

INFORMATION BULLETIN



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

BAHAMAS: HURRICANE JEANNE

28 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

This Information Bulletin (no. 01/2004) is being issued based on the needs described below reflecting the information available at this time. As information from further updates and details from assessment reports becomes available, the Federation will consider international support through an Appeal. A DREF allocation of CHF 100,000 has been released and unearmarked funds to repay DREF are needed.

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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>

The Situation

Hurricane Jeanne made landfall in the Bahamas on Saturday, 25 September, damaging more than 100 homes. Jeanne, a category 3 hurricane, struck the Bahamas just three weeks after another category 3 storm, Hurricane Frances, which caused two deaths and affected more than 8,000 people on Grand Bahama Island. There are no reports of deaths or serious injuries in the wake of Hurricane Jeanne, but flood waters rose to more than six feet in some areas and roofs were blown off of houses. Hurricane Jeanne impacted the northwestern Bahamas, including Abaco, Andros, Berry, Bimini, Eleuthera, Exuma, Grand Bahama and New Providence islands.

Hurricane Jeanne has caused significant the most significant damages on the Grand Bahama and Abaco islands. The Secretary General of the Bahamas Red Cross travelled to Grand Bahama Island yesterday, 27 September, and conducted a preliminary assessment of damages. Based on this assessment, it became clear that damages from Hurricane Jeanne are much greater than those caused by Hurricane Frances. Almost all of the areas affected by Hurricane Jeanne are the same areas that were struck by Hurricane Frances, and many homes that were weakened

by Frances have now been more seriously damaged by Jeanne. All along the coast of Grand Bahama Island, homes have been flooded by storm surge. Electricity service has been cut and water supplies are limited in many areas.

In 8 Mile Rock, the largest community on Grand Bahama Island, over 75 percent of the homes have suffered serious structural damage, with roofs partially or completely torn off. All shelters in 8 Mile Rock sustained structural damages and/or flooding. An unknown number of families were relocated and remain in shelters. The eastern half of the island has been cut off by storm surges and reports indicate significant flooding of homes, particularly along the coastline. In the city of Freeport on Grand Bahama Island, the airport was flooded but was reopened on Sunday.

Communications were cut off with Abaco Island after Jeanne's eye passed directly over the island on Saturday, bringing 115 mile per hour winds and heavy rains. Preliminary reports indicate that the most populated town of Marsh Harbour has been significantly flooded. Officials report that about 700 people had taken refuge at an emergency shelter that was set up in a local school. The primarily Haitian settlements of Pigeon Pea and the Mud are completely submerged in four to five feet of water. Families in these areas are staying in shelters or with relatives. Cooper's Town and Dundas Town have also been greatly damaged.

Red Cross and Red Crescent action

The Bahamas Red Cross (BRC) has been implementing a response operation following Hurricane Frances, which has included distributions of relief goods in the northern islands of the Bahamas Islands chain. Distributions were put on hold as Hurricane Jeanne approached the country since the focus turned to preparations for shelter management. The Bahamas Red Cross is responsible for shelter management and first aid services in the shelters that have been opened on Grand Bahama Island and Abaco Island. The BRC has also been in communication with the Federation's Pan American Disaster Response Unit (PADRU), the National Emergency Management Agency, and the U.S. Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance (OFDA). PADRU has deployed a delegate to the country to assist in the relief effort following this latest storm.

The Secretary General of the BRC has carried out an assessment mission to Grand Bahama Island, and an additional needs assessment is scheduled to be carried out by the Secretary General and a disaster management delegate from PADRU. Assessments carried out thus far indicate that up to 5,000 families in the hardest hit areas are in need of immediate assistance: 3,000 families on Grand Bahama Island and 2,000 families on Abaco Island. The immediate needs are for food parcels, tarpaulins, hygiene kits, water containers and kitchen sets. Water purification tablets may also be needed.

Given the extent of the damage, particularly in light of the ongoing relief effort following Hurricane Frances, the Bahamas Red Cross will require additional support from the Federation particularly in the area of relief, logistics and telecommunications.

All International Federation Operations seek to adhere to the Code of Conduct and are committed to the Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Disaster Response (SPHERE Project) in delivering assistance to the most vulnerable.

For support to or for further information concerning Federation operations in this or other countries, please access the Federation website at <http://www.ifrc.org>

For longer-term programmes, please refer to the Federation's Annual Appeal.

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