

# Rebuilding homes and livelihoods in Jamaica after Hurricane Dean

## Background

On 19 August 2007, Hurricane Dean caused major destruction to Jamaica as a category 4 hurricane. Its winds caused extensive damage to infrastructure and property along the eastern and southern Jamaican coastline.

The Jamaica Red Cross Society carried out ten assessment missions between 21 and 22 August in coordination with members of other humanitarian organizations operating on the ground. The assessments identified 3,272 destroyed houses, 16,650 houses with major damage, and 18,053 houses with minor damage. In total 160,000 people were affected and four people died as a result of the hurricane. Flooding was limited to eastern Jamaica, where the ground had become saturated by rain the previous week, severely affecting the banana crop.

The Jamaica Red Cross Society had pre-positioned non-food emergency relief items throughout the country for immediate distribution and Red Cross volunteers distributed food and drinking water during the assessments. The Jamaica Red Cross Society quickly identified the need for additional relief supplies from the International Federation to reach over 1,200 families.

During the weeks following the hurricane, the Jamaica Red Cross Society began the process of evaluating the longer-term needs of the affected population. It started to plan recovery activities focusing on the rebuilding and repairing of homes, and on providing livelihood support to farmers and fisherfolk.

## The recovery programme

The Jamaica Red Cross Society and its partners collaborated on a number of housing reconstruction and livelihoods assistance projects targeting the social and economic recovery of those households most affected by Hurricane Dean.

Rebuilding and repairing homes was a priority. The Jamaica Red Cross Society and French Red Cross initiated a one-week joint assessment process to gather damage data related to shelters in order to support an

International Federation



*Hurricane Dean caused widespread destruction of shelter and livelihoods.*

application for funding from the European Commission Humanitarian Aid Department (ECHO). The process built on the detailed knowledge that the Red Cross branch staff and volunteers had of the affected communities and served to verify needs, map vulnerability and damage, and prepare beneficiary lists.

With the support of the Inter-American Development Bank, the Federation, the French Red Cross and ECHO, the Jamaica Red Cross Society successfully constructed 111 homes and repaired 85 roofs.

In November 2007, the Jamaica Red Cross Society started its livelihood support activities, which provided:

- agricultural assistance to 107 farmers
- fishing nets and lines to 218 fishermen
- poultry start-up supplies to 239 poultry farmers
- other small business assistance to 21 beneficiaries

The Jamaican Red Cross Society worked closely with a number of associations who provided advice on livelihoods support as well as assistance in identifying beneficiaries. The partnership with the fisherman's cooperative and the







