

OPERATIONS UPDATