

Final Report

Cuba: Population Movement

DREF operation n°: MDRCU007	
Date of Issue: 20 January 2023	Glide number: N/A
Operation start date: 2 June 2022	Operation end date: 31 July 2022
Host National Society: Cuban Red Cross	Operation budget: 46,417 Swiss francs (CHF)
Number of people affected: 974	Number of people assisted: 660
Red Cross Red Crescent Movement partners currently actively involved in the operation: The International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC), the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC).	
Other partner organizations actively involved in the operation: Cuban Civil Defense, Government Ministries (Health, Trade, Energy, Housing), Defense Committees, Civil Society Organizations.	
The IFRC on behalf of the Cuban Red Cross spent a total of 27,143 CHF. The remaining balance of 19,274 CHF will be returned to the Disaster Response Emergency Fund.	
<i>The major donors and partners of the Disaster Response Emergency Fund (DREF) include the Red Cross Societies and governments of Belgium, Britain, Canada, Denmark, German, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Luxembourg, New Zealand, Norway, Republic of Korea, Spain, Sweden, and Switzerland, as well as DG ECHO, Blizzard Entertainment, Mondelez International Foundation, Fortive Corporation, and other corporate and private donors. The IFRC, on behalf of the Cuban Red Cross, would like to extend thanks to all for their generous contributions.</i>	

A. SITUATION ANALYSIS

Description of the disaster

Between 24 and 28 May 2022, 844 Haitian migrants, including several children and a baby, were travelling on a cargo ship intending to reach the United States, but landed on the coast of Caibarién, Villa Clara (central Cuba). On 28 May, another boat with 130 migrants landed in the province of Holguín resulting in a total of 974 Haitian migrants in need of support from the Cuban government.¹ According to migrants' testimonies, they sought to flee Haiti's violence and political and economic instability. Volunteers and staff from the provincial branches of the Cuban Red Cross (CRC) and local authorities were present when the situation was reported to provide medical assistance. People were transferred to temporary collective centers once the national established protocols were followed. The Cuban Red Cross supported the Ministry of Public Health with registration, first aid to those in need and ensuring everyone received a medical exam. Cuban authorities established contact with the Haitian government to ensure the safe and voluntary return of the migrants.

The number of Haitians arriving to Cuban shores continues to increase significantly, with the country's eastern provinces being the most affected. The authorities and the CRC have assisted migrants during their voluntary return process despite the challenges with the country's limited availability of supplies and food.

The Cuban Red Cross also activated its staff at the national headquarters with a group of approximately 15 people

¹[IFRC GO: Cuba Population Movement, 25 May 2022.](#)

to follow up and establish contact with the national authorities. Similarly, the provincial branches in Villa Clara and Holguin mobilized about 40 volunteers to support the activities of the Ministry of Public Health (MINSAP). The branch in Las Tunas provided support to deliver the remaining humanitarian aid, which was pre-positioned by the Red Cross movement (IFRC and ICRC) at the beginning of 2022. This initial assistance supported 310 people, but the remaining 660 were pending the RC services, attention, and humanitarian relief. The returnees were transferred to temporary collective centers following the respective country protocols.

Summary of response

Overview of Host National Society

The Cuban Red Cross coordinated with provincial, municipal and community authorities to support the migrant population. Municipal and community response teams were activated to assist with identification, relief and first aid. In addition, Psychosocial Support (PSS) and Restoring Family Links (RFL) brigades were activated along with the volunteers of Cuban Red Cross' local branches, with the support of personnel from Provincial and Municipal branches. Since the beginning of 2022, the Cuban Red Cross has assisted 2,212 Haitian migrants by delivering basic hygiene kits, providing first aid, and accompanying all the groups during the voluntary return to Haiti. The National Society coordinated with the International Organization for Migration (IOM) on the return flight 2 weeks after their arrival and attended the group to Haitian territory to ensure their safe return. Cuban Red Cross volunteers also contributed to the rapid assessment of the needs of people entering the country. All actions developed by the Cuban Red Cross were closely coordinated and linked with the COVID-19 National Response Plan and considered measures taken nationally to control the epidemic, such as individual protection, social distancing, and isolation. The Cuban Red Cross is allowed to operate and respond in this context in coordination with the national authorities. The National Society and volunteers, as a part of the Defense Councils and response mechanisms in Cuba authorized to implement activities in the country, implemented personal and collective measures to prevent the spreading of COVID-19 and other diseases such as cholera, HIV, and tuberculosis. Attention to people with dehydration symptoms and skin problems was also provided.

