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Emergency appeal operation update

Cuba: Hurricane Sandy

 International Federation
of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

Emergency appeal n° MDRCU002
GLIDE n° TC-2012-00180CUB
Operation update n°1
20 December 2012

Period covered by this Ops Update: 5 to 22
November 2012.

Appeal target (current): CHF 12,223,402 Swiss francs to support the Cuban Red Cross provide humanitarian assistance to approximately 175,000 beneficiaries (35,000 families) over 12 months.

Appeal coverage: This appeal currently stands at approximately **40 per cent** based on the total of in-kind donations, registered and unregistered pledges. Further contributions are urgently needed to help the Cuban Red Cross to meet the immediate needs of the most vulnerable people affected by the floods.

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Appeal history:

- On 27 October 2012, a **Preliminary Emergency Appeal** was issued seeking 5,453,221 Swiss francs to support the Cuban Red Cross (CRC) to assist 15,000 families (75,000 beneficiaries) for nine months.
- 550,000 Swiss francs were allocated from the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies' (IFRC) Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF) to support this operation. Non-earmarked funds to replenish the DREF are encouraged.
- On 5 November 2012, an **Emergency Appeal** in the amount of Swiss francs 12,223,402 was issued as a result of the extent of needs reflected in assessments.

Summary: The passing of the Hurricane Sandy through the Cuba caused eleven deaths and extensive damage to 200,000 houses, affecting approximately one million people. The Cuban Red Cross aims to provide non-food items to 10,000 families (50,000 people), provide 15,000 families with shelter support and strengthen the response capacity of the National Society. During this reporting period, four charter flights with non-food relief items (NFIs) for 3,000 families arrived in the airport in Santiago de Cuba, located on the East coast of the island. The National Society started NFI distributions on 9 November. Additionally, CRC volunteers continue to support the government efforts, providing information on water purification through chlorination, proper food handling and hygiene promotion to reduce the risk of flood-related emerging diseases.

The IFRC expresses its sincere gratitude to the following Partner National Societies (PNSs) and governments for their support for this appeal: the Brazil Permanent Mission in Geneva, the British Red Cross (with British government funds), the Canadian Red Cross (with Canadian government funds), the Danish Red Cross, the Japanese Red Cross Society, Irish Aid, the Netherlands Red Cross (with Netherlands government funds), the New Zealand Red Cross (with New Zealand government funds), the Norwegian Red Cross and the Norwegian government, the Swedish Red Cross, the Taiwan Red Cross. The IFRC also gratefully acknowledges the Voluntary Emergency Relief Fund of the World Health Organization (WHO) for its contribution to this operation.



Cuban Red Cross volunteers unloaded non-food items for relief distributions in the Santiago de Cuba airport. Source: Cuban Red Cross

The situation

On 25 October 2012, Hurricane Sandy hit land in Mar Verde (near the South-eastern city of Santiago de Cuba) and head North on the island until Punta Lucrecia in the Holguin province. Faced with this emergency, the national civil defence plan and the Santiago provincial defence council were activated and coordinated the preventive evacuation of 343,230 people. Despite these precautions, the hurricane caused eleven deaths and significant damage to homes. Over 194,767 homes were damaged and another 32,521 were destroyed. The city of Santiago de Cuba, in the path where the hurricane was strongest, experienced the heavy winds. Storm surges took place on the South-eastern coast. In Siboney, 14 kilometres from the city of Santiago de Cuba, the waves reached up to 10 metres above the coastal barrier and sea surges reached up to 35 metres inland.

The Cuban government is conducting further assessments to determine the extension of damage and required materials. Over 200,000 affected homes already have been registered and an estimated 1,000,000 persons need shelter solutions. United Nations figures estimate that approximately 3,000,000 people were indirectly affected. Based on the assessed needs, construction materials will be subsidized 50 per cent to support the repairs and rebuilding. At the end of this reporting period, electricity services were re-established and running at 85 per cent of their pre-hurricane capacity; the water service was re-established.

Coordination and partnerships

The National Defence Council, the state institution responsible for disaster response, leads the response efforts. The council provides oversight and guidance to the provincial defence councils responsible for identifying and selecting target population and implementing relief actions. The local branches of the Cuban Red Cross are part of these councils. Additionally, as the Cuban Red Cross branch president in Santiago de Cuba is also the provincial director of the Ministry of Health in the Santiago province, close coordination between the National Society and state efforts are prompt and effective.

The Ministry for Foreign Trade and Investments (MINCEX) and the state's implementing agency for donations (*Empresa Ejecutora de Donativos- EMED*) are also channelling donations to the relief actions. The ministry receives donations and then ensures their prompt distribution. Identified needs for affected families including roofing materials, non-food items, storage supplies, and water pumps. Although several governments, including Venezuela, México, Peru, Japan and China have offered assistance, further support is needed due to the scope of affectation.

