

Operations update



International Federation
of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

CARIBBEAN: Tropical Storm Noel

Emergency appeal n° MDR49002
GLIDE no. TC-000198-
BHS/CUB/DOM/HTI;
Operations update n° 3
31 October 2008

Period covered by this Operations Update: Period covered: 27 February to 28 October 2008.

Previous appeal target and timeframe: CHF 1,725,000 (USD 1,543,586 or EUR 1,045,897) for 6 months to assist 52,995 beneficiaries.

Revised budget: CHF 1,750,541 (EUR 1,199,000 or USD 1,528,857)

Appeal coverage: 100%.

[<click here to view the attached Revised Emergency Appeal Budget,](#)
[or here to go to contact details >](#)

An Interim Financial report will be published shortly.

Appeal history:

- This Emergency Appeal was initially launched on a preliminary basis on 1 November 2007 for CHF 785,000 (USD 677,308 or EUR 469,217) for six months to assist 15,000 beneficiaries.
- A total of CHF 480,000 (USD 414,150 or EUR 286,909) was allocated from the Federation's Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF) to support this operation (CHF 230,000 for the Dominican Republic, CHF 150,000 for Haiti and CHF 100,000 for the Bahamas).
- The appeal was revised on 7 November 2007 to CHF 1,462,103 (USD 1,261,521 or EUR 873,941) for 6 months to assist 52,995 beneficiaries (10,599 families) **in the Bahamas, Cuba, the Dominican Republic and Haiti**. Included is an increase of an additional 2,000 families affected by tropical storm Olga in the Dominican Republic which was made possible by bilateral contributions.
- On 27 February 2008, an Operations Update no.2 featured a *second revised budget*, increasing the budget to CHF 1,725,000 (USD 1,543,586 or EUR 1,045,897).
- **This Operations Update features a Revised Appeal budget for CHF 1,750,541 (EUR 1,199,000 or USD 1,528,857) and the timeframe of the operation is hereby extended for an additional ten months (until 28 February 2009) to scale up the response capacities of the Cuban Red Cross (CRC) and the Dominican Red Cross (DRC).**

Summary:

The countries of the Bahamas, Cuba, the Dominican Republic and Haiti were seriously affected by tropical storm Noel from 29 October to 2 November 2007. The National Societies of the affected countries in coordination with the International Federation's Pan American Disaster Response Unit (PADRU) worked together to assess the needs, damages, purchase and distribution of relief items to those most affected by the floods and damages caused by tropical storm Noel.

A total of 76,674 families were affected by the storm; under this appeal a total of 8,929 families received emergency relief items, including hygiene kits, kitchen kits, mosquito nets and tarpaulins, as well as additional



Aid delivered in the municipality of Moca in the province of Espaillat in Dominican Republic. Source: International Federation.

support including food parcels, jerry cans and blankets. In emergency health, 959 people received proper medical care and 14,124 families received clean drinking water. In total, approximately 23,245 families in the four affected countries received humanitarian assistance.

The operation is now being handed over to the Regional Representation Office for Cuba, the Dominican Republic and Haiti and this operations update reflects the information on the activities undertaken up to date. The countries affected by Noel were also substantially affected by the 2008 hurricane season and have had to direct their efforts towards new relief operations. This operation has been extended to include additional strengthening preparedness activities for response since this has been identified as a priority by the affected National Societies.

The Situation

The 14th named storm of the 2007 Atlantic hurricane season, tropical storm Noel, caused severe damages in the countries of the Bahamas, Cuba, Dominican Republic and Haiti from 28 to 29 October. Floods and mudslides damaged infrastructure, crops and houses in all countries leaving thousands of families in anguish.

Dominican Republic

On 27 and 28 October the Dominican Republic experienced intense rainfall caused by a tropical depression. This phenomenon rapidly transformed into a tropical storm which hit the island of Hispaniola (shared by Haiti and the Dominican Republic) on 29 October. The geographical location of the country and its particular socioeconomic characteristics exacerbated the impact of the storm. 40 percent of the country was severely affected; the most affected regions included: San Cristobal, Bani, San Jose de Ocoa, Barahona, Azua, Bahoruco and Duberge in the Southern region; Villa Altagracia, Bonao, Duarte, Arenoso, la Vega, Sanchez Ramirez, Montecristi, Santiago and Puerto Plata in the northern region. The province of Santo Domingo and the regions in the east were also affected.

In total, an estimated 78,752 people were affected by the storm: 87 deaths and 42 missing people were reported. There was extensive damage to homes, infrastructure and agriculture: 15,505 houses suffered damages and another 3,185 were completely destroyed; 46 bridges, and approximately 40 percent of roads in the affected areas were damaged. In addition, an estimated USD 77.7 million was reported as losses in the agricultural sector, particularly affecting small farmers producing rice, plantain and yucca (cassava). The storm caused the collapse of the water supply system, contamination of drinking water and problems in waste disposal. In terms of health, vector-spread diseases were compounded by worsened sanitary conditions after the storm and increased the toll on the country. An outbreak of leptospirosis caused the deaths of 35 people, while 40 people died from dengue fever.

In addition, tropical storm Olga hit the country on 12 December, affecting the eastern, northern, north-eastern and south-eastern regions of the island while emergency activities were still underway in the wake of Noel. Heavy rains caused floods and landslides mostly in the provinces of Hato Mayor, el Seibo, Samana, Maria Trinidad Sánchez, Espaillat, Duarte, Salcedo, Puerto Plata, Santiago, Azua and Peruvia. The overflowed Yaque del Norte and Yuna rivers caused damage to agriculture and infrastructure. Revised reports indicated that 33 people died, over 61,000 people were displaced, 12,321 houses were damaged and 190 communities were completely cut-off due to damages to roads and bridges. The Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (Comision Economica para America Latina y el Caribe – CEPAL) estimated that the cost of damages sustained and losses amounted for both tropical storms amounted to USD 420 million.

The Office of Public Works elaborated a plan to repair damaged infrastructure, particularly in remote villages. The 211 damaged aqueducts were restored by the National Water and Drainage Institute (Instituto Nacional de Aguas Potables y Alcantarillados - INAPA), restoring water supply to approximately 3.8 million people. The State Secretariat for Public Health and Social Support (Secretaria del Estado de Salud Publica y Asistencia Social - SESPAS) was closely monitoring the spread of diseases, including dengue, malaria and dermatitis.

Haiti

Noel struck Haiti on 29 October, moving through the provinces of Sud-Est, Sud, Grand Anse, Nippes, Ouest, Centre and Artibonite, followed by the provinces of Nord-Est, Nord and Nord-Ouest. The provinces of Ouest, Artibonite, Sud, Sud Est, Grande Anse and Nippes suffered the greatest damages following the storm. The losses and damages sustained were significant and compound pre-existing vulnerabilities due to the socioeconomic conditions of local affected populations, as well as limited public infrastructure and historically weak governance. The effects of Noel were particularly acute, given the fact that many affected areas also suffered from heavy rains earlier in the same month. During the month of October prior to Noel, the National Civil Defence (Direction de la Protection Civile – DPC) had reported 14,807 families affected by flooding in Sud, Ouest and Artibonite.

