure that a strategic plan in communications is designed and implemented. Through regularly produced news articles and reports, the Movement will strongly advocate in favour of the respect of human dignity and the Fundamental Principles.