

DEPARTMENT OF DISASTER MANAGEMENT



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PRESS NOTICE #10 ISLAND UPDATES: JAMAICA, GRENADA

Thursday, 16th September 2004

JAMAICA

Water and sanitation supplies from the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) are part of a shipment of goods totaling US\$23,000.00, slated to arrive in Jamaica on Thursday, September 16, in response to the serious challenges facing the island's children following the passage of Hurricane Ivan. These supplies include water purification tablets, water containers, chlorine bleach and oral rehydration salt for the treatment of diarrhea.

UNICEF has also procured US\$10,000.00 worth of goods for children in 10 government-operated homes, which were severely damaged by the hurricane. The Island suffered extensive damage to houses, environment, and infrastructure. Coastal road damage was primarily due to storm surges and flooding.

- The National Emergency Operations Centre confirmed fifteen fatalities.
- 207 communities in 11 parishes have reported damage.
- Agricultural sector severely affected. Losses reported in livestock and banana industry

Water supply affected. Lack of electricity to operate pumps.

Preliminary assessments suggest that the level of impact may only require targeted assistance.

Response & Relief Efforts

1. Damage assessment teams deployed throughout the island. Inter-agency team conducting house-to-house assessment of damage.
2. Registration Centres opened island wide for victims. A voucher system has been established for victims to redeem at stores for relief supplies.
3. Efforts are ongoing to reduce the number of persons in shelters and to find alternative accommodation for all persons housed in schools. 19,000 are currently in 358 shelters
4. Food supply airlifts organized to communities severely affected and currently cut off
5. Clearing of Roads - 101 roads cleared and now accessible.
6. Restoration of Power - Restored to critical areas such as the Kingston & Jubilee Hospital, Sangster's International Airport and water pumping stations at Mona, Hope Road in Kingston and Great River, Montego Bay. Full restoration of power may take some time due to the extent of damage to the system.
7. Red Cross has supplied relief items valued at US\$348,458.

8. The National Emergency Organisation Centre continues to coordinate relief and recovery efforts.

Regional and International Assistance

CDERA Coordinator to visit Jamaica to hold discussions with officials on September 16, 2004.

Government of Japan – in-kind contribution equivalent to approximately JPY12.2 M (USD111, 000) for emergency supplies (tents, electric generators, plastic sheets, sleeping mats and blankets).

OCHA cash grant and Norwegian cash grant of USD50, 000 each

The European Union has indicated its readiness to provide support as needs are identified.

GRENADA

The situation is improving incrementally. The major challenges are the pace of relief distribution, the continued lack of effective communication and environmental health issues. A CDERA field team assessed the situation on September 15th, 2004 and the report has been summarized below.

Deaths

The official death toll remains at 28 and 353 people are being treated at the Grenada General Hospital.

Security

A dusk till dawn curfew remains in effect and is enforced by regional security troops.

Food Distribution

Food supply is dwindling; more shipments of food are needed. Distribution of food was slow today due to transportation shortage, in particular, from the St Georges Harbour. More medium sized trucks capable of navigating the winding mountainous roads are required to meet the shortfall at both the airport and seaport. Consideration is being given to activating the Pearl's airport to the north of the country to expedite the movement of food and water. This will require helicopters with sling-load capability. There is a shortage of volunteers to assist with the distribution of food and water. Community kitchens are required.

Water distribution

The amount of water supply restored in the parish of St George increased from 30 per cent to 75 per cent falling short of the original estimate of 90 per cent by Tuesday. Work continues but reports are that people are breaking the mains to get water and therefore slowing the process of restoration. Until full supply is restored, the shortfall is being supplemented by bladders, tanks, water trucks, and bottled water.

Electricity

Electricity has been restored to a small section of St Georges as local and regional crews, provided by member states of CARILEC, continue to work during daylight hours to restore power.

Telephone and communications

Telephone service has also been restored to sections of St George but remains down in most of the country. Internal communications remains a major challenge. There is limited communication between the Emergency Operation Centre and its teams in the field, between the airport and seaport, and communication with the public. In order to rectify the challenges, at least 100 hand held VHF short range radios and three repeater stations are required as well as 7,000 wind-up radios or solar-powered AM/FM radios for distribution to the general population.

Housing and Shelters

There is no one currently assessing the housing sector and its needs. Discussion has started with the United Nations in an effort to mobilize funds to commission an assessment and identify needs. Groups of people in rural villages have started reconstructing homes in exchange for food.

Environmental Health

An environmental health hazard has arisen now that rains have come. The runoff, which contains pathogens from several sources including human waste, is contaminating rivers where people are washing and bathing. The Pan American Health Organization (PAHO) has identified the need for 5,000 dry pit latrines. The health agency is aiming to send in a sanitary engineer to address this issue and the United Nations is trying to source the latrines. PAHO has reported that it was contacted by the Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Health in Grenada and advised that the services of Environmental Health personnel were urgently needed.

Public Service

Permanent Secretaries of nine ministries met yesterday at the EOC to devise an action plan that would make the public service operational.

