

# PROGRAMME 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

## PAN AMERICAN DISASTER RESPONSE UNIT

21 December 2005

*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.*

*For more information: [www.ifrc.org](http://www.ifrc.org)*

### In Brief

**Appeal No. 05AA040; Programme Update no. 2, Period covered: 1 June to 30 November 2005; Appeal coverage: 66%; Outstanding needs: CHF 689,002 (USD 532,716 or EUR 444,127).**

*[Click here to go directly to the attached Contributions List \(also available on the website\).](#)*

**Appeal target: CHF 2,061,935 (USD 1,594,203 or EUR 1,329,113)**

**Related Emergency or Annual Appeals:** Caribbean: Hurricanes Dennis and Emily (05EA014), El Salvador: Floods and Volcanic Activity (05EA020), Central America: Floods from Hurricane Stan (05EA021), Bahamas, Cuba and Mexico: Hurricane Wilma (05EA024); Caribbean Annual Appeal (05AA041); Central America Annual Appeal (05AA043); South America Annual Appeal (05AA044)

**Programme summary:** During the reporting period, most of the work of the Pan American Disaster Response Unit (PADRU) was focused on responding to one of the most active and destructive hurricane seasons the region has known. The 2005 Hurricane Season saw a total of 26 named storms, eight of which made landfall in the Central America and Caribbean regions. PADRU worked with the affected National Societies to provide immediate response in the wake of these disasters, which included appealing for funds from the Federation's Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF) and deploying disaster management experts to the field. Four emergency appeals were launched in response to hurricanes to assist some 171,000 affected families in the 10 worst affected countries: Bahamas, Costa Rica, Cuba, El Salvador, Guatemala, Haiti, Honduras, Jamaica, Mexico and Nicaragua. In addition, PADRU responded to a number of other emergencies, including volcanic eruptions in Colombia and El Salvador, floods in Colombia, Costa Rica and Guatemala, earthquakes in Chile and Peru, drought in Paraguay and fire and social unrest in Bolivia. PADRU continued its on-going work in the area of disaster response preparedness, strengthening the Regional Intervention Teams (RITs), supporting the development of contingency and disaster response plans within the National Societies of the Americas and encouraging National Society staff to carry out internships within PADRU, promoting exchanges and information-sharing.

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*This Programme Update reflects activities to be implemented over a one-year period. This forms part of, and is based on,*

*longer-term, multi-year planning (refer below to access the detailed logframe documents). 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>*

## Operational developments

During the reporting period, the primary focus of the Pan American Disaster Response Unit (PADRU) was emergency response to a number of disasters in Central and South America and the Caribbean. The majority of the disaster response operations are associated with the 2005 Atlantic Hurricane Season, which was one of the fiercest on record. PADRU has also been working to improve disaster response capacity in areas such as logistics and disaster preparedness, including provision of support for the implementation of a DIPECHO funded disaster preparedness project in the Caribbean.

Of the 26 named storms of the 2005 hurricane season, eight impacted 16 countries in the Caribbean and Central and North America. Hurricanes Dennis, Emily, Katrina, Rita, Stan, Wilma, Beta and Gamma caused serious material and economic damages in the affected countries and killed and injured numerous people. The Federation's disaster response system in the Americas provided assistance to thousands of families affected by these storms. In Guatemala alone the Red Cross is assisting 6,400 families with distributions of food, water and relief items, and provision of first aid, psychosocial support and family linking services.

In a period of just four months, the Federation's Pan American Disaster Response Unit sent 23 shipments of humanitarian assistance from Panama to affected countries; 15 by air, 5 by land and 3 by sea. Shipments included plastic sheeting, blankets, hygiene kits, kitchen kits, mosquito nets, first aid kits and water purification tablets. Other essential relief items were also sent to the region by sister Red Cross Societies. PADRU also provided vehicles through the Federation's vehicle leasing programme, and personnel specialized in disaster management, water and sanitation, logistics and communications to support the National Societies in carrying out their emergency response operations. In total, more than 200 experts from all over the world provided support to the National Societies affected by hurricanes in 2005. PADRU coordinated this large-scale effort by making available its database of trained members of the Regional Intervention Teams and coordinating the deployment of its members, both directly to the field and to support the unit in Panama.

In addition to the hurricanes, PADRU provided assistance to National Societies affected by other emergencies, such as landslides that hit Guatemala in June and July, and flooding in El Salvador in June. In Costa Rica, PADRU supported the Costa Rican Red Cross' relief effort following heavy rains in September, and in El Salvador PADRU assisted the National Society in monitoring and responding to volcanic activity in the Ilamatepec volcano in October. In South America, PADRU supported the Chilean Red Cross' relief effort after an earthquake hit the northern region of the country in June, and supported the Bolivian Red Cross in response to social unrest in June and fires in September. PADRU also provided assistance to the Paraguayan Red Cross in its response to persistent drought affecting the Chaco region.

PADRU continued strengthening its cooperation with the United Nations system, as well as with the European Union. In mid 2005 PADRU received a programmatic funding from ECHO through a programme which seeks to strengthen the Caribbean National Societies and Overseas Branches. The Spanish International Cooperation Agency (AECI) has also provided funding for PADRU activities. PADRU continues its on-going initiatives to build the Caribbean telecommunications network and to work in collaboration with Ericsson Response in the area of communications and to promote the use of the warehouse established in the Colón Free Zone. The RITs network has been strengthened with a workshop organized in the Caribbean, together with the holding of a logistics workshop for the region. At the same time, PADRU's work to support the National Societies in the Americas in contingency and response plans is on-going.

**Goal: Red Cross National Societies in the Americas receive significant benefit through support, services, coordination, resources and training from an efficient and effective disaster management unit that**

**contributes to increasing the capacity to successfully help people reduce risk, respond to and recover from disasters, thus alleviating human suffering.**

**Programme Objective 1: Disaster Response**

**Upon the request of the Regional Delegations on behalf of National Societies affected by disasters, PADRU will provide a professional, effective and technically competent delivery of disaster response services and resources through well-coordinated and integrated planning.**

**Progress/Achievements:**

**2004 Hurricane Season**

During first months of the reporting period, PADRU's work focused on concluding the final stages of relief operations begun during the 2004 hurricane season. In particular, work focused on reconstruction and capacity building activities with the Cuban Red Cross following the two hurricanes, Charley and Ivan, which hit the island in August and September 2004. The relief operation in response to Hurricane Charley was extended due to logistical and funding difficulties and concluded in July 2005. Operations responding to the 2004 hurricanes were still ongoing when the region began to be affected by the 2005 hurricane season.

**Guyana Floods**

Guyana was affected by heavy rains and severe flooding in January 2005. The operation, which was initially planned for six months, was extended to eight months and provided assistance to 6 thousand families. PADRU supported the Guyana Red Cross Society to strengthen affected communities to be better prepared for similar disasters in the future. At the end of the operation, a lessons learned exercise was carried out in consultation with partners from within and outside the Movement in order to improve coordination in future disasters. The Guyana Red Cross has also benefited from the Japanese Red Cross-funded container project, which provides pre-positioned relief items to disaster prone countries. During the operation, 34 communities in the country participated in information sessions addressing hygiene, HIV/AIDS/STIs, and first aid. Some 288 people were trained in community first aid. The National Society with the support of the Federation, installed basic VHF radio communications equipment in the country and trained Red Cross staff in volunteers in telecommunications and logistics. (For more information please see the Federation's website.

<http://www.ifrc.org/where/country/cn6.asp?countryid=79>)

**Mudslides in Guatemala (June)**

Mudslides brought on by heavy rains killed at least 22 people and injured 40 in northern Guatemala in June. The region was pounded by heavy rains for several days, which caused large portions of the Calvario Hill to slide onto houses in eight communities in the municipality of San Antonio Senahú, in the department of Alta Verapaz. The Guatemalan Red Cross (GRC) dispatched National Intervention Team (NITs) members from the local branch in Cobán to support search and rescue efforts, provide first aid care, conduct damage and needs assessments and manage shelters. Additional NITs teams were also sent to the area to relieve those volunteers that had been working almost round the clock. Throughout the operation, PADRU was in contact with the Guatemalan Red Cross, helping to monitor the situation in order to support the National Society and the people affected by the mudslides. (For more information please see the Federation's website <http://www.ifrc.org/where/country/cn6.asp?countryid=76>)

