

CARIBBEAN: HURRICANE GEORGES

appeal no: 29/98
2 October 1998

***THIS APPEAL SEEKS CHF 10,221,000
IN CASH, KIND AND SERVICES
TO ASSIST 272,500 BENEFICIARIES FOR 6 MONTHS***

Summary

The International Federation launched a Preliminary Appeal on 23 September for CHF 2,400,000 to provide immediate relief assistance to victims of Hurricane *Georges*. This Appeal replaces the Preliminary Appeal. Commencing on September 20, Hurricane *Georges* ripped through the Caribbean with intense winds at times approaching speeds of 150 mph, and after six days left more than 300 people dead and nearly 300,000 homeless. More than one million people have been severely affected. Unknown hundreds of impoverished people are missing, possibly dead, some buried hastily by their communities in unmarked graves while others have perished in mudslides or been washed out to sea in raging floodwaters. Many more are now at risk from disease, contaminated drinking water, food shortages and lack of adequate shelter. In the worst-hurricane season of many years, the danger remains until the end of October, at the latest. The International Federation and its member National Societies are concentrating efforts in the worst-affected countries in the region, particularly the Dominican Republic, which bore the brunt of the storm. The turnover on relief arriving in Santo Domingo is so high that Red Cross warehouses are almost empty and over 100 tons of relief goods have been distributed by thousands of Red Cross volunteers. Haiti suffered from terrible floods and landslides. Red Cross actions are also being carried out in Cuba and the Eastern Caribbean small-island states of Antigua and Barbuda, and St. Kitts and Nevis. A team of 11 delegates is now in place in Haiti, Dominican Republic and the East Caribbean and there is very close co-operation with the Participating National Societies of Germany, the Netherlands, Spain, UK and USA.

The Disaster

Over half the national territory of the Dominican Republic has been affected by this calamity and it will be some years before the country fully recovers from its economic losses and damage to

infrastructure. According to the United Nations Office for the Co-ordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UN-OCHA):

The agricultural sector was particularly affected. Approximately, 80% of the country's green areas has suffered major/irreparable damage. Most of the banana and plantain plantations around Santiago, and on the route to Santo Domingo, have been destroyed. Preliminary reports show major loss of yields of basic foodstuffs, such as rice, banana and cassava.

Some 290,000 people are still in 711 temporary shelters across the country and sanitary conditions in the shelters are a major cause of concern. In Barahona and San Juan de la Maguana some 20,000 people are homeless. At least 220 people are known dead, and 551 injured. Major damage has been inflicted in La Romana, La Altagracia, San Pedro de Macoris, Barahona and Bahoruco Provinces. Access to many communities continues to be difficult because of destroyed bridges, roads, and downed trees.

In Haiti, Hurricane *Georges* inflicted most damage through the heavy rains and storm surges which accompanied the weather system as it crossed the border with the Dominican Republic. Most of the principal cities on the coast are almost at sea level and very vulnerable to flooding. Among the worst-affected were Cap-Haitien, Jacmel, Gonaïves, Cayes and Port-au-Prince. Port-au-Prince and its region suffered at least 80 dead and missing. The official number of fatalities is 87. The country's water supply has suffered major disruption. The Artibonite region, the major rice growing area, continues to be threatened by the overflow from the Pelegré Dam which is at its highest level ever, according to UN-OCHA, at 50% above its planned capacity. Conditions in the slum areas of major cities have sunk to extreme depths of human misery with no proper sanitation or management of waste; conditions are ripe for major outbreaks of disease. In the town of Leogane, over 20,000 people have been displaced from the surrounding countryside by floodwaters. According to UN-OCHA, 33% to 75% of crops have been destroyed in the north-east and the north-west where some 300,000 people have been affected.

Reports received from the Cuban Red Cross, indicate that almost 500,000 people were evacuated as Hurricane *Georges* bore down on the drought-affected eastern provinces of the country on 23-24 September. Torrential rains continued on September 25. More than 900 shelters were in use for over 200,000 people. Extensive damage has been caused to agriculture, housing, communications and electricity supply. The worst-affected areas were Guantanamo, Granma, Tunas, Holguin, Santiago de Cuba, Camaguey, Villa Clara, Cienfuegos, Sancti Spiritus and Matanzas.

