



Barbados Red Cross Society

Annual Report 2021



Message from Leadership

2021 was a year of unprecedented challenges and resilience for the Barbados Red Cross Society. Despite the ongoing effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, the eruption of La Soufrière volcano, and the passage of Hurricane Elsa, the Society continued to provide essential humanitarian assistance to the most vulnerable.

The Governing Board is especially proud of the staff and volunteers whose dedication ensured that BRCS remained a visible and trusted actor in the humanitarian landscape of Barbados.

About Us

The Barbados Red Cross Society (BRCS) was incorporated on 24 July 1969 by an Act of Parliament as a Voluntary Aid Society auxiliary to Government. It became a full member of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement in 1984. Guided by the **Seven Fundamental Principles**, the BRCS delivers core services such as Meals on Wheels, First Aid training, Disaster preparedness and response, Psychosocial Support, and Community Outreach.

In August 1984, the Society was approved as a member of the International Red Cross and became a full member of the League of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (now known as the International Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, IFRC or the Movement) with all the privileges afforded to its Member Societies.

The Barbados Red Cross is now a part of the world's largest humanitarian network, with nearly 117 million members, volunteers and supporters in 192 National Societies.

Key Achievements of 2021:

COVID-19 Response

Background:

By May 31st, 2021, there were 4,017 confirmed cases in Barbados - comprising 1,942 females and 2,075 males, ranging in age from 1 to 95 (*GIS: May 31st, 2021*). Within that same time frame, there were 47 deaths attributed to COVID-19. On February 11, 2021, the government launched a COVID-19 National Vaccination Programme (**Oxford-Astra-Zenaca vaccine*); and by the middle of the year, 60,721 people (approximately 20.3% of total population) completed a full round of vaccination (two doses).

The Barbados Red Cross' response provided tangible support to vulnerable individuals, including those who had lost their source of employment due to the pandemic, e.g. tourism workers and taxi operators.

In partnership with the local civil society **The Anti-Human Trafficking Project**, supermarket vouchers and masks were distributed to 35 households headed by migrant women who had been unable to work since the onset of the pandemic and were without full citizenship status. Masks and PSS kits were also provided to primary school-aged children and to community-based and other civil society organisations.

The BRCS also partnered with the Coca-Cola Foundation to implement the following activities:

- The distribution of food hampers to **50 vulnerable and affected families**
- The provision of hygiene kits (including mops, bleach, personal hygiene items, etc.) **to 50 affected families**
- The provision of home garden 'starter kits' for affected families in response to concerns around food security

The BRCS provided targeted psychological support to **26 of its' beneficiaries**, with the support of **Life Intervention Support Services** – a group of psychologists who delivered one-on-one counselling.

Between October and December 2021, the Barbados Red Cross supported the Ministry of Health's **National Vaccination Campaign** by providing water and information stations at 16 vaccination sites, **reaching 1,098 people (440 males/649 females)**. The Society primarily interacted with individuals who had already chosen to be vaccinated, with limited direct engagement to encourage vaccine uptake within communities.



Given the availability of volunteers, the accessibility of vaccination sites, and the strength of the national campaign, BRCS focused on complementing Ministry of Health services.

With funding from the IFRC and other donors, the Society also:

- Distributed **Home Garden Kits to 175 households** to strengthen food security
- Provided **psychosocial support** through Mental Health First Aid initiatives
- Trained **20 staff and volunteers** in **Mental Health First Aid**
- Reached **470 households** with livelihoods support (**food vouchers and hampers**)
- Established the **Meals on Wheels** kitchen
- Donation of (150) masks to the public on **World Red Cross Day**
- Donation of branded BRCS masks to (98) primary school students at the West Terrace Primary School