**Earthquake in Chile (June)**

After an earthquake registering 7.9 on the Richter scale struck the Iquique region in the province of Tarapacá in northern Chile, PADRU, in coordination with the Federation's Lima Regional Delegation, supported the Chilean Red Cross (CRC) with a request for CHF 30,000 from the Federation's Disaster Relief Emergency Fund to cover the National Society's operational costs. The disbursement of DREF funds made possible for the CRC to carry out first aid education activities in remote communities which usually receive very little assistance. A camp was built by the volunteers to better coordinate actions, workshops and activities with the communities. The inhabitants of the communities of Pozo Almonte, Huara, La Huaica, Tarapacá and Mamiña benefited from the distribution of disinfectants and hygiene kits, as well as from workshops on how to prevent illnesses, such as acute respiratory and digestive illnesses that often affect children and the elderly, following a disaster. PADRU also supported the CRC in monitoring and follow up of the operation and helped to publish reports on the disaster management information system (DMIS). (For more information please see the Federation's website

<http://www.ifrc.org/where/country/cn6.asp?countryid=46>)

### 2005 Hurricane Season (June-November)

**Dennis & Emily:** CHF 250,000 were released from the disaster relief emergency fund (DREF) to assist 6,000 families affected by Hurricanes Dennis and Emily in Grenada, Jamaica and Haiti. Aruba, Bonaire, Cuba, Curacao, Mexico, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, Trinidad and Tobago, and the United States were also affected by these storms. The Federation launched an emergency appeal for the three most affected countries on 15 July for CHF 758,000 to assist 3,000 families in Grenada, 500 families in Haiti and 1,000 families in Jamaica. A disaster management delegate from PADRU was deployed to Grenada to support the National Society's relief efforts and another was deployed to Haiti in order to provide support to the Federation's Country Delegation and the Haitian National Red Cross Society. A Regional Intervention Team alert was issued on 12 July and eight trained members were available for deployment. The Pan American Disaster Response Unit organized two airlifts of relief materials to Grenada, the first of which arrived on 16 July, and the second on 18 July. The first contained 950 hygiene kits, 1,705 pieces of plastic sheeting, 950 jerry cans (10 litres) 50 first aid kits, 100 raincoats (for volunteers) and 100 pairs of rubber boots (for volunteers). The second airlift contained 1,000 hygiene kits, 2,590 pieces of plastic sheeting and 1,000 jerry cans (10 litres). In anticipation of the passage of Hurricane Emily, PADRU also pre-deployed relief materials by airlift to Jamaica, which arrived on 10 July. The airlift contained 750 hygiene kits, 664 kitchen sets, 750 plastic buckets, 1,500 plastic sheets, and 25 family tents. Following this, an ocean freight shipment of relief supplies was sent to Jamaica and arrived on Monday, 18 July. This shipment contained 750 blankets, 86 kitchen sets and 6,077 sleeping mats. (For more information please see the Federation's website [http://www.ifrc.org/where/reg\\_sprep.asp?iYear=0&xFlag=2&txtRegion=4&view=1](http://www.ifrc.org/where/reg_sprep.asp?iYear=0&xFlag=2&txtRegion=4&view=1))

**Katrina & Rita:** The largest natural disaster relief effort in the 125-year history of the American Red Cross (ARC) was launched in response to the devastation wreaked by Hurricane Katrina and the subsequent flooding in New Orleans. The Federation, through PADRU, provided support to the ARC by deploying a disaster management delegate to Alabama immediately after Katrina struck. Some 100 RITs members were available to assist the relief effort. PADRU personnel specialized in logistics, disaster management, water and sanitation, telecommunications and communications were placed on alert, and PADRU's information officer was mobilized to Washington, DC, for two weeks to support the ARC's public affairs unit by working with Spanish-language and international media. Following Hurricane Rita, the information officer was also deployed to the ARC's operations centre in Texas to perform similar duties. This communications support filled a critical need as American Red Cross press officers had been deployed to the affected area to facilitate and disseminate preparedness and safety messages, conduct interviews with national media, and manage response messages. In its coordination role, the Federation served as a focal point for the operation with Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies interested in supporting the operation; PADRU served as the focal point for the Latin American region while the Secretariat in Geneva served as a coordinator and facilitator for the other regions of the world. (For more information please see the Federation website <http://www.ifrc.org/where/country/cn6.asp?countryid=4>)