Overview of Red Cross Red Crescent Movement in country

The International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) continuously provided support and technical assistance to the Cuban Red Cross with situational analysis, response solutions, and scenario planning to offer the best possible relief to support the 974 people who arrived in Cuba. Initially, the Cuban Red Cross responded with its capacities and volunteers and supported the National Government assistance.

Since March 2020, the IFRC supported the Cuban Red Cross with the response to the COVID-19 global pandemic with funding of the Cuba Country plan managed by IFRC's Latin Caribbean Country Cluster Delegation (CCD) and financing of IFRC's global emergency appeal. Most recently, the IFRC has been supporting the CRC through the emergency appeal launched in response to the effects of Hurricane Ian in September 2022.

The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) supports the Cuban Red Cross and supports its restoring family links (RFL) activities and COVID-19 response through the ICRC regional delegation in Panama. ICRC and IFRC maintain constant coordination.

Overview of non-RCRC actors in country

The Provincial and Municipal Defense Councils were activated for the immediate attention and supported migrants with safe collective centers services, food, and care for pregnant women, children, people with disabilities and people of the third age. The Cuban Red Cross, as part of the National Defense Council, coordinates and works with National authorities. Specific coordination with the armed forces and the Ministry of Public Health is key to the development of the activities carried out by the National Society. All first aid and patient transfer support, as well as the delivery of kits, were carried out considering the list drawn up jointly for the registration of migrants. Management Centers for Risk Reduction and Civil society actors coordinate the plan and assist with the Cuban Red Cross. The plan of action has been designed and coordinated with local governments and formal and informal leaders.

