

# DREF operation update



International Federation  
of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

## Belize: Floods

**DREF operation n° MDRBZ001**  
**GLIDE n°TC-2008-000078-BLZ**  
**Update n° 01**  
**11 June, 2008**

The International Federation's Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF) is a source of un-earmarked money created by the Federation in 1985 to ensure that immediate financial support is available for Red Cross and Red Crescent response to emergencies. The DREF is a vital part of the International Federation's disaster response system and increases the ability of national societies to respond to disasters.

**Period covered by this update:** 4 June to 11 June, 2008.

**Summary:** CHF 90,000 was originally allocated on 4 June, 2008 with an additional CHF 69,000 requested and allocated from the Federation's Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF) on 10 June, 2008 to support the National Society in delivering assistance to some 2,500 beneficiaries, as well as to replenish pre-positioned stocks.

Torrential rainfall as a result of Tropical Storm Arthur hit Belize during the end of May, 2008 affecting some 10,000 people. To date, the Belize Red Cross Society (BRCS) has delivered emergency relief to some 380 families representing more than 1,900 people. In addition, the BRCS continues to carry out assessments in the affected areas. This operation is expected to be implemented in three months, and completed by 4 September, 2008. In line with Federation reporting standards, the Final Report (narrative and financial) is due 90 days after the end of the operation (by 4 December, 2008).

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**Belize Red Cross carries out assessments in Dangriga.**

**Source: International Federation**

## The situation

Tropical Storm Arthur formed on Saturday 31 May, 2008 and made landfall in northern Belize on the Yucatan Peninsula before becoming the first named storm of the Atlantic Hurricane Season. The rains from the tropical storm compounded the effects of tropical storm Alma which had developed in the Eastern Pacific on 27 May. Together, storms Alma and Arthur brought approximately 10 inches of rain across Belize within 36 hours, causing flash floods in low lying areas.

The National Emergency Management Organization (NEMO) and the Belize Red Cross Society (BRCS) have conducted assessments in the northern districts of Orange Walk and Corozal. Preliminary findings from Orange Walk estimate that there are 105 affected families in five villages: San Estevan, Carmelita, Black Water Creek, Trial Farm, and Douglas. In Corozal, 144 families have been identified as being in need of assistance in the villages of Santa Clara, San Roman, San Victor, San Narciso, Louisville, Caledonia and San Pedro.



**Affected family in Belize.**  
**Source: BRCS**

Complete and detailed assessments are yet to be finalized, due to the fact that flood water took long to recede. The assessments of the Belize Red Cross Society as well as those of other organizations, show that people in Hope Creek, Sara Wee, Valley Community, Alta Vista, Mullins River, Gales Point Manatee, Sittee River and Hopkins have suffered direct impacts from the floods, such as damages and losses.

In most parts of the country the water levels are now receding. However, reports indicate that the levels in some places in the north are still rising, which means that the number of affected villages and communities may still change.

Water systems are reported to be intact at the pump stations, but have suffered damages along delivery lines. In addition, communities supplied by rudimentary systems are reporting shortages. Contamination of surface and ground water systems remain of great concern to health officials. The health sector also warns of possible increases of water/vector born diseases if early mitigation strategies are not employed.

Safe water will be provided by BRCS. The BRCS will support health authorities in hygiene promotion and vector control. In addition, psychosocial support will be integrated into the response, whilst training sessions on Community Based First Aid and HIV/AIDS and STI awareness will be conducted in the affected communities.

## **Coordination and partnerships**

The BRCS is working closely with government (NEMO), Partner National Societies (PNS) present in Belize and NGO partners to coordinate a timely and efficient response. Emphasis is being placed on avoidance of duplication as well as ensuring that basic human needs are being met.

The BRCS received a direct contribution of USD 25,000 from the United States Agency for International Development and the Office of US Foreign Disaster Assistance (USAID/OFDA) as well as 2,000 hygiene kits, 1,500 blankets, 500 Jerry Cans and 100 rolls of plastic sheeting.

## **Red Cross and Red Crescent action**

The BRCS has made substantial progress in implementing its Plan of Action (PoA). The progress towards objectives listed below include the activities earmarked with DREF funding, and it should be noted that the BRCS is carrying out additional activities to those listed here as a result of funding secured from other donors outside the International Federation's DREF.

The BRCS continues to receive in-country support from the Norwegian Red Cross via two in-country representatives working on DIPECHO programming.