**Stan:** Hurricane Stan, the 18<sup>th</sup> named storm of the 2005 hurricane season, struck the region in early October. The storm caused heavy rains in Belize, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua and south-eastern Mexico and killed more than 747 people. The storm also caused heavy rains as far away as Haiti. On 17 October, the Federation launched the revised emergency appeal for Central America, Mexico and Haiti to assist 10,050 families. Four staff members from PADRU specialized in water and sanitation, logistics, communications and disaster management were deployed to Guatemala to support the relief activities being carried out by the National Society. A RITs member working as operations coordinator arrived in Guatemala on 11 October to work with the Federation and the Guatemalan Red Cross, as did two Federation FACT team members: one specialized in water and sanitation and the other specialized in logistics. In addition, two Regional Intervention Team members from the Costa Rican Red Cross were mobilized to Guatemala. Federation personnel from the Panama Regional Delegation, the Regional Reporting Unit and the Regional Finance Unit were also providing support to the relief operation from Panama. This relief operation, which has a particular focus on Guatemala as the country which was hardest hit, seeks to provide food and non-food relief items, shelter, health and sanitation services, psychosocial support and capacity building activities to affected communities. (For more information please see the Federation's website [http://www.ifrc.org/where/reg\\_sprep.asp?iYear=0&xFlag=2&txtRegion=2&view=1](http://www.ifrc.org/where/reg_sprep.asp?iYear=0&xFlag=2&txtRegion=2&view=1))

**Wilma:** Hurricane Wilma, the 12<sup>th</sup> hurricane and 21<sup>st</sup> named storm of the Atlantic hurricane season, battered Mexico's Yucatan Peninsula, Cuba, the state of Florida in the United States, and the Bahamas between 20 and 24 October, causing widespread destruction. The category four storm first came ashore on the Yucatan Peninsula on Friday, 21 October, bringing winds of up to 225 km/h (140 mph), killing at least six people. The storm then moved back out into the Gulf of Mexico, lashing Cuba with its outer rain bands, before slamming into Florida as a category three storm. The hurricane then moved out into the Atlantic Ocean, causing heavy rains and flooding in the Bahamas. Hurricane Wilma virtually decimated the Mexican resort town of Cancun and the island of Cozumel, destroying hotels and homes and littering the streets with debris. Prior to the hurricane, Mexican officials had declared a state of emergency in 18 municipalities in the state of Yucatan and 5 municipalities in the state of Quintana Roo. On Tuesday, 25 October, relief assistance shipped by air from the Federation's Pan American Disaster Response Unit reached Merida airport; these relief goods comprising 1,000 hygiene kits, 2,000 plastic sheets and 1,000 kitchen sets benefited 1,000 families. A second shipment was sent on Thursday, 27 October with 5,000 hygiene kits donated by the American Red Cross, 1,000 additional hygiene kits, 397 kitchen kits, 1,500 mosquito nets and 2 gas generators for use in the response operation. Two disaster management delegates from PADRU were deployed to Mexico to support the relief activities carried out by the National Society. (For more information please see the Federation's website

[http://www.ifrc.org/where/reg\\_sprep.asp?iYear=0&xFlag=2&txtRegion=2&view=1](http://www.ifrc.org/where/reg_sprep.asp?iYear=0&xFlag=2&txtRegion=2&view=1))

**Beta:** The 13th hurricane and 23rd named storm of the Atlantic hurricane season, strengthened to a category 1 storm on Saturday, 29 October, causing damages to the Colombian islands of Providencia and San Andres and impacted the eastern coast of Nicaragua. At least 30 people were injured on Providencia. In response to the damages caused by Hurricane Beta on Providencia and San Andres, the Colombian Red Cross Society (CRCS) activated its hurricane contingency plan. In Nicaragua, PADRU coordinated with the National Disaster Response Agency and UN agencies to arrange an aerial assessment of the eastern coast of the country. Two disaster management experts from PADRU were deployed to Nicaragua to support the National Society's relief activities. (For more information please see the Federation's website <http://www.ifrc.org/where/country/cn6.asp?countryid=48>)