Agriculture

The nutmeg industry has been damaged but has not been totally destroyed.

Immediate Needs

1. More medium sized trucks, capable of navigating the winding mountainous roads are required to meet the shortfall at both the airport and seaport;
2. Food supply is dwindling, more food is needed;
3. The services of a helicopter with sling-load capacity is urgently required;
4. Volunteers are needed to assist with the distribution of food and water;
5. Community kitchens are required;
6. At least 100 VHF short range radios and three repeater stations are required to rectify one layer of communication challenges;
7. About 7,000 wind-up radios or solar-powered AM/FM radios are required for distribution to the general population to rectify another layer of communication challenges;
8. Battery operated lanterns are required;
9. The National Water and Sewerage Authority requires urgently four 6-inch flanged pressure reduction valves with a reduction range of 250 to 100 psi and six 5,000-watt portable gas operated lighting generators for night-time plant operations and administrative operations;
10. PAHO has reported that it was contacted by the Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Health in Grenada and advised that the services of Environmental Health personnel were urgently needed;
11. A urgent assessment of the housing sector and its needs is required; urgent initial health supplies identified by PAHO are: 50 medical (first aid) kits for the shelters, disinfectants, generators, sterile gauzes, oxygen, cold-chain equipment for vaccines, oral rehydration salts, and refrigerated insulin;
12. PAHO has said that it will cost US\$470,000 to meet the cost of emergency needs.

Regional, International Response

1. WRB Enterprises, Inc has donated US\$250,000 to the CDERA Grenada Appeal Fund;
2. The Government of Anguilla is dispatching 1,230 cases of water and a quantity of fruit juices, soft drinks, rice, and other dry goods;
3. The European Commission through the Humanitarian Aid Office (ECHO) has earmarked 1.5 million Euros in humanitarian aid to meet emergency needs in shelter, food, drinking water, hygiene kits and tarpaulins for house roofing;
4. UNICEF has provided health kits for up to 5,000 people over a three-month period and 5,000 doses of oral rehydration packets to prevent dehydration from diarrhea – a particular threat to children under five. The shipment also included 200 collapsible water containers, trauma kits, and other supplies. The supplies have already landed in Grenada;
5. UNICEF has also provided a doctor and psychosocial expert to help the Government as it struggles with limited resources;
6. The Government of Canada has approved a contribution of CAD 500,000 in relief aid to the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies for assistance to the areas affected

- by the hurricane, in addition to its initial contribution of CAD 50,000 to support the mobilization of assessment teams. Emergency relief supplies are also being sent to Grenada;
7. The European Commission has earmarked EUR 1.5 million (USD 1.88 million) for humanitarian aid to Grenada, to assist the most vulnerable people with emergency;
 8. UN OCHA has released emergency cash grants of USD 100,000 (an OCHA cash grant and a Danish cash grant of USD 50,000 each);
 9. The International Federation of the Red Cross (IFRC) today launched a revised appeal increased to six million Swiss francs to support the current and ongoing relief operations being carried out by the Red Cross Societies in Grenada, Jamaica, Cuba and the Cayman Islands branch of the British Red Cross. The appeal funds will be used to provide shelter materials, food, blankets, kitchen sets, hygiene articles and jerry cans to support 85,000 people over the next six months;
 10. The IFRC which flew in a plane load of relief goods on September 12, 2004 has sent in a second cargo plane on 14 September, bringing 3,500 plastic tarpaulins in order to work towards meeting urgent shelter needs. All the relief items received have been distributed;
 11. The Canadian Red Cross is flying relief items into Grenada on a cargo flight scheduled for Wednesday, 15 September, carrying primarily watsan material and supplies (generators, water bladders, jerry cans, etc.). There has also been a contribution of relief goods from the Martinique Red Cross, and the Trinidad Red Cross has sent (by air) food supplies in the form of 9,600 tins of corned beef, 10,000 bags of rice (2 kg each), and 10,000 bags of red beans. The Red Cross team on the island is considering prioritizing the parishes of St. Georges, St. David and St. Andrew as these are highly populated areas of the country that were particularly badly hit by the hurricane;
 12. Regional and international organizations working in support of the Grenada Government and people include CDERA, UNDP, UNICEF, FAO, UNDAC, CIDA, USAID/OFDA, PAHO, IFRC, Trinidad Red Cross, Canadian Red Cross, Martinique Red Cross, PADRU, OCHA, SUMA Team (computerized relief tracking system)

Additional health personnel and volunteers from BVI are on standby to respond if necessary.

Arrangements are also being made locally for shipping of emergency supplies to Grenada. Please contact the DDM or visit www.bviplatinum.com for more information and for a copy of Grenada's current needs list.

CDERA is recommending that Participating States make a contribution in support of the Hurricane Ivan relief operations. Residents, companies or other interested parties in the BVI who wish to donate material or cash, should contact the Department of Disaster Management at 494-4499. Cash donations are also being accepted at FirstCaribbean International Bank, relief bank account #2345133338.

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It is better to prepare and prevent rather than repair and repent. S. Thomas 1856