The Mexican Red Cross has deployed a team of 12 volunteers trained in assessments and distributions to support the operation, made possible with funding support from the American Red Cross. The Pan American Disaster Response Unit (PADRU) deployed a Disaster Management delegate and a RIT member specialized in logistics to support its operation.

## Progress towards objectives

### Relief distributions (food and basic non-food items)

**Objective: 500 families (2,500 beneficiaries) will benefit from the provision of relief items to recover from the effects of the Tropical Storm.**

Distributions are carried out according to assessment and selection criteria that identify actual needs and vulnerable groups, and are based on careful registration and a process that controls, monitors, and records the movement of the items.

#### Progress:

The BRCS has carried out initial family assessments with more than 380 families. Teams of BRCS continue to target affected communities as well as address immediate needs of beneficiaries. Points of distribution have been established at Corozal, Orange Walk, and Stann Creek branches to carry out assessment and distribution cycles.

To date, the following distributions have been accomplished:

Branch	Number of families	Number of persons	Relief Items
Corozal	65	354	12 Tarpaulins 24 Kitchen sets 115 Hygiene kits 125 Blankets
Orange Walk	114	567	1,589 meals 73 Food package 50 tarpaulins 39 Hygiene kits 61 blankets 6 Baby kist
Stann Creek	201	1,050	800 meals 175 food packages 4 tarpaulins 50 kitchen kits 90 hygiene kits 234 blankets 30 baby kits 91 Jerry Cans 87,000 Liters of drinking water
Total	380	1,971	

At the same time, the BRCS promoted a safe and healthy environment during the relief phase of the operation, as volunteers of the BRCS provided support to the activities that were undertaken in shelters run and managed by the government. The BRCS delivered meals and initial relief supplies to those in shelters (accounted for in the distribution summary). As of 9 June, 2008, all emergency shelters are closed; BRCS is integrating the needs of those families that were in shelters into the overall relief plan.

#### Challenges:

As mentioned above, due to the fact that flood waters took long to recede in Stann Creek, detailed assessments are yet to be completed. This means that the number of beneficiaries can still be subject to change. Possible changes herein will be reflected in the next update.

## Emergency Health

**Objective:** The health risks of the emergency on the affected population is reduced through the provision of preventive and community-level education to 500 families (2,500 beneficiaries) in 3 months.

This update contains several new activities that focus on HIV and AIDS awareness-raising.

### Activities planned:

- In collaboration with the Ministry of Health, conduct clean-up campaigns in six villages;
- Distribute 1,000 treated mosquito nets to 500 families with instructions;
- Produce and broadcast public service announcements to inform about vector control;
- Distribute flyers with health information;
- Train six villages on Basic Community First Aid;
- Carry out HIV and AIDS and Sexually Transmitted Infections (STI) awareness activities, and stigma & discrimination and HIV and AIDS in emergencies sessions in six villages;
- Print and post 500 posters on HIV and AIDS and STI awareness;
- Distribute condoms in shelters and at HIV and AIDS, and STI information sessions;
- Integrate psycho-social support awareness sessions in cooperation with Ministry of Education.

### Progress:

Condom distribution in shelters took place in various communities. The rest of the activities in this area should commence within the coming weeks.

### Challenges:

It was noted that Public Health programming after Hurricane Dean was delayed and that attention should be placed on ensuring that planned activities above commence as soon as possible for this operation.

## Emergency Health

**Objective:** The risk of waterborne and water related diseases will be reduced through the provision of safe water, adequate sanitation as well as hygiene promotion to 500 families (or 2,500 beneficiaries) in targeted areas as appropriate to the operation for three months.

### Activities planned:

- Assess the existing coverage with a view of ensuring availability of an adequate water supply
- Produce safe drinking water for 500 families for one month
- Distribute water purification tablets to 500 families for two months
- Distribute 1,000 jerry cans for 500 families for safe storage of water
- Print and post 1,000 posters on hygiene promotion

### Progress:

After assessments of water needs, a water and sanitation operation has been on the ground since 3 June, 2008, with RIT trained BRCS volunteers overseeing the operation. To date, more than 87,000 liters of water have been distributed to affected communities.

### Challenges:

There are no challenges identified within this objective.

## 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

### Global Agenda Goals:

- Reduce the numbers of deaths, injuries and impact

out four broad goals to meet the Federation's mission to "improve the lives of vulnerable people by mobilizing the power of humanity".

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

### For further information specifically related to this operation please contact:

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