The Eastern Caribbean which also took the worst of the 1995 record-breaking hurricane season, was the first to suffer *Georges'* onslaught. The worst-affected island was St. Kitts where there were five confirmed deaths and 1,440 homes destroyed. On Antigua, damage was less but 368 homes were destroyed and over 1,000 damaged.

The Response so far

Red Cross Action •

Dominican Republic

Over 100 tons of relief supplies have been handled by the Dominican Republic Red Cross with the support of the Regional Delegation. Seven plane-loads of relief goods have been processed for distribution by the Red Cross since last Friday including one from American Red Cross. Distributed items included 15 tons of food, 60 tons of plastic sheeting and 2,000 "clean-up" kits. Red Cross warehouses are practically empty given the high turnover of goods received. The Government has assigned a lead role to the Red Cross for relief distribution throughout the affected areas including much of the aid which is not specifically in response to the Preliminary Emergency Appeal (in-kind assistance has so far arrived from the American and British Red Cross Societies).

A contingent of 3,350 Red Cross disaster workers are in the field. The Red Cross is playing a crucial co-ordination role for other NGO's and is utilising volunteers from many other reputable organisations including local Church and community groups, Peace Corps volunteers, and unarmed soldiers. The Regional Delegation team in Santo Domingo now numbers seven, with delegates from Spain, the Netherlands, Colombia, USA and Norway.

A system of registering people in shelters and taking family notification messages but no disaster welfare inquiries are presently being accepted.

Haiti

A two-person team from the International Federation's Disaster Response department joined a Netherlands Red Cross delegate at the Port-au-Prince Federation office on Sunday last. A task force has been established with the Haitian Red Cross which has been evaluating the needs in some of the worst-affected areas. Little comprehensive information is yet available on Red Cross action in the provinces but support is being given to shelters in the Port-au-Prince area and the Red Cross ambulance service brought all the injured to hospital. Red Cross is not handling disaster welfare inquiries.

Cuba

In Cuba, the Red Cross mobilised 8,700 volunteers to assist in the evacuation of almost half a million people. It has been supporting the 900 evacuation shelters with emergency first aid and carrying out search and rescue operations in the flooded areas. It is also targeting food and medical assistance at particularly vulnerable groups such as the elderly, disabled, and those without shelter. Cuban Red Cross is also meeting the needs of 500 Haitian boat people in two of the worst-affected areas, Guantanamo and Camaguey. Red Cross can handle disaster welfare inquiries but communications with the affected areas remain difficult.

St. Kitts and Nevis

Last weekend the Antigua and Barbuda Red Cross Societies sent a team of six, including a British Red Cross logistician, to assist the St. Kitts and Nevis Red Cross Societies in carrying out a detailed needs assessment on the island where some 600 vulnerable families have either lost their homes or have seen them badly damaged. Plastic sheeting distribution began this week for 1,000 families. Emergency feeding and first aid was provided by Red Cross in the shelters. Red Cross can handle disaster welfare inquiries.

Antigua and Barbuda

Distribution is underway of plastic sheeting to 500 families whose homes were severely affected by the storm. Red Cross previously provided first aid and 2,000 meals to the shelters; 105 cots; 200 sets of toiletries; 100 comfort kits; and water purification tablets. Red Cross can handle disaster welfare inquiries.

Co-ordination •

Co-ordination with other agencies is close. Given the needs, this is especially important in the Dominican Republic and Haiti. In the Dominican Republic, the Red Cross meets daily with representatives from the government, including the army and civil defence. It also co-ordinates the action of a broad coalition of some 35 NGO and community groups. In Haiti, the Red Cross is consulting fully with the government authorities and PAHO/WHO in particular, to ensure that its capacity is deployed to the best advantage on behalf of the most vulnerable.

