

Operations update



International Federation
of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

Cuba: Hurricane Season 2008

Emergency appeal n° MDRCU0001
GLIDE No. TC-2008-000143
Operations update n° 2
30 October 2008

Period covered by this Operations Update: 25 September to 23 October 2008.

Appeal target: CHF 9,604,366 (USD 8,811,345 or EUR 6,156,645).

[<click here to view the attached Revised Emergency Appeal Budget>](#)

Appeal coverage: 56%; [<click here to link to contact details >](#)

Appeal history:

- This Emergency Appeal was initially launched on a preliminary basis on 8 September 2008 for **CHF 6,417,524 (USD 5,834,112 or EUR 3,973,699)** for nine months to assist 40,000 beneficiaries.
- The Emergency Appeal was revised on 25 September, 2008 for **CHF 10,106,348 (USD 9,187,600 or EUR 6,257,800)** to assist 60,000 beneficiaries for nine months.
- CHF 150,000 was initially allocated from the Federation's Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF) to support the National Society in Cuba in starting their early damage and needs assessments caused by Hurricane Gustav.
- This Operations Update no.2 includes a revised budget of **CHF 9,604,366 (USD 8,811,345 or EUR 6,156,645)** to assist 60,000 beneficiaries for nine months.

Summary:

Hurricane Gustav hit the island of Cuba on 31 August 2008 with heavy winds and rain causing flooding throughout the island. Gustav, considered to be the worst storm to strike Cuba in 50 years, left thousands of people affected. Just as the Cuban Red Cross (CRC) was responding to this emergency, hurricane Ike ravaged the island as a category three storm. Ike entered through Punta Lucrecia on 7 September and crossed the island as a category one hurricane causing additional widespread damage. Based on the situation, this second Operations Update is focused on providing up to date information on the support and activities carried out by the Cuban Red Cross and the International Federation. This Emergency Appeal places an emphasis on providing support to deliver appropriate and timely response, assistance and relief through the provision of non-food relief items, shelter, water and sanitation, and capacity building, with a view of contributing to reduce disaster risk.

This operation is expected to be implemented over nine months, and will therefore be completed by 8 June 2009; a Final Report will be made available by 8 September 2009 (three months after the end of the



Shattered ceilings in the city of La Florida after the passage of the hurricane.

Source: International Federation

operation).

The situation

Considered the most devastating hurricane to strike **Cuba** in the past 50 years, Gustav hit the island on the night of 30 August 2008. After moving west parallel, to the Cuban territory; Gustav struck the Isle of Youth (Isla de la Juventud) as a category four hurricane. Huge five meter waves washed over the isle's territory and penetrated inland between two and seven km. Sustained winds were 220 km per hour. Subsequently, Gustav arrived in the province of Pinar del Rio with winds reaching up to 340 km per hour, a record for Cuba.

The Isle of Youth was left completely devastated, affecting the entire population of approximately 87,000 people. No infrastructure was left undamaged including hospitals, houses and schools. Basic services such as electricity and communications were interrupted. 20,745 dwellings are severely damaged impacting 95% of the population. The Isle of Youth was highly urbanized with 84 percent of the inhabitants living in urban areas.



Fishermen in a cooperative explaining damages in Sancti Spiritu. Source: International Federation.

In the province of Pinar del Rio more than 60 percent of the territory was directly affected by the hurricane. The municipalities of Los Palacios, La Palma, Bahía Honda, La Herradura, San Cristóbal, Viñales, Consolación del Sur and Candelaria sustained the burden of the damages. Roughly 90,000 houses, mainly in the urban areas were damaged affecting an estimate of 360,000 people, representing 49.2 percent of the total population of the province.

Regarding the agricultural sector, Pinar del Rio is the second most productive province in the country after Havana, producing 10 percent of the national production within this sector. Damages to the agricultural sector in Pinar del Rio, particularly urban agriculture, will impact negatively the food security of the local and national population.