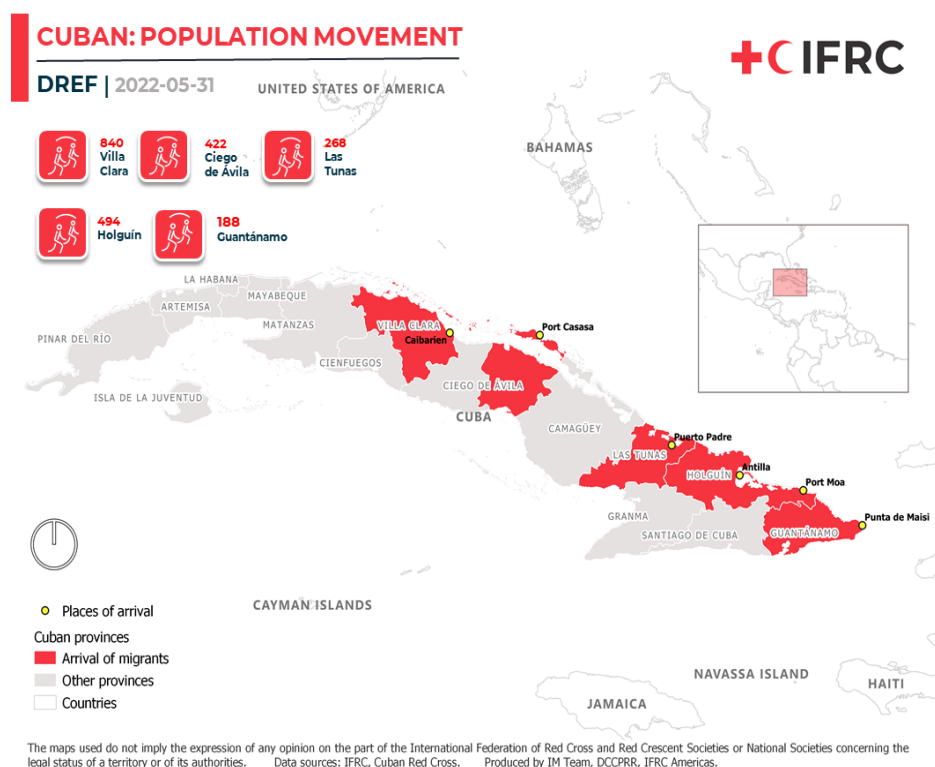
Needs analysis and scenario planning

The Cuban Red Cross has historically supported the Haitian migrants arriving in the country with services in the collective centers, medical attention, water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH), and protection measures. The staff and volunteers of the Cuban Red Cross continuously support government actions while responding to the needs of the affected population. After a long journey, during which they had to wait almost two months to leave their home country (Tortuga Island), the migrants arrived in Cuba, mainly suffering from dehydration and skin lacerations. Some of them arrived with gastrointestinal diseases, and some women were pregnant. The most severe cases were referred to health centers. The facilities where they were temporarily transferred are those of a tourist camp. Unfortunately, although the facilities were able to accommodate them, they did not have most of the supplies required, including access to drinking water. Emphasis was placed on the sanitation of the facilities, the distribution of personal hygiene items, and food provision for all persons.

Risk Analysis

There were significant risks facing the situation of migrants in the region which affected the arrivals in Cuba:

- This migration occurred during the first months of the 2022 hurricane season when people were exposed to severe meteorological events.
- COVID-19 cases are still present in Cuba despite the vaccination efforts and containment measures.
- Health risks related to the pre-conditions of the migrant population (malnutrition, unvaccinated, spread of non-communicable diseases) and timely access to health and hygiene services.
- Increased migration flows to Cuba and other countries in the region².
- Measures taken by the United States Government concerning Haitian migrants.



Summary of main places of arrival and number of migrants arriving in Cuba as of 31 May 2022. Source: IFRC.

² If people decide to return voluntarily, they are all guaranteed a return flight through IOM. In the case that some do not want to return, the government oversees the process for staying.

B. OPERATIONAL STRATEGY

Proposed strategy

The arrival of Haitian nationals in Cuba generates important challenges. The Haitian migrants were sailing for several days and were living in overcrowded conditions with little or no access to any food or water. Even pregnant women arrived in Cuba dehydrated and with pregnancy complications, which required a specialized response. Moreover, although the Cuban authorities provided an immediate response to such events with the support of the Red Cross, many of the supplies needed for the response were scarce and very expensive.

The IFRC, through this DREF operation, aimed to reposition some of the most used items during the migrant response (hygiene kits, first aid kits) and store them in two of the most affected provinces for future response. It is important to note that return processes to Haiti do not last more than 2 weeks, so they are quick responses in terms of time but require a lot of resources. The DREF comes to ease some of the burden and allowed the Cuban Red Cross to provide a better service in terms of migration.

Despite the logistical challenges and Cuba's own process for importing goods, the strategy of pre-positioning Household Items for this type of response has been very well accepted by the institutions of the Cuban Civil Defense System, of which the Red Cross is a part.

Overall Operational objective:

To establish Disaster Risk Reduction mechanisms as a strategy to respond to sporadic migratory events through the pre-positioning of humanitarian kits in key locations identified by local authorities and the Cuban Red Cross.

The Cuban Red Cross was able to support the Cuban government's humanitarian assistance to the incoming migrants with prepositioned household items.

Through its longstanding experience assisting migrants in need the National Society disseminated information on humanitarian assistance and distributed different kits (food, hygiene, and COVID-19 protection) as required. The Cuban Red Cross is part of the National Civil Defense and response mechanisms through which it provides humanitarian assistance to migrants in the country and promotes restoring family links. Considering the barrier languages associated with the Haitian migrants, PGI activities were promoted.

Human Resources

This emergency operation was implemented under the direct supervision of the Cuban Red Cross' President, who is the focal point for coordinating the implementation of this operation with the Head of the Country Cluster Delegation for the Latin Caribbean. The IFRC Americas Regional Office DCPRR team, through its Disaster Manager for the Caribbean region, monitored the operation remotely. The Disaster Risk Management Coordinator of the CCD for the Latin Caribbean was the focal point for the operation. The Americas Regional Logistics Unit also provided feedback and support regarding the shipping of humanitarian kits and visibility for the response.