The Intended Operation

Assessment of Needs •

Needs assessments have been carried out by the five Operating National Societies. In the case of the Dominican Republic, in addition to on-site visits and interviews with affected families, this also involved low-level flights over the stricken areas. Red Cross also has access to a wide variety of information from other sources, including the governments in the region, PAHO/WHO, UN-OCHA, UNDP, CDERA, Civil Defence and Church bodies. Immediate financial and material contributions are sought to provide emergency and rehabilitation assistance to a minimum of 250,000 people.

Immediate Needs •

Immediate needs include drinking water, food, shelter, medical supplies, vector control, clothing and blankets. A balance is being struck between the needs which are being met sufficiently by other organisations and those which are best met by the Red Cross. For example, there is no need for the Red Cross in Haiti to become involved in emergency feeding and water distribution as other organisations are looking after this.

Anticipated Later Needs •

The overwhelming need is clearly going to be in the area of rehabilitation of the housing stock especially for families who were previously living in low-lying areas vulnerable to flooding and storm surges. Many of these families lost everything. In some communities, almost all zinc roofs were lost in the storm. Many partially damaged homes are in need of repair.

Red Cross Objectives •

The overall goal of this operation is to reduce the present high level of vulnerability of people affected by Hurricane *Georges* in the five affected countries of Dominican Republic, Haiti, Cuba, St. Kitts and Nevis, and Antigua and Barbuda through a well-targeted response to the emergency and rehabilitation needs.

- to continue first aid and medical support to the shelters;
- to support feeding programmes to the homeless;
- to ensure supplies of drinking water;
- to ensure emergency shelter;
- to support repairs/ rehabilitation of low-income housing stock;
- to respond to disaster tracing inquiries;
- to support vector control;

National Society/Federation Plan of Action

Beneficiary Figures Emergency Phase: October - December 1998 •

The Hurricane *Georges* relief operation will assist a total of 200,000 affected people (40,000 families living in shelters and/or with houses partially/totally destroyed) distributed as follows:

Antigua (2,500 people)

Prioritised areas: Five Islands, Bolands, Crabbs, Muck Pond and Liberta.

St.Kitts (2,500 people)

Prioritised Areas: Basseterre and other affected communities island-wide;

Dominican Republic (130,000 people):

Prioritised Areas: Communities from provinces of La Romana, San Pedro de Macoris, Distrito Nacional, San Juan, Baoruco and Barahona.

Haiti (50,000 people):

Prioritised Areas: Port-au-Prince, South East (Jacmel), North (Cap Haitien) and Artibonite.

Cuba (15,000 people):

Prioritised Areas: Communities from provinces of Guantanamo, Holguin and Santiago de Cuba

ON-GOING AND PLANNED ACTIVITIES:

- distribution of emergency relief supplies to affected population;
- evaluation and prioritisation of immediate needs;
- shelter management and support self-organisation of homeless population;
- sanitation/health activities in shelters managed by Red Cross, including latrine improvements and potable water distribution (water purification tablets and water purification units);
- distribution of basic food parcels;
- distribution of "clean-up" kits for household cleansing;
- distribution of mattresses and blankets;
- equipping first aid health posts with basic medicaments such as analgesics, anti-malaria drugs, eye ointment, vitamin A and Oral Rehydration Salts;
- vector control with Red Cross volunteers working with PAHO/ Ministries of Health in spraying stagnant water with agents such as Abate;
- distribution of plastic sheeting for shelter inhabitants whose homes suffered partial damage;
- co-ordinating efforts with other NGOs, authorities and other official agencies;
- implement a relief supplies reception system at the points of arrival (airports and ports);
- prepare warehouses and distribution points according to standard Federation logistic and relief procedures;
- establish and maintain a system of radio-communication and ready contact with branches in prioritised areas;
- co-ordinate regional fund-raising effort and support international fund-raising efforts;
- handling of disaster welfare inquiries as capacity improves in Dominican Republic.