The electricity system was completely destroyed and in the Isle of Youth the system was severely damaged. In Pinar del Rio public service buildings such as hospitals and schools sustained damages, affecting especially the population's possibility of preparation, storage and transportation of food. This will no doubt further impact the nutritional status of the population.

After eight days the Cuban territory was once again hit by a storm. hurricane Ike made landfall as a category 3 hurricane near Cabo Lucrecia, in the province of Holguin on 7 September. The most affected territories are the eastern provinces of Holguin, Las Tunas, Camagüey and Guantánamo, although all territories in the country were directly or indirectly impacted by the hurricane. An initial evaluation, made by national officials, estimated that the economic losses due to both hurricanes add up to USD five billion.

So far, 328,114 additional houses have been reported to be affected by Ike, of which 42,683 have collapsed completely. As a result, approximately 1.3 million people lost their homes, almost ten percent of Cuba's entire population. In terms of housing the most affected provinces are Holguin and Las Tunas.

Approximately 2.7 million people were evacuated due to Ike. 500,000 people were relocated to shelters while the rest went to homes of neighbours and family. Out of the 2,200 governmental shelters, 1,200 are schools. 480 of the schools used as shelters were also damaged.

Serious damages were reported in banana, coffee, yucca, corn and other plantations, adding up to approximately 491,000 tonnes of food crops lost. Over half a million poultry were lost, 205 green houses and the majority of the semi protected cultivations were also destroyed. Not only has the food production system suffered great losses, but also 49,000 tons of stored food were ruined as numerous warehouses were damaged; 1,111 of these in Holguin alone. This raises the concern of inadequate food reserves in the immediate future, which would affect food security for the population.

Moreover, the power grid has sustained severe damage. The destruction of distribution lines, transformers, utility poles and cable lines. Due to the impact of the hurricanes, only 30% of individual and public users in Las Tunas, Camagüey and Holguin have been able to have electricity services restored. This affects the normal and safe functioning of basic public institutions such as hospitals and schools. At the same time, it also limits the population's ability to adequately prepare and store food.

Cuba has had to face, in a short period of time, several extreme meteorological events. tropical storms Fay and Hanna, and hurricanes Gustav and Ike, have severely impacted the population's livelihoods and the economy of the country. There are still a few weeks left of the Atlantic hurricane season, for which 18 meteorological events were forecast. Estimations are that at least another 8 could potentially still affect Cuba in 2008.

Coordination and partnerships

The Red Cross Movement has been coordinating efforts both internally and externally since the beginning of the emergency. The Cuban Red Cross (CRC) has been in regular contact with the International Federation through its Pan American Disaster Response Unit (PADRU) and the Regional Representation for Cuba, the Dominican Republic and Haiti. Two Disaster Management delegates were deployed at the onset of the emergency to support the CRC in the design of the Preliminary Emergency Appeal. One specialist in early recovery was later on deployed to Cuba to support the National Society in assessing initial recovery needs.

The CRC coordinated early relief actions with local authorities. International Federation disaster management delegates and the CRC participated in several inter-agency coordination meetings. Also, PADRU has kept regular contact with the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) to share information and current plans. In order to support the recovery process in the country after the passing of hurricanes Gustav and Ike, the United Nations (UN) has mobilized USD 8,649,516.

Currently, there are two OCHA officials, an official of United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)'s Bureau of Crisis Prevention and Recuperation (BCPR), an official of the Pan-American Health Organization (PAHO) Regional Office and an official of the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) Office in Guatemala to support the United Nations system in Cuba.

The capacity of the Cuban Civil Defence, while widely seen as one of the strongest and most advanced in the region, faces limitations in the recovery phase – which in Cuba begins immediately after the impact of the event - due to the magnitude of the disaster and the lack of financial and material resources.

Red Cross and Red Crescent action

After consulting with different International Federation offices and the CRC, the Appeal target was modified in order to include early recovery activities.

The International Federation through PADRU sent a first cargo plane with emergency relief items for 3,300 families from its warehouse in Panama. In addition, PADRU assisted with overall coordination of response activities and in the procurement of additional relief items or through in-kind donations linked to this Appeal.