The United Nations, coordinating with the government efforts to avoid duplication, is distributing NFI. Coordination meetings are taking place with the United Nations agencies in country, OXFAM, Save the Children, CARE and other non-governmental organizations (NGO) in Cuba.

National Society Capacity Building: In recent times, the capacities of the Cuban Red Cross were strengthened with the obtainment of equipment and training through the recent DIPECHO and PRECO projects. These resources are being used in this emergency. Further strengthening and reposition of non-food items is planned when the early response activities are completed, as detailed in the CRC's plan of action.

Red Cross and Red Crescent action

Overview

The Cuban Red Cross initially was assigned to the urban area of Santiago de Cuba, while the UN and NGOs focused their efforts in nearby communities. However, the national coordinating body has requested that the National Society also provide humanitarian assistance in the provinces of Guantanamo and Holguin. The International Federation and Spanish Red Cross and Norwegian Red Cross have personnel in the area to ensure that the operational needs of the National Society are covered.

Progress towards outcomes

Relief distributions (food and basic non-food items)	
Outcome: Affected families from the provinces of Santiago de Cuba, Holguin and Guantanamo benefit from the distribution of non-food items to help them recover from the effects of the hurricane.	
Outputs (expected results)	Activities planned
10,000 families (50,000 people) are reached with non-food items.	<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 the relief activities and provide reporting on relief distributions.

Progress: The state authorities have carried out needs assessments in the affected communities and distributed target lists to humanitarian agencies involved in the response effort. Selection criteria include the level of affliction (severe or moderate) and vulnerability (prioritizing senior citizens and people living with disabilities, families with very young children, single-parent families, and low-income households). Verification means are shared with stakeholders to ensure transparency. The distribution strategy relies on community organization to ensure the delivery of relief items. The Cuban Red Cross and community committees jointly carry out duly registered distributions to prioritized beneficiary families.

The Cuban Red Cross, in close coordination with local authorities, is engaged in the distribution of relief items for 3,000 families that had arrived on charter flights directly to the Santiago de Cuba airport. These NFIs include 3,000 hygiene kits, 6,000 jerry cans, and 3,000 buckets. Relief distribution is carried out in two manners. The first is the delivery of relief items to local popular councils, which in turn distribute these to the affected population in coordination with the National Society. The following table details the initial distributions conducted during this reporting period:

Local popular councils	Tarps	Shelter kits	Hygiene kits	Kitchen kits	Jerry cans	Mosquito nets
Mariana	100	10	9	9	18	18
Guillermón	50	12	12	12	24	24
Abel	50	5	5	5	10	10
Caney	100	10	7	7	14	14
San Pedrito	733	53				
Flores	500	25	25	25	50	50
Sueño	150	15	15	15	30	30
Vista Alegre	100	10	6	6	12	12
Altamira	300	20	16	16	32	32
Ciudamar	250	25	23	23	46	46
Los Maceos	50	5	1	1	2	2
Chicharrones	200	20	18	18	36	36
Cristo	200	20	17	17	34	34
Sigua (Juraguá)	100	10	6	6	12	12
Siboney	300	32	32	32	64	64
Mar Verde	300	30	28	28	56	56
Boniato	100	10	7	7	14	14
Manuel Isla	75	6	4	4	2	2
TOTAL	3658	318	231	231	456	456

Furthermore, on 21 November 2012, the National Society, based on target lists provided by the community councils, initiated the direct distribution of the following items to the prioritized affected population, including people living in shelters:

Direct Distribution	Tarps	Hygiene Kits	Kitchen kits	Jerry cans	Mosquito nets	Buckets	Tool kit
Cayo Granma	-	189	189	345	401	-	-
Los Caracoles-La Socapa	-	182	182	280	174	-	-
Cuidamar-Aguadores	86	43	43	172	86	0	10
Sigua	454	227	227	908	454	0	70
Agüero-Mar Verde	640	320	320	1280	640	0	200
Jose Marti Norte-La Risuena	0	331	331	0	662	0	110
Manuel Isla - Gascon Pinalito	0	186	186	744	372	0	20
Jose Marti Sur- Novoa	110	55	55	220	110	0	10
Cristo- La Tordera y Maceira	0	353	353	1059	706	0	40
Shelters	0	0	0	0	862	280	0
TOTAL	1,290	1,886	1,886	5,008	4,467	280	460

The specific needs registered during assessments are being used in these distributions. For example, households receive mosquito nets based on the number of unprotected beds in their homes. Distributions are underway in the provinces of Santiago, Holguin and Guantanamo. In addition to the recently received relief items in the previously mentioned charter flights, the prepositioned stock in the country allowed the Cuban Red Cross to deliver NFI for approximately 4,000 families, including blankets and mattresses not covered in this emergency appeal. An additional shipment for 2,000 families is on its way via sea to the port in Havana. The Spanish Red Cross, as bilateral cooperation to this appeal, is providing 1,500 tarpaulins, 1,000 kitchen sets, and 2,000 hygiene kits. Future operations updates will further detail the support channelled through the Cuban Red Cross.