Note: The Red Cross is co-ordinating with other agencies, especially local NGOs, in order to identify and mobilise human and material resources, transport and storage facilities for the implementation of this plan of action. Quantities of plastic sheeting, drinking water, latrines, mattresses, blankets, basic drugs and other relief items are being provided by other agencies, NGOs, private foundations, governmental agencies and private donors.

Phase Two: Rehabilitation and Capacity Building - October 1998 - March 1999 •

TARGET POPULATION: 72,500 people (14,500 families) living in houses damaged by *Georges*.

- post-emergency assessment and re-evaluation of rehabilitation needs;
- identify beneficiaries in prioritised communities;
- maintain proper management and self-organisation of residents in shelters still co-ordinated by Red Cross;
- distribution of rehabilitation supplies to affected households in prioritised communities: roofing (zinc sheets); nails for zinc roofing; timber supplies; carpentry tools;
- maintain co-ordination with other agencies and authorities to avoid duplication of efforts;

- maintain regular contact with media and support to global and regional fund-raising efforts;
- disaster preparedness training at National Society and community level;
- evaluation of the operation/review of 1998 hurricane season and implications for regional disaster preparedness programme.

Capacity of the National Societies •

The five National Societies concerned have all previous experience in handling relief operations. The largest emergency relief effort ever launched by a National Society in the Caribbean is now underway in the Dominican Republic where 3,500 volunteers have been mobilised. In Cuba, the evacuation phase is reported to have involved some 8,000 volunteers. The National Societies of Haiti, Antigua and Barbuda and St. Kitts and Nevis have a good, nation-wide presence in their respective territories. The response capacity of the region generally has improved in recent years with the exposure of many Red Cross staff and volunteers to disaster preparedness techniques.

Present Capacity of the Federation in the Caribbean •

The International Federation, with the National Societies of the region, recently decided to re-locate the Regional Delegation to Santo Domingo. This has saved time and resources in allowing an operational base to be built up quickly in response to the present crisis. A team of delegates is now in place from a broad range of National Societies operating out of Santo Domingo, Port-au-Prince, St. Kitts and Antigua. Support is also available from the Disaster Preparedness Unit in Kingston which has not yet re-located to Santo Domingo.

The National Societies in the region have also launched a major fund-raising initiative in support of the operation. A Caribbean-wide television appeal was broadcast yesterday and a fund-raising Radiothon is being run on 14 October by the Barbados-based Caribbean News Agency with the support of the Barbados Red Cross. To-date, individual fund-raising initiatives have also been launched by National Societies in Jamaica, St. Lucia, St. Vincent and Guyana (despite its own on-going relief operation in response to the *El Nino*-caused drought). This activity is taking place within the context of the Federation's regional resource development programme. The regional office of Cable and Wireless responded quickly to the needs in the Eastern Caribbean with a donation of \$50,000. Other corporate interest is being expressed.

Evaluation •

It is anticipated that a thorough in-depth evaluation of the operation will take place early next year. This will be linked to an overall review of the 1998 hurricane season. It was a review of the 1995 hurricane season which led to the development of the regional disaster preparedness programme.

Budget summary

See attached Annexes for details.

Conclusion

The needs are growing with each passing day. The National Societies involved in this operation are stretched well-beyond their normal resources. There are real fears that unless strong remedial measures are taken soon, the plight of those left without access to the basic necessities of life will worsen dramatically. Donors are advised that funds are now badly needed to run this complex and difficult operation. For further information please contact the Americas Department: Santiago Gil, +41 22 730 4391 or gil@ifrc.org; Darrel Diedrichs, +41 22 730 4258 or diedrich@ifrc.org; or Denis McClean, +41 22 730 4428.