**Gamma:** Tropical Storm Gamma, the 24th named storm of the record breaking Atlantic hurricane season, killed 14 people in Central America, including 11 in Honduras and 3 in Belize. Another 15 people were reported missing in Honduras. Gamma brought high winds and torrential rains to Honduras on Saturday, 19 November, cutting off several communities on the country's Caribbean coast. According to the Honduran government, the storm destroyed 48 homes, damaged 264 and forced more than 11,000 people to evacuate. In Belize, search teams blamed bad weather associated with Gamma for the crash of a private plane that killed three people. Throughout the emergency, the Honduran Red Cross maintained close coordination with PADRU in order to assess the situation and formulate adequate response. A disaster management delegate from PADRU was deployed to Honduras to assist with the relief operation. The following relief items were distributed in the affected areas of Honduras: 1,000 hygiene kits, 1,000 kitchen sets and 1,000 food parcels. (For more information please see the Federation's website <http://www.ifrc.org/where/country/cn6.asp?countryid=81>)

#### **Earthquake in Peru (August)**

In Moyobamba, the Peruvian Red Cross (PRC) team, led by a member of the National Intervention Team, worked with the community in the damage assessment and in the setting up of a camp with 21 tents to provide shelter to the affected people. Some 200 water filters were provided by the German Red Cross; so far 125 filters have been distributed and continuous coordination work was carried out with the Ministry of Health for the distribution of more water filters to the population. In addition, hygiene kits and diapers were sent to the region to assist 500 families. Funds from the Federation's DREF were used to purchase 300 hygiene kits. This was complemented with workshops on hygiene and disaster preparedness. DREF funds are also being used for the PRC response to the earthquake in Moquegua on 1 October. This earthquake highlighted the need for an improved focus on the identification of water sources and disaster preparedness in order to ensure that the population is better prepared for future earthquakes. (For more information please see the Federation's website

<http://www.ifrc.org/where/country/cn6.asp?countryid=135>)

#### **Fire in Bolivia (September)**

Disaster struck Bolivia again in late September when a large fire destroyed more than 160,000 hectares of tropical forest near Riberalta, close to the Brazilian border. Although fire fighters were able to control the fire several days

later, approximately 527 families, most of them farmers from Riberalta whose yucca, banana, rice and almond plantations were destroyed, were left with no food or shelter and, in many cases, suffering from respiratory infections. The greatest needs identified were for food, as most of those affected were subsistence farmers whose crops had been destroyed. PADRU and the Lima Regional Delegation supported the BRC with an allocation of CHF 30,000 released from the Federation's DREF to respond to the immediate relief needs of the most vulnerable members of the population. Food relief was provided via the BRC and the Federation for more than 300 families. Each family received a food package, along with sheets and towels. (For more information please see the Federation's website <http://www.ifrc.org/where/country/cn6.asp?countryid=33>)

#### **Floods in Costa Rica (September)**

Heavy rains began affected Costa Rica in mid September and caused flooding in several regions of the country, especially in the southern Pacific coastal area. Some 198 communities were affected and more than 1,500 people were obliged to evacuate their homes. 398 houses were reported as damaged by the rains, water and electricity supplies were affected in some areas, 48 bridges, 4 dikes and 28 sewerage systems were damaged, and over 100 roads were waterlogged. 30,000 CHF was allocated from the DREF to support the National Society, through PADRU and Panama Regional Delegation. (For more information please see the Federation's website <http://www.ifrc.org/where/country/cn6.asp?countryid=51>)