PADRU also dispatched a first shipment with 25,000 zinc sheets and nails to replace or repair damaged roofs.



The municipality's organo-ponic orchard in Sancti Spiritu. Source: International Federation

Progress towards objectives

This Emergency Appeal seeks to support immediate response activities in Cuba that require International Federation support.

Relief distributions (basic non-food items)

Objective: 12,000 families (60,000 people) affected by hurricanes Gustav and Ike will benefit from the distribution of non-food items.	
Expected results	Activities planned
Approximately 12,000 families in the affected areas will receive essential non-food items (see detailed kit below).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct rapid emergency needs and capacity assessments. • Develop beneficiary targeting strategy and registration system to deliver intended assistance. • Distribute relief supplies and control supply movements from point of dispatch to end user. • Monitor and evaluate the relief activities and provide reporting on relief distributions.

After several meetings held with the CRC and thanks to the generous contributions provided by other state agencies and foreign governments, the initial number of relief items (kitchen kits, mattresses, towels and sheet sets) was decreased to avoid duplication of efforts. The following items will be distributed to the affected families:

- 7,000 kitchen kits (1 per family).
- 2,500 mattresses (1 per family).
- 24,000 jerry cans (2 per family).
- 24,000 mosquito nets (2 per family).
- 2,500 towels (1 per family).
- 2,500 sheet sets (1 per family).

Progress to date:

The International Federation's Regional Logistics Unit (RLU) based in Panama sent a first air shipment with the following items:

- 3,330 kitchen kits.
- 6,600 mosquito nets.
- 6,600 jerry cans.

The distribution of the items on the first shipment was finalized. The RLU is sending additional relief items to complete the distributions in the affected areas. According to CRC instructions, the priority is to complete the procurement process of zinc sheets and construction material.

Shelter

Objective: To provide adequate shelter for 12,000 families.	
Expected results	Activities planned
11,000 families will receive materials for roofing and 1,000 families will receive shelter kits.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identification of communities and specific beneficiaries coordinating with local government authorities. • Procurement of materials (zinc sheeting, nails and wood) for the reconstruction of damaged roofs. • Supervision in the repairing of the damaged houses by CRC staff and volunteers.

11,000 families will receive zinc sheeting, nails (each family receives 30 zinc sheets and one kilo of nails) and materials like galvanized steel beams in order to repair their homes. Part of the material necessary to complete roof repairs will be recuperated by beneficiaries from damaged houses, re-utilising salvaged timbers.

Technical support will be provided to the beneficiaries in order to ensure the appropriate use of salvaged material and to ensure better roof repair. This support will be provided by experienced CRC volunteers who have participated in past operations such as Wilma in 2005 and Noel in 2007, which also included repair of

roof tops using zinc sheeting. The repairs will require that the affected families be temporarily accommodated with host families.

The Spanish Red Cross with funds from the Spanish International Cooperation Agency (Agencia Española de Cooperación Internacional - AECI) provided a bilateral contribution of 21,176 zinc sheets and nails. The shipment is expected to depart towards the island on 26 October.

Progress to date:

Identification of beneficiaries has started in close coordination with local authorities, with beneficiary lists updated regularly, pending first distribution, to ensure that assistance is provided to those who remain most in need. The distribution of the first shipment of 25,000 zinc sheets and nails has started.

1,000 families will receive shelter kits and additional material for setting up and cover the roof (timber or other available material). The shelter kits contain the following items:

Item	Quantity per kit	Units
Tarpaulins	2	Piece
Rope	1	Roll
Hand saw	1	Piece
Roofing nails	0.5	Kg
Shovel	1	Piece
Hoe	1	Piece
Machete	1	Piece
Tin Snips	1	Piece
Nails	0.5	Kg
Tie wire	1	Roll
Claw hammer	1	Piece
Woven sack	1	Piece

Water and Sanitation

Objective: 1,000 families in the affected communities receive a specialized water filter.	
Expected Results	Activities planned
Specialized water filter is provided to the most affected communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identification of communities and specific beneficiaries coordinating with local government authorities. • Procurement of materials in adherence with Federation procurement • Distribution of water filter and supervision of their installation • Instructions for the population

Progress:

As additional support to families receiving shelter kits, water filters will also be distributed to facilitate access to safe drinking water.