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APPEAL No. 29/98
HURRICANE *GEORGES*

Annex 1

BUDGET SUMMARY

<u>RELIEF ITEMS</u>		CHF
Food parcels	2,606,000.00	
Hygiene parcels	1,016,000.00	
Water containers	138,000.00	
Relief items (<i>clothing/cooking sets</i>)	1,488,000.00	
Medical supplies	45,000.00	
Shelter material/construction	2,816,000	
Labelling/packing costs	42,000.00	
<u>CAPITAL EQUIPMENT</u>		
Radio/communication equipment	150,000.00	
Office equipment (computers/printers)	30,000.00	
<u>TOTAL SUPPLIES</u>		<u>8,331,000.00</u>
Transport of goods	215,000.00	
Vehicle fleet maintenance/leasing	177,000	
Storage	5,000.00	
Personnel: 10 delegates	660,000.00	
Personnel: national staff	220,000.00	
Training (Shelter management/DP)	41,000.00	
Administrative expenses	95,000.00	
Travel & related expenses	83,000.00	
Information & visibility	55,000.00	
Monitoring & evaluation	39,000.00	
Secretariat support	300,000.00	
<u>TOTAL NEEDS IN CASH / SERVICES</u>		<u>1,890,000.00</u>
<u>TOTAL APPEAL BUDGET</u>		<u>10,221,000</u>
LESS CONTRIBUTIONS RECEIVED (1/10)		1,204,000.00
<u>NET AMOUNT REQUESTED</u>		<u>9,017,000.00</u>

Appeal 29/98
BUDGET SUMMARY

Annex 2
CHF

	Dominican Republic	Haiti	Antigua	St Kitts and Nevis	Cuba	TOTAL
<u>EMERGENCY PHASE</u>						
N° of beneficiaries	130,000	50,000	2,500	2,500	15,000	200,000
Families	26,000	10,000	500.00	500.00	3,000	40,000
Length of operation	3 months	3 months	3 months	3 months	3 months	3 months
Food parcels	2,260,000		17,000	44,000	285,000	2,606,000
Water container/Jerrycans	113,000		11,000		14,000	138,000
Hygiene parcels	938,000			3,000	75,000	1,016,000
Relief items (clothing & cooking sets)	788,000	405,000	144,000	1,000	150,000	1,488,000
Shelter material (roofing mat./tools)				218,000		218,000
Medical supplies	35,000	7,000			3,000	45,000
Packing costs	30,000	12,000				42,000
Radio/communication equipment	150,000					150,000
Office equipment	24,000	5,000		1,000		30,000
Transport of goods/clearance costs	150,000	50,000			15,000	215,000
Vehicle maintenance	23,000	10,000		2,000	2,000	37,000
Vehicle lease/transport	120,000	20,000				140,000
Storage		5,000				5,000
Personnel: delegates	240,000	60,000				300,000
Personnel: national staff	60,000	20,000	8,000		5,000	93,000
Training		5,000		10,000		15,000
General & Admin. expenditures	20,000	5,000	12,000	31,000		68,000
Travel & accomodation	40,000	10,000		3,000		53,000
Information/visibility	25,000	3,000			2,000	30,000
Monitoring/Evaluation	25,000	2,000				27,000
Total Emergency Phase	5,041,000	619,000	192,000	313,000	551,000	6,716,000

REHABILITATION PHASE						
	Dominican Republic	Haiti	Antigua	St Kitts and Nevis	Cuba	TOTAL
N° of beneficiaries	50,000	15,000			7,500	72,500
Families	10,000	3,000			1,500	14,500
Length of operation	6 months	6 months			6 months	6 months
Houses repairs (construction material)	1,840,000	276,000			276,000	2,392,000
Rehabilitation of shelters in communities	140,000				60,000	200,000
Draining equipment		6,000				6,000
Training	24,000				2,000	26,000
Personnel: delegates	270,000	90,000				360,000
Personnel: national staff	100,000	27,000				127,000
General & Admin. expenditures	18,000	9,000				27,000
Travel & accomodation	15,000	15,000				30,000
Information/visibility	25,000					25,000
Monitoring/Evaluation	10,000	2,000				12,000
TOTAL	2,442,000	425,000	0.00	0.00	338,000	3,205,000

SECRETARIAT SUPPORT						300,000
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TOTAL BUDGET	7,483,000	1,044,000	192,000	313,000	889,000	10,221,000
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