#### **Floods and Volcanic Activity in El Salvador (October)**

In October, El Salvador was struck by two natural disasters causing much suffering, hardship and, in many cases, separating individuals from their families. Firstly, the Ilamatepec volcano began hurling out hot lava rocks on 1 October, killing at least two people and forcing more than 2,000 to flee. Secondly, the country experienced heavy rains, flooding and landslides as a result of the passage of Hurricane Stan through the region in early October. Rains brought on by Hurricane Stan killed at least 69 people in 11 departments of El Salvador; 26 in La Libertad 22 in San Salvador, 5 in La Paz, 4 in Usulután, 3 in Sonsonate, 2 in Cuscatlán, 2 in San Vicente, 2 in Santa Ana, 1 in Ahuachapán, 1 in La Unión and 1 in Morazan. The Salvadorean Red Cross Society (SRC) will prioritize 4,200 families to receive essential relief items. In the longer-term, given that many vulnerable families' homes were damaged or destroyed, together with their possessions and/or crops, there is a need for assistance with housing in order that families may leave the shelters; the Salvadorean Red Cross Society also plans to distribute seed packages to help farmers whose crops were lost so that they may replant. The National Society also seeks to distribute vouchers for the purchase of educational supplies to encourage families to continue sending their children to school. In addition, vulnerable communities and those living in shelters will be assisted with training in basic hygiene and sanitation, access to clean drinking water and psychosocial support to help beneficiaries recover from the effects of the disasters. The SRC is working in close coordination with the Panama Regional Delegation and the Pan American Disaster Response Unit (PADRU), as well as Partner National Societies present in the country. This operation is ongoing and is expected to conclude in April 2006. (For more information please see the Federation's website <http://www.ifrc.org/where/country/cn6.asp?countryid=62>)

#### **Drought in Paraguay (October)**

A period of prolonged drought affected 4,900 families in the department of Boquerón in Paraguay this year, where little to no rain has fallen since April. The western region of Paraguay, called the "Paraguayan Chaco", which includes the department of Boquerón, has a population of 160,214 inhabitants. This region experiences droughts on an almost annual basis. On 26 September 2005, the Paraguayan National Conference declared a state of emergency in the Chaco region for six months. An estimated total of 11,518 families (52,990 people) in 265 communities in the 3 departments in the Chaco region have been affected. Based on surveys carried out in the affected departments, the Paraguayan Red Cross is providing food supplements to 1,150 families in 22 communities in the department of Boquerón. Communities that are reliant on locally grown crops, have exhausted their food reserves and are located far from urban centres are being prioritized. The local communities are being organized in order to better manage these food distributions, which are being carried out with funding provided by the Federation's DREF. (For more information please see the Federation's website <http://www.ifrc.org/where/country/cn6.asp?countryid=134>)

#### **Floods and Volcanic Activity in Colombia (November)**

Colombia was affected by three major disasters in November. The country's annual rainy season has been particularly heavy this year, leaving 80 people dead, 93 injured and 4 missing. In total, 58,359 families (268,944 people) have been affected. Floods have caused major damage in 26 departments destroying 709 houses, damaging

another 23,479 and forcing 5,000 people into shelters. In addition to these floods, the Colombian islands of Providencia and San Andres were affected by Hurricane Beta. Beta affected 913 families (3,074 people) in Providencia. The third disaster occurred when the Galeras volcano erupted on 24 November. The National Disaster Preparedness and Response System (SNPAD) ordered the immediate evacuation of about 9,000 people living on the slopes of the Galeras volcano. DREF funds were allocated to respond to the floods and volcanic activity in the country. The CRCS has worked in close coordination with PADRU in response to these emergencies. (For more information please see the Federation's website <http://www.ifrc.org/where/country/cn6.asp?countryid=48>)

### **Impact**

The Americas disaster response system attended to the needs of thousands of families during the reporting period. In order to respond to the devastating hurricane season and other disasters which have struck the region in recent months, the Federation mobilized some CHF 1,438,000, providing essential funds to National Societies, allowing them to immediately implement much needed emergency response activities. In total, four emergency appeals were launched during the reporting period for more than CHF 10 million to assist those most severely affected by the recent disasters.

### **Constraints**

The severity of the 2005 hurricane season stretched the capacities of PADRU and the National Societies to the limit, which served to highlight staffing issues within PADRU; the constant rotation of specialized personnel, for the most part expatriates who are in the region for an average of one year or less, does not allow for continuity within the disaster response programme and decreases the efficacy of projects and operations.