Challenges: The operation is challenged due to the scarce transportation resources in the country, which delays shipping by land. Relief items had been stored in three different warehouses. Limited transport capacity generated delays in the pace of the operation.

Shelter

Outcome: 15,000 families from the provinces of Santiago de Cuba, Holguin and Guantanamo are assisted with their shelter needs.	
Outputs (expected results)	Activities planned
15,000 families are supported with the reconstruction of their damaged roof tops with roof repair kits.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identification of communities and specific beneficiaries in coordination with local government authorities. • Procurement of material for the reconstruction of damaged roofs, including galvanized sheets, hurricane straps, steel or timber beams and nails.
15,000 families are provided with shelter kits (including 2 tarpaulins each).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provision of technical assistance and guidance to family members. • Supervision of the repair of damaged houses. • Reproduction of educational materials for repairing houses and on the

<p>15,000 families are given community training on techniques for house repair.</p> <p>Members of 6 communities in the 3 affected provinces gain awareness of weaknesses and resources regarding shelter safety at community level.</p>	<p>Participatory Approach to Safe Shelter Awareness (PASSA).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training sessions on home repair. • Implementation of a PASSA promotion campaign for affected families in 6 communities.
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Progress: The national authorities carried out a house-by-house technical assessment in the affected areas to identify the specific needs of future beneficiaries. Current government plans support less vulnerable families with a subsidy for 50% of the cost of construction materials. The CRC plans to provide assistance to lower-income families.



The Cuban Red Cross provided tarpaulins to affected families until more permanent solutions can be delivered. Source: CRC

Upon the request of national authorities, the shelter and tool kits will be distributed to community councils, which will provide support according to particular target families needs. For example, some families might need more than two tarpaulins while others might only need one. The distribution model relies heavily on established community organization. Skilled community council members receive the tools to assist in housing repair for the most vulnerable families and train new community members. These community-based structures will be employed for the distribution and installation of more permanent zinc roofing.

The National Society currently has distribution plans to provide 2,925 tarpaulins and 265 tool kits to affected families, while an additional 1,290 tarpaulins and 460 tool kits were delivered to community councils for coordinated community-level distributions. The Cuban Red Cross has

printed flyers with instructions for adequate tarpaulin installation to distribute to local councils, thus contributing to a sturdy temporary solution until damaged roofs can be permanently repaired.

A purchase order was processed for the first 1,500 roof repair kits containing zinc roof sheets, hurricane straps and nails. The Norwegian Red Cross, in a bilateral contribution to this appeal, will provide 280 roof kits.

Challenges: The diversity of needs of the most vulnerable population is being addressed by the strategic and knowledgeable actions by the local community councils. The country's strong community structures permit more tailor-made attention to the needs of affected households.

Water, sanitation, and hygiene promotion

<p>Outcome: The risk of waterborne and water related diseases is reduced through the provision of safe water as well as hygiene promotion amongst the population affected by Hurricane Sandy.</p>	
<p>Outputs (expected results)</p>	<p>Activities planned</p>
<p>Access to safe water is provided to 10,000 families</p> <p>10,000 families receive hygiene kits and hygiene promotion</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identification of communities and specific beneficiaries in coordination with local government authorities. • Procurement of materials in line with Federation procurement procedures. • Distribution of chlorine tablets for a duration of 60 days, jerry cans, buckets, thermoses and water filters. • Distribution of hygiene kits. • Reproduction of educational materials for sanitation and hygiene

	<p>promotion campaigns.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hygiene promotion for affected families (50,000 persons).
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Progress: As mentioned in the section on relief distribution, 3,000 hygiene kits, 6,000 jerry cans, and 3,000 buckets have arrived in country. By the end of this reporting period, the National Society had directly distributed to affected families or to community councils a total of 2,117 hygiene kits, 5,464 jerry cans and 280 buckets. Following coordination with the National Society, the Ministry of Health now distributes the buckets and 300,000 chlorination tablets also delivered through the air charter. As the water supply has been recovered, the authorities are carrying out a campaign about water purification. This includes printed material, as well as television and radio ads. The CRC volunteer network supports the government efforts by providing families with information on chlorination and proper food handling. Hygiene promotion activities are also taking place to prevent the outbreak of water-borne diseases.

Challenges: While there are no current challenges, the National Society, in coordination with the appropriate local authorities, has increased hygiene promotion and health information activities to prevent the possibility of an outbreak of flood-related health conditions.