40 volunteers from the affected branches were mobilized, and 15 people from headquarters were supporting the assistance. Similarly, staff from the HQ and other affected territories such as Ciego de Avila and Guantanamo also carried out support and monitoring activities. Approximately 100 staff and volunteers from the National Society supported this operation.

Logistics and supply chain

IFRC Americas Regional Logistics Unit coordinated the mobilisation of first aid kits and hygiene kits. The IFRC RLU managed the requests abiding to the necessary procedures and requirements to supply the Cuban Red Cross with the household items contemplated through this operation and ensured the quality control and authorisation levels required.

Communications and Community Engagement

National and international media have widely covered the arrival of migrants from Haiti in Cuba. Cuban Red Cross' spokespersons have informed about their humanitarian response and were keen to amplify on social media the impact of its work. IFRC's communications unit worked with AP and Radio Caibarién to obtain authorization to use the pictures gathered by their correspondents. Key messages on the emergency were drafted and made available to the parties.

The experience of the Cuban Red Cross responding to the needs of Haitian immigrants served to communicate in the most effective possible ways while respecting the language (Creole) and cultural aspects of the migrants.

- Cuban doctors who have served in Haiti were included in the operation.
- The National Society deployed staff from headquarters fluent in French and Creole to support the operation.
- Within the group of migrants, those who are fluent in Spanish were identified to transmit key messages and information on health, hygiene and basic water and sanitation.

The Cuban Red Cross volunteers actively implement community approaches to strengthen the primary health care system. In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, civil unrest and hurricane season events, the following actions are implemented:

- Participatory assessment, including information needs and preferred channels.
- Empowerment of individuals and communities.
- Inclusion of vulnerable and/or stigmatized people.
- Use of local knowledge.
- Improving the effectiveness of interventions.



Cuban Red Cross Volunteers assist the migrant population upon arrival. Source: [Twitter](#)

Security

The Cuban Red Cross is part of the Government response actions following security measures at the local, municipal, and provincial levels. The IFRC Americas Regional Office provides technical assistance to the Cuban Red Cross for Security.

Planning, Monitoring, Evaluation and Reporting (PMER)

The Cuban Red Cross does not have a PMER focal point and therefore all the PMER related work is carried out by the operations management teams. Information on the beneficiaries is gathered through the Civil Defense or Ministry of Public Health by the CRC teams. The PMER Senior Officer from the CDD for Latin Caribbean and ARO DCPRR team provided support to the National Society.

Administration and Finance

The Finance Delegate and Administration Officer from the CCD for the Latin Caribbean, with support from the Americas Regional Office, provided financial and administrative assistance to the Cuban Red Cross.

C. DETAILED OPERATIONAL PLAN



Health

People reached: 660

Male: 400

Female: 260

Indicators:	Target	Actual
# of people reached with health services	660	660
# of First Aid Kits distributed to branches	20	20
# of people transferred to health facilities	20	0

Narrative description of achievements

The Cuban Red Cross provided immediate attention to the Haitian migrants as this National Society has a long history of collaboration and support to this population. Throughout the years, the CRC provides first aid and health assistant to the migrants coming from Haiti and has become a national focal point. The National Society sets up health care points within the government-designated place for migrants to stay. There, general check-ups are given to each migrant and virus tests are also carried out. In the most frequent cases, they treat cases of dehydration caused by the journey, pre-natal check-ups for pregnant mothers and some minor injuries.

In providing the assistance to the migrants, the CRC used prepositioned stock in country for the immediate response. In turn, the IFRC Americas Regional Office logistics team processed the requests for the purchase, shipping, and transport of the first aid kits to replenish the in-country stock of the National Society.



IFRC shipped to the Cuban Red Cross 20 First Aid kits. The CRC in turn replenished their stock in the key geographical areas identified for this type of event (Guantanamo, Holguin, Ciego de Avila, Las Tunas and Villa Clara).