### **Programme Objective 2: Disaster Response Preparedness.**

#### **Expected Results:**

**At the request of the Regional Delegations, PADRU will contribute through technical support to the strengthening of the capacities of National Societies to reduce risk, prepare for, respond to and recover from disasters. Disaster preparedness and response mechanisms will be improved through systematic early warning, disaster monitoring and information sharing mechanisms.**

#### **Progress/Achievements:**

##### **Logistics**

The Regional Logistics Unit's (RLU) purchasing processes improved during the 2005 hurricane season, in particular through the signing of a service agreement with the British Red Cross. The RLU was able to consolidate its inventory and establish a goal of 10,000 families to receive assistance in case of an emergency. The vehicle leasing programme has 24 vehicles rented and 17 more available; however, there is still a problem with recovering costs. Work will continue in 2006 to make National Societies aware of the advantages of leasing vehicles through the vehicle leasing programme.

PADRU's warehouse in Panama's Colon Free Zone is now fully functioning and a person has been hired to manage the building and supplies. Half of the stocks in the Colon warehouse are reserved for UNICEF, which is shouldering a large portion of its costs.

One of the areas of logistics that still requires further work is the mapping of logistics capacities in the National Societies in the region. A new logistics officer has been hired in PADRU who is currently distributing questionnaires to the National Societies as a means of identifying their needs; however, to date only 7 of the 35 National Societies in the region have responded.

During the reporting period, much of the efforts of the RLU were dedicated to sending emergency relief supplies to countries affected by the numerous disasters that have hit the region in recent months. In 2005, the RLU shipped 273,981 kilograms of relief items to El Salvador, Grenada, Guatemala, Guyana, Haiti, Jamaica, and Mexico, primarily kitchen sets and mosquito nets. Despite the large number of relief items shipped in 2005, costs for this year have been less than in 2004 due to the fact that in 2004 large quantities of construction materials were sent.

### **Regional Intervention Teams**

One of the major successes of the RITs programme is that the National Societies now consider the RITs as invaluable, are more committed to the concept and to the strengthening of RITs; it is hoped that the momentum will be sustained in 2006. There is the need to create a global RITs data base in order to be in a position to identify the mobilization of RITs members. It is also important to analyze how best the RITs can contribute during periods when there are no disasters and how they can support PADRU and their own National Societies. A general RITs workshop was held during the reporting period as well as a logistics workshop, both in Trinidad. Of the RITs members who undertook missions during the year, one was mobilized to Cuba, 5 to Guatemala and 2 to the United States.

PADRU's internship programme also continued throughout the year, with 10 National Societies taking part, as well as Ericsson Response.

### **Contingency Plans**

A workshop on Piloting Response and Contingency Plans, promoted by PADRU, was held in the city of Pasto, Colombia from 30 November to 3 December in order to strengthen response and contingency planning, validate the material on this topic and exchange experiences among the affected countries in order to improve future operations. This important event was carried out with 11 participants from the Colombian Red Cross Society, 5 participants from the Ecuadorian Red Cross, 2 participants from the Mexican Red Cross, 2 participants from the Salvadorean Red Cross Society, 1 consultant, 1 participant from OXFAM and a disaster management delegate from PADRU.

### **ECHO--Strengthening disaster management capacity in the Caribbean**

In 2005 PADRU received programmatic funding from the Humanitarian Aid Department of the European Commission which is supporting PADRU's activities in the Caribbean region, in particular with regard to its mandate to support the National Societies in reducing risk, prepare for, respond to and recover from disasters. The need to have an effective disaster response capacity in place in a region as exposed to disasters as the Caribbean is obvious and undisputed, and the Red Cross is well placed to provide disaster response. This is particularly true in the many Caribbean states where governments do not have sufficient capacity to manage response in the event of a disaster. The main objective of this project is to reduce the impact of disaster on the most vulnerable populations in the Caribbean through the establishment of efficient and coordinated regional response capacities. Several activities have been carried out within the framework of this project, including the 2005 Pre Hurricane Meeting, the Red Cross Disaster Management Directors' Meeting, two Regional Intervention Team workshops, and work on the contingency and response planning guide.

### **IT and Telecommunications**

The IT and telecommunications programme provides important support for disaster response operations, as well as ensuring appropriate telecommunications capacity for PADRU. It is essential that the team in PADRU works closely with telecommunications in the different programme areas. The Ericsson GSM container used in the operation in response to Hurricane Katrina has been pre-positioned in PADRU and an Ericsson response programme volunteer is currently working in facilitating its use. During the last few months of the year, work has been carried out on the installation of a new telephone switchboard donated to PADRU by Ericsson. In addition, a mapping exercise of telecommunications resources was carried out in Central America and in the Caribbean countries of Grenada, Jamaica, Bahamas, Cuba, Guyana, Dominican Republic, Anguilla, the Cayman Islands and Trinidad and Tobago.