Capacity of the National Society

Outcome: The capacity of the CRC to assist with relief activities is strengthened.	
Outputs (expected results)	Activities planned
<p>Relief and operations teams are well equipped and trained to support authorities with preventive and relief efforts.</p> <p>The emergency operation is evaluated and recommendations are gathered.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Procurement of equipment for 21 NITs who are operational throughout the country. • Procurement of equipment for 29 relief operations teams at provincial and municipal level, sufficient for 290 volunteers. • Procurement of suitable protective gear with visibility for 1,830 volunteers at community level. • Carrying out one Damage and Needs Assessment (DANA) and one National Intervention Team (NIT) training for volunteers. • Holding of a lessons learned workshops with representatives from all the branches involved in the operation. • Hiring of an external consultant to conduct a specialized study. • Hiring of an external consultant to conduct a final evaluation

Progress: National Society capacity building activities are scheduled to begin after the completion of the early response phase, and pending additional funding. Future operations updates will provide details on the capacity building of the Cuban Red Cross.

Risk Reduction and early warning

Outcome: The capacity of the CRC to support early warning and preventive community-based measures in at-risk areas is strengthened in the provinces of Holguin, Santiago and Guantanamo.	
Outputs (expected results)	Activities planned
<p>Three highly vulnerable municipalities in Holguin, Santiago and Guantanamo have a Risk Reduction Centre as well as the one in Havana.</p> <p>Schools and homes for the elderly in affected municipalities in Holguin, Santiago and Guantánamo are reached with improved early warning.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Carry out one national VCA training for volunteers. • Refurbishing and improvement of the CRC Emergency Operations Centre operational centres in the 3 affected areas and the Havana headquarters. • Pre-positioning of 4 water and sanitation kits 2000 in these 4 centres for disaster preparedness purposes. • Provision of early warning systems, signage and information on disaster hazards in 24 schools and homes for the elderly.

Progress: Activities planned for this area will be after the end of the first response phase.

Logistics

Outcome: The local logistics capacity of the Cuban Red Cross Society to respond with relief items is strengthened with the support of standardized items prepositioned in the IFRC's zone Logistics Unit in Panama as well as enhanced with technical support	
Outputs (expected results)	Activities planned
Enhanced logistics capacity and technical support to facilitate the distribution of relief items to 35,000 families and other related activities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preparation of the logistics mobilization table. • Management of the logistics mobilization for the appeal and maintenance of relations with donors. • Procurement of transport services through the ZLU transport network. • International procurement. • Pipeline management of in-kind goods.

Progress: The operation has deployed a Regional Intervention Team (RIT) member to assist the CRC with the importation of goods for this operation. The CRC received four charter flights and two land cargos of the following times:

NFIs delivered by air	
Item	Quantity
Hygiene Kits	3,000
Kitchen Kits	3,000
Plastic sheeting	6,000
Tool kit	2,498
Mosquito nets	6,000
Jerry cans	6,000
Aquatabs	300,000
Buckets	3,000

The following table details the items in the pipeline and stand-by materials that are scheduled to arrive via sea:

Pipeline				
Item	IFRC-PNS	Iranian RC	Spanish RC	Total (in the pipeline)
Hygiene Kits	2,000	-	2,000	4,000
Kitchen kits	2,000	-	1,000	3,000
Plastic sheeting	2,028	-	1,500	3,528
Tool kits	1,014	-	-	1,014
Mosquito Nets	4,000	1,000	-	5,000
Jerry Cans	4,000	-	-	4,000
Aquatabs	-	-	-	-
Buckets	2,000	-	-	2,000
Blankets	-	2,000	-	2,000
Tents	-	100	-	100

Challenges: At the moment, the Cuban Red Cross does not face serious logistics problems, except those caused by the scarcity of available vehicles.

Communications – Advocacy and Public Information

The IFRC Secretariat has provided technical support in communications and outreach to the media. Audiovisual and print articles and reports have been disseminated on television, web sites, and social media, including the BBC, Monacle Radio, NTlevision, Daily Telegraph, Voice of Russia, and the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement on Facebook and www.cruzroja.org. A video on logistics of the operation is being development and will be available soon.

Contact information

For further information specifically related to this operation please contact:

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How we work

All IFRC 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 the Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Disaster Response (Sphere) in delivering assistance to the most vulnerable.

The IFRC's vision is to inspire, encourage, facilitate and promote at all times all forms of humanitarian activities by National Societies, with a view to preventing and alleviating human suffering, and thereby contributing to the maintenance and promotion of human dignity and peace in the world.

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1. Save lives, protect livelihoods, and strengthen recovery from disaster and crises.
 2. Enable healthy and safe living.
 3. Promote social inclusion and a culture of non-violence and peace.
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