This event did not require the transfer of patient to health facilities. All dehydration and injuries cases were treated and followed up in-site.

Challenges

The biggest challenge for health care is mainly the shortage of medicines and medical supplies. The first aid kits help the branches have the basics, however, the repositioning of expendable material is not possible due to lack of availability.

On the other hand, importing goods into Cuba requires a very rigorous process that requires a lot of time and effort. Even if there is immediate availability to send emergency supplies, it is not possible to do so without the corresponding permits. These management times alter the expected result and the impact of the aid sent.

Lessons Learned

- The length of stay of Haitian migrants in Cuban territory is very short, so it is very difficult to think of a response other than the repositioning of materials (hygiene, fuel, visibility, first aid kits, etc.).

- The time taken to prepare, transport and receive goods to Cuba is very slow, so that a period of three months is not sufficient to guarantee that the items will reach their destination.
- The expertise of the Cuban Red Cross in this type of event and the constant coordination with the national authorities allows to speed up some processes. It is important to maintain this coordination to ensure the success of the operations in the country.



Water, sanitation, and hygiene

People reached: 660

Male: 400

Female: 260

Indicators:	Target	Actual
Purchase and distribution of personal hygiene kits	660	660

Narrative description of achievements

CRC volunteers work closely with National Authorities and are part of the response system in emergencies. As per their previous experiences attending to the needs of migrants, the CRC is constantly monitoring immigration flows. As part of their services, the Cuban Red Cross was able to provide immediate attention and distribute hygiene kits to the affected migrants.

Hygiene kits were for one person, sufficient for 1 month and included:

- Soap
- Shampoo and conditioner
- Toothbrush and toothpaste
- Body lotion
- Shave gel
- Deodorant
- Comb
- Bandages
- Hand sanitizer

Challenges

The hygiene kits took a long time to leave the port because the National Society did not have all the necessary permits for their release at the time of their arrival.

Moreover, fuel shortages in the country delayed the allocation of a vehicle to transport the kits from the port to the branches. Although this did not affect the people targeted, as it was a replenishment, it is important to have all the permits required by the authorities before shipping the cargo to its destination.

Lessons Learned

It is essential to allow the CRC enough time to process authorizations, permits and necessary in country transportation for the timely delivery of relief.

Strengthen National Society

Indicators:	Target	Actual
# of volunteers who increase their visibility in the field.	100	51

<i>IFRC provides assistance to the NS during the 2 months of the operation.</i>	Yes	Yes
<i># of monitoring visits by IFRC delegates</i>	1	0
Narrative description of achievements		
- The Americas Regional Office was able to process the purchase and logistics for the visibility items required for the strengthening of the Cuban Red Cross volunteers. However, it should be noted that the number of visibility kits was reduced, as prices were much higher than initially estimated. In the end, the National Society was able to dispatch 51 visibility kits including: - White T-shirt with Cuban Red Cross logo - Reflective waistcoat with Cuban Red Cross logo - Cuban Red Cross red operational overalls with Cuban Red Cross logo - The IFRC Latin Caribbean CCD provided CRCs with support throughout the implementation of this operation serving as a liaison between the CRC and different IFRC teams which converge in the implementation of this operation.		
Challenges		
- Some activities were planned to support the National Society with Partnerships and Coordination, but it was not possible to implement during this operations timeframe due to other emergencies. - Shipping the visibility items to Cuba posed delays and obstacles mainly related to import authorization from the government. - The prices of the visibility kits were higher than initially estimated, which led to a reduction in the number of kits sent. The kits were prioritized for members of the Cuban Red Cross immediate response teams, who participated in the intervention with Haitian migrants and other interventions at the national level. - Two monitoring visits were carried out by CCD staff; however, the costs were not charged to the operation.		
Lessons Learned		
- Given the widespread shortages in the country, it is important to ensure that all interventions include a component to strengthen the visibility and increase the response capacities of operational groups. - Although the National Society has information from the beginning of each event, it is often categorised as confidential by local authorities, and this makes it difficult to access. It is often important to consider a little more time for cases in Cuba in terms of submitting a DREF or EA proposal.		