- Donation to the Barbados Alliance to End Homelessness (BAEH) - Hand sanitizers (36), infrared thermometers (4), latex gloves (1000), nitrile gloves (1000), gowns (20), N95 masks (200), hygiene kits (2)
- January 2021: (15) BRCS Volunteers trained in Epidemic Control for Volunteers. Training conducted by the IFRC
- 15 volunteers received PPE kits.
- February 2021: (30) hygiene kits donated to Haynesville Youth Club
- **Psychosocial Support:** Counselling provided to **13 staff/volunteers.**
- **Nasopharyngeal Swabbing Training:** At the request of the Ministry of Health, two Barbados Red Cross volunteers received swab training (October). These volunteers – who were trained in PCR swabbing and PPE use – went on to support the government’s testing facilities throughout 2021. Volunteers also provided basic first aid support to the Barbados Defence Force for the transportation of patients between isolation and quarantine centres.
- Training provided to 20 volunteers in correct usage of PPEs. Training was provided by the Ambulance Service, Ministry of Health.
- **First Aid Support for Government of Barbados’ Adopt Our Families Programme:** BRCS First Aid teams provided support to the Prime Minister’s Office in the roll out of its cash distribution activity to 900 beneficiaries.



Barbados Red Cross Society volunteers distributing Home Garden kits to public (2021)

During this period, the Government of Barbados shifted its focus towards re-opening the country. The national curfew was lifted, protocols were adjusted, and emphasis remained on encouraging eligible populations to become vaccinated. Uptake of the vaccines increased steadily throughout the quarter.

Disaster Response

In April 2021, following the eruption of the La Soufrière volcano in St. Vincent and the Grenadines, the BRCS coordinated the donation of **500 blankets, hygiene kits, and PPE**. These items were donated through the **Department of Emergency Management**.

Following the passage of Hurricane Elsa in July 2021, PPEs, cleaning and hygiene kits were distributed to **100 affected households**.

Barbados Red Cross provided volunteer support and first aid services in 5 government shelters during the passage of Hurricane Elsa at the request of the Ministry of Education and the Department of Emergency Management.



Barbados Red Cross Society volunteers distributing hygiene kits to families affected by Hurricane Elsa.

- Following the passage of Hurricane Elsa, the BRCS received a donation from **the Royal Bank of Canada** to assist with food hampers for persons displaced from their homes due to damage to their roofs by Hurricane Elsa.

In preparation for the hurricane season, the National Society ran a two-month radio campaign on hurricane preparedness (including messaging on observing COVID-19 protocols).

Health, Training & Resilience

- Epidemic Control Training: 63 participants - including representatives of 5 district emergency organisations (DEOs) trained in September 2021.
- Volunteer Development: Volunteer Manual and Management System completed.

Governance & Partnerships

Board Elections were held on June 21st, 2021 at the General Assembly. At this time a new board was elected, and three new members came on to the Board. There are now five women on the Board (of 8 Board members), including a female Vice-President, *Ms. Tempu Nefertari*. *The new Governing Board is comprised of the following members:*

Board Members:

- **Winston Waithe** (President)
- **Tempu Nefertari**, Attorney-at-Law, Activist, Agricultural Specialist (newly elected)
- **Fabianna Alexander**, Development Professional (newly elected)
- **Heather Farrell-Clarke**, Scientist, Operations Manager (newly elected)
- Taitu Heron (returning member)
- Samantha Hazelwood (returning member)
- Roger Deane (returning member)
- Tremaine Rouse (Youth Director)

Ms. Danielle Toppin was also appointed as the Director General of the BRCS in July 2021.



The Newly Elected BRCS Governing Board and incoming Director General (2021)

Financial Overview

- COVID-19 Operations Budget: CHF 129,752.70; expenditure CHF 77,833.91 as of January 2021.
- Funding Sources: In response to the eruption of the La Soufriere volcano in St. Vincent and the Grenadines, and the subsequent passage of Hurricane Elsa, the BRCS received donations valued at BB\$256,000 from the Royal Bank of Canada and the Coca-Cola Foundation.

Challenges: Significant decline in First Aid training income due to pandemic restrictions.

Sustainability: Plans for thrift shop, facility rentals, and expanded Meals on Wheels kitchen.

Looking Ahead – Priorities for 2022

- Scale up cash/voucher assistance with stronger SOPs.

- Expand Meals on Wheels into an integrated humanitarian and social enterprise model.
- Strengthen psychosocial support with a dedicated hotline and volunteer unit.
- Enhance youth engagement and volunteer recruitment.
- Deepen role in emergency preparedness, including ambulance service provision.