

# 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

11 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. 02; Period covered: 10 - 11 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 Federation, through an agreement with DHL, has chartered a plane to carry relief supplies from Panama to Grenada, including 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. Also travelling on the flight are 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 flight left Panama on Saturday, 11 September and, given logistical issues, will arrive in Grenada on Sunday, 12 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. A Federation Field Assessment and Coordination Team (FACT) is expected to arrive in Grenada today, 11 September together with a British Red Cross Emergency Response Unit (ERU) specialized in logistics. A further FACT team is ready for deployment to Jamaica. 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.**

**The Grenada Red Cross Society headquarters were badly damaged by Hurricane Ivan. The National Society**

is currently working from one of the shelters where the emergency operations centre has re-located, together with the team from the Federation. The National Society is working to coordinate with its staff and volunteers in order to deploy them to the shelters in which the homeless have taken refuge. Initial assessments point to a lack of water together with distribution problems as water systems appear to have been more seriously damaged than previously thought.

In Jamaica, initial needs assessments are being carried out and Federation staff in the country have submitted a preliminary request for relief goods. Goods required include hygiene kits, kitchen kits, plastic sheeting, generators, batteries and flashlights.

The Canadian Red Cross has pledged CAD 495,000 (approximately CHF 483,882) to the Hurricane Ivan operation.

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.

To date, the greatest damage has been incurred in Grenada, where at least 17 people have died and approximately 90 percent of the country's homes have sustained damage. There are at least 60 people in hospital with injuries. There is currently no water or electricity, and limited cell phone coverage on the island. Approximately 60,000 people are homeless and there are currently between 5 and 8 thousand people accommodated in 47 shelters, 30 of which are official shelters and 17 of which have been established on an ad-hoc basis.

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.

As of midday Saturday, Hurricane Ivan was located just off the western tip of Jamaica. The hurricane's path kept the eye of the storm just south of the island, but the country was still pounded with winds nearing 250 kilometres per hour, heavy rains and tidal surges. At least five 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 and officials urged 500,000 people to evacuate high-risk areas. Many residents chose to stay because of fears of looting. The slow moving storm was continuing to batter the country as of late Saturday afternoon.

The current projected path of the hurricane would carry it over the Cayman Island and western Cuba, and on into the eastern Gulf of Mexico. Hurricane warnings are in effect in the Cayman Islands and Cuba. The storm is expected to hit the Cayman Islands on Sunday.

On its current course, Hurricane Ivan is expected to hit Cuba between Sunday morning and 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 the Cayman Islands, all houses have been boarded up with wood and zinc sheets. Yesterday, 10 September was a public holiday for the population in order to prepare for the hurricane. The population of Little Cayman (100 persons) has been requested to evacuate. In Brac Cayman, all 1,500 inhabitants are in shelters or have left to safer islands. In Grand Cayman 18 shelters have been 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. Since last Tuesday, 7 September, the National Hurricane Committee, of which the National Society is a member, has been meeting every day to ensure coordination.

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 Grenada, the Emergency Operations Centre temporarily suspended all shipments of relief supplies into the country, following a recommendation from the Regional Security System and the Caribbean Disaster Emergency Response Agency (CDERA). The suspension was implemented to allow for the strengthening of security to ensure that goods and equipment could arrive safely in the country. This suspension has now been lifted again, allowing for the free movement of goods into the country. The airport is back in operation now and is expected to be open to limited commercial traffic today. Transportation is also a major issue; there are not enough trucks to take relief goods out of the airport and there is also a lack of storage space for these goods at the airport. Only daylight operations are possible.

The Federation team in Grenada has reported that there is minor damage to the Grenada General Hospital. The hospital is low on water. The 95 geriatric, psychiatric patients from the hospital at the Richmond Home are in a life threatening situation and need water and food. There are 15 persons who are currently vomiting and suffering from diarrhoea. The Princess Alice Hospital in Grenville was evacuated. The critical needs now are for antibiotics, anti diarrhoeal medication and relief personnel.

Water is also a serious issue in Grenada. There are currently four water trucks involved in relief distributions, three of which have been supplied by the National Water and Sewerage Authority (NAWASA), and one which has been supplied by St. George’s University. Unfortunately, this is not enough to address the needs of the affected population. There are additional water trucks located in the country, but they are too large to travel on Grenada’s rural roads. The only water service available at this time is a small, low-level supply that is being used to distribute water to hotels and the airport. St. George’s University and the Grenada General Hospital are also being supplied with water. The two major water supplies on the island suffered serious damage and it is unclear how long repairs will take. OXFAM will take the lead role in addressing water and sanitation issues in relief efforts on the island. The Federation will support OXFAM through an assessment by water and sanitation personnel and through complementary activities.



**Damaged homes and buildings in Grenada**

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) have been 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 hurricane began impacting Jamaica yesterday morning, 10 September, and is still doing so. However, the island was spared the full impact of the storm as the eye passed along the south-west coast of the island. The system is slowly moving away from the island and strong winds are likely to continue for several hours. There are reports that approximately 11,836 persons weathered the storm in Jamaica in 285 shelters. Power and water supply were shut down for safety; however, the telephone service is still functioning. Reports so far indicate that 88 communities have been affected, mostly in Kingston and St. Andrew. 25 main roads are inaccessible given fallen trees, flooding or landslides. The Federation has a team composed of a disaster management expert from the Secretariat and an information and reporting delegate in Jamaica.

In Cuba, the Federation has deployed a water and sanitation delegate and a logistician from PADRU, together with a telecommunications expert from Ericsson Response. The regional information delegate from the Lima Regional Delegation is currently travelling to Cuba.

**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)**

On Saturday, 11 September, through an agreement with DHL, the Federation chartered a flight from Panama to Grenada carrying relief goods, as well as IT and logistics personnel. The shipment, which is scheduled to arrive in Grenada on Sunday, 12 September, 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

To address the needs in Jamaica, PADRU has available three vehicles, which can be shipped to the country in 4-5 days aboard ocean freight. Also available from the PADRU warehouse are hygiene kits, kitchen sets and plastic sheeting. Federation personnel in Jamaica have also indicated that food will needed for 15,000 beneficiaries for two weeks.

In Grenada, the Red Cross team in the country is looking at various possibilities for warehouses to store the relief goods coming into the country. A local company has offered the use of its warehouse, and another building located nearby the airport is also expected to be made available soon.

**Impact**

Relief goods en route to Grenada will ensure that all beneficiary families receive relief assistance. In addition, the Red Cross relief effort is monitoring conditions in the shelters.

**Constraints**

Damage to the local airport in Grenada is impeding the delivery of relief items by air. As the approach lights at the airport are down, only daylight operations are possible, 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 also 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 has not yet been able 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 scheduled 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.



**Downed power lines block roads in Grenada**

**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 is leaving for Grenada later today, 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 with communications to allow them to communicate with their relatives abroad.

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 is being deployed to Grenada. 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.