D. Financial Report

See the final financial report [here](#).

Contact information

Click here for:

- [Emergency Plan of Action \(EPoA\)](#)

**For further information, specifically related to this operation please contact:
In the Cuban Red Cross National Society**

- **President:** Dr. Luis Foyo Ceballos, crsn@infomed.sld.cu

In the IFRC Americas Region

- **Head of Latin Caribbean Delegation:** Elias Ghanem, elias.ghanem@ifrc.org
- **Head of Disaster and Crisis Department:** Roger Alonso, roger.morgui@ifrc.org
- **Disaster Management Coordinator:** Gonzalo Atxaerandio, gonzalo.atxaerandio@ifrc.org
- **Head of Partnerships and Resource Development (Acting):** Mei Lin Leon, meilin.leon@ifrc.org
- **Communications Manager:** Susana Arroyo, susana.arroyo@ifrc.org
- **Head of PMER and Quality Assurance:** Golda Ibarra, golda.ibarra@ifrc.org
- **Head of Regional Logistics Coordinator:** Mauricio Bustamante, mauricio.bustamante@ifrc.org

In IFRC Geneva

- **DREF Senior Officer:** Eszter Matyeka, eszter.matyeka@ifrc.org
- **Operations Coordination Senior Officer:** Antoine Belair, antoine.belair@ifrc.org

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 Humanitarian 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.

DREF Operation

FINAL FINANCIAL REPORT

Selected Parameters			
Reporting Timeframe	2022/06-2022/12	Operation	MDRCU007
Budget Timeframe	2022	Budget	APPROVED

Prepared on 30/Jan/2023
All figures are in Swiss Francs (CHF)

MDRCU007 - Cuba - Population Movement

Operating Timeframe: 01 Jun 2022 to 31 Jul 2022

I. Summary

Opening Balance	0
Funds & Other Income	46,417
DREF Allocations	46,417
Expenditure	-27,143
Closing Balance	19,274

II. Expenditure by area of focus / strategies for implementation

Description	Budget	Expenditure	Variance
AOF1 - Disaster risk reduction			0
AOF2 - Shelter			0
AOF3 - Livelihoods and basic needs			0
AOF4 - Health	8,754		8,754
AOF5 - Water, sanitation and hygiene	24,137	26,758	-2,620
AOF6 - Protection, Gender & Inclusion			0
AOF7 - Migration			0
Area of focus Total	32,891	26,758	6,134
SFI1 - Strengthen National Societies	3,195		3,195
SFI2 - Effective international disaster management	9,905		9,905
SFI3 - Influence others as leading strategic partners	426	385	41
SFI4 - Ensure a strong IFRC			0
Strategy for implementation Total	13,526	385	13,140
Grand Total	46,417	27,143	19,274

DREF Operation

FINAL FINANCIAL REPORT

Selected Parameters			
Reporting Timeframe	2022/06-2022/12	Operation	MDRCU007
Budget Timeframe	2022	Budget	APPROVED

Prepared on 30/Jan/2023

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MDRCU007 - Cuba - Population Movement

Operating Timeframe: 01 Jun 2022 to 31 Jul 2022

III. Expenditure by budget category & group

Description	Budget	Expenditure	Variance
Relief items, Construction, Supplies	20,080	15,543	4,537
Water, Sanitation & Hygiene	15,180	15,543	-363
Medical & First Aid	4,900		4,900
Logistics, Transport & Storage	10,804	9,601	1,203
Storage	1,104		1,104
Distribution & Monitoring		5,885	-5,885
Transport & Vehicles Costs	8,700		8,700
Logistics Services	1,000	3,715	-2,715
Personnel	3,000		3,000
Volunteers	3,000		3,000
General Expenditure	9,700	343	9,357
Travel	6,000		6,000
Information & Public Relations	1,400	362	1,038
Office Costs	1,200		1,200
Communications	600		600
Financial Charges	500	-19	519
Indirect Costs	2,833	1,657	1,176
Programme & Services Support Recover	2,833	1,657	1,176
Grand Total	46,417	27,143	19,274