### **Water and Sanitation**

In September a volunteer from the Red Cross Society of Panama who has been RITs and FACT trained and had been deployed to the field to assist in various emergency operations, was hired as the new water and sanitation officer to work in PADRU. Since then, the inventory of water and sanitation equipment has been updated and maintenance and repairs performed on the equipment. During the hurricane season, assistance was provided to the Guatemalan Red Cross in evaluating water and sanitation needs. A water system was sent to the country to provide clean water to 2,000 families along with two water pumps. In addition, 10 volunteers were trained in the cleaning of wells. The water and sanitation officer also assisted the Honduran Red Cross in its emergency response activities following Tropical Storm Gamma.

**Monitoring and Information**

During the reporting period several advances have been made in the area of information during times of disaster. Throughout the busy hurricane season a constant and steady flow of information was maintained through the Federation's Disaster Management Information System. The PADRU website has been updated to include all of the latest information regarding the events of the hurricane season and other disasters that occurred during the period. In addition, much effort went into producing other information products, such as a video about the 2004 hurricane season and a brochure about the Ericsson Response Programme. In addition, work was done to promote the image of the Red Cross, in particular PADRU, during all emergency operations. The information programme has allowed for better visibility for PADRU and has made National Societies more aware of the importance of sharing information regarding their activities.

**Impact**

The emergency response operations carried out during the reporting period have demonstrated a high level of motivation and commitment among Federation and National Society staff and volunteers, which resulted in emergency operations being well handled. The use of DREF and PADRU's pre-deployment strategy for positioning disaster management experts in country prior to a disaster have worked well and have been well received by the National Societies. The acceptance of PADRU's proposal to ECHO for programmatic funding represents a major step forward for the unit as this ensures funding for vital disaster response preparedness activities. Communication and coordination also significantly improved during the reporting period, both within in PADRU itself as well as with other Federation offices, National Societies and Partner National Societies in the region. Finally, PADRU's image has improved significantly both within and outside the Movement and is increasingly seen as a valuable participant in inter-agency activities.

**Constraints**

The severity of the 2005 hurricane season stretched the capacities of PADRU and the National Societies to the limit, which served to highlight staffing issues within PADRU; the constant rotation of specialized personnel, for the most part expatriates who are in the region for an average of one year or less, does not allow for continuity within the disaster response programme and decreases the efficacy of projects and operations.

*[Contributions list below; click here to return to the title page and contact information.](#)*

## CASH

REQUESTED IN APPEAL CHF ----->	2,061,935				TOTAL COVERAGE 66.6%
AMERICAN - RC	200,000	USD	226,400	07.02.05	
BRITISH - GOVT/DIFD GRANT			35,000	01.01.05	
BRITISH - RC	14,080	GBP	30,709	18.05.05	LOGISTICS WORKSHOP
BRITISH - RC	26,000	GBP	58,747	04.08.05	DISASTER MANAGEMENT
BRITISH - RC	11,000	GBP	24,855	17.08.05	DELEGATE
ECHO (01001)	500,000	EUR	775,000	27.07.05	STOCK
ERICSSON	17,201	USD	19,472	27.05.05	DISASTER MANAGEMENT
SWEDISH - GOVT	500,000	SEK	84,150	20.06.05	
SUB/TOTAL RECEIVED IN CASH			1,254,333	CHF	60.8%

## KIND AND SERVICES (INCLUDING PERSONNEL)

DONOR	CATEGORY	QUANTITY	UNIT	VALUE CHF	DATE	COMMENT
SPAIN	DELEGATE(S)			81,800		
CANADA	DELEGATE(S)			36,800		
SUB/TOTAL RECEIVED IN KIND/SERVICES				118,600	CHF	5.8%

## ADDITIONAL TO APPEAL BUDGET

DONOR	CATEGORY	QUANTITY	UNIT	VALUE CHF	DATE	COMMENT
SUB/TOTAL RECEIVED				0	CHF	