National Society Capacity Building

Objective 1: The capacity of the Cuban Red Cross (CRC) in disaster response and preparedness will have been strengthened.	
Expected Results	Activities planned
The Cuban Red Cross' local branch volunteers will be adequately identified and prepared for this and future emergencies.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Procurement of visibility materials (T-shirts, caps), computers, office equipment • Disaster preparedness workshop for volunteers • Procurement of 20 tents, 100 stretchers, 200 radios for volunteers • Procurement of three motorcycles • Procurement of two laptops

The three motorcycles will be used for volunteers to perform follow up activities on the distributions in the affected areas.

Early Recovery	
Objective 1: Improve living conditions of the most affected communities by providing better opportunities for the families to have an alternative to grow and process food for sale and self consumption.	
Expected Results	Activities planned
Approximately, 20,700 people will be able to produce their own food complementing the basic food basket.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Needs evaluation and analysis mission in Early Recovery • A domestic hygiene workshop for CRC local branch volunteers. The same volunteers will be facilitators in the community talks and distribution of 1,500 hygiene flyers. • A food processing workshop for CRC local branch volunteers. Universities and technical schools will participate in this workshop. All volunteers capacitated by the workshop will become facilitators in the communities and will distribute 1,500 flyers. • Provide tools and equipments for the livestock and fishing production at a community and family level. • Monitor and follow up by the CRC volunteers.

Following recommendations by the local authorities and the Cuban Red Cross, it was decided not to include livestock, vaccines, fertilizers, and seeds. The government is determining the areas, quotas, methods and time periods for the fishing activities.

The kits distributed consist of the following:

Community Agricultural Kit

2 Carts
1 Backpack sprayer
2 Agricultural scissors
2 Files

Family Agricultural Kit

1 Machete
1 Hoe blade
1 Rake
1 Shovel
1 Pick

Irrigation equipment

2.5 inch 110-220 V1 Submersible Pump
1x1/2 200 meter hose
1 x 1 inch 200 meters hose
Micro aspersers 600
1m³ -1000 It Tank

Fishing and diving Kit

Nylon fishing nets
Diving equipment
Guiding buoys
Fishing hooks
Lamps
Jerry cans and ice box

Community	Activities and distributions
CRC - Havana	Workshops
	Flyers
Las Palmas	Community and personal agricultural kit, protection

	equipment, pump and spare part.
Erberto Polanco	Community and personal agricultural kit, protection equipment, pump and spare part.
Tunas de Zaza	Fishing/diving kit and ice making machine
PesCasilda	Fishing/diving kit
Huerto Guine	Community and personal agricultural kit, protection equipment, pump and spare part.
Huerto S. Spiritu	Community and personal agricultural kit, protection equipment, pump and spare part.
Huerto Ancianos	Community and personal agricultural kit, protection equipment, pump and spare part.
Huerto Materno	Community and personal agricultural kit, protection equipment, pump and spare part.

Communications – Advocacy and Public Information

Maintaining a steady flow of timely and accurate information between the field and other major stakeholders is vital for fundraising, advocacy and maintaining the profile of emergency operations. During an operation, communications between affected populations and the Red Cross and Red Crescent, as well as with the media and donors, is an essential mechanism for effective disaster response and the cornerstone to promote greater equality, accountability and transparency.

The communications activities outlined in this appeal are aimed at supporting the National Society to improve their communications capacities and develop appropriate communications tools and products to support effective operations. These activities are closely coordinated between the Cuban Red Cross and the Federation communications team in the Americas Zone office and Geneva. Support will be provided to the Cuban Red Cross to increase the visibility of their humanitarian actions for this operation.

At the onset of the operation the International Federation, PADRU's information officer was deployed to Cuba to assist, set up media interviews and increase visibility of the Red Cross and Red Crescent in the field. A communications plan of action has been completed, contemplating the visibility aspects of the operation and the implementation of communication tools.

Information on the emergency has been published on the following web sites: www.cruzroja.org, www.ifrc.cruzroja.org and www.ifrc.org. This includes press releases, articles and photographs from the field. There have been 35 interviews, two press releases and four humanitarian stories published in the web. Additional stories will be published and a brochure with information on the operation's progress is being elaborated along with the Americas Zone office. Another press release is will be published soon.

The Cuban Red Cross with support of the International Federation continues assisting the most vulnerable people affected by the hurricane. Activities carried out in this operation are based upon the humanitarian principles and values. Beneficiary selection is based on the level of vulnerability of those affected, respecting culture diversity and ensuring gender sensitivity.

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

Global Agenda Goals:

- Reduce the numbers of deaths, injuries and impact 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:

- In Panama: Alberto Monguzzi, Regional Shelter Advisor, Pan American Disaster Response Unit; email: alberto.monguzzi@ifrc.org.
- In Panama: Ariel Kestens, Head of PADRU; phone (507) 316 1001; fax (507) 316 1082; email: ariel.kestens@ifrc.org.
- In Dominican Republic: Alexandre Claudon, Regional Representative for Cuba, Dominican Republic and Haiti; email: alexandre.claudon@ifrc.org.
- In Panama: Maria Alcazar, Resource Mobilization Coordinator for the Americas; phone: (507) 380 0250; fax: (507) 317 1304; email: maria.alcazar@ifrc.org.
- In Geneva: Pablo Medina, Operations Coordinator for the Americas; phone: (41 22) 730 42 74; fax: (41 22) 733 03 95; email: pablo.medina@ifrc.org.

**[<Revised Appeal Budget attached below;
click here to return to the title page>](#)**

APPEAL BUDGET SUMMARY

Annex 1

Cuba Hurricane Season 2008

MDRCU001

	ORIGINAL	REVISED	VARIANCE
<u>RELIEF NEEDS</u>			
Shelter	5,689,000	5,689,000	0
Construction Materials	1,504,000	1,504,000	0
Clothing & Textiles	609,000	240,875	-368,125
Food			0
Seeds & Plants			0
Water & Sanitation	33,000	33,000	0
Medical & First Aid	6,600	6,600	0
Teaching Materials			0
Utensils & Tools	540,000	509,883	-30,117
Other Supplies & Services			0
Total Relief Needs	8,381,600	7,983,358	-398,242
<u>CAPITAL EQUIPMENT</u>			
Land & Buildings			0
Vehicles Purchase	67,260	7,260	-60,000
Computers & Telecom Equipment	10,500	7,000	-3,500
Office/Household Furniture & Equip.			0
Medical Equipment			0
Other Machinery & Equipment			0
<u>TRANSPORT, STORAGE & VEHICLES</u>			
Storage - Warehouse			0
Distribution & Monitoring	326,200	260,200	-66,000
Transport & Vehicles Costs	15,000	9,800	-5,200
Service fee & Recovery	450,000	400,000	-50,000
<u>PERSONNEL</u>			
International Staff	9,000	139,500	130,500
Regionally Deployed Staff	35,100	11,550	-23,550
National Staff	12,000	12,000	0
National Society Staff	25,000	25,000	0
Consultants			0
<u>WORKSHOPS & TRAINING</u>			
Workshops & Training	22,000	39,640	17,640
<u>GENERAL EXPENSES</u>			
Travel	18,375	18,375	0
Information & Public Relations	25,000	14,000	-11,000
Office running costs	13,500	13,500	0
Communication Costs	22,500	22,500	0
Professional Fees			0
Financial Charges	6,000	6,000	0
Other General Expenses	10,400	10,400	0
<u>PROGRAMME SUPPORT</u>			
Programme Support - PSR	656,913	624,284	-32,629
Total Operational Needs	1,724,748	1,621,009	-103,739
Total Appeal Budget (Cash & Kind)	10,106,348	9,604,366	-501,981
Available Ressources			
Net Request	10,106,348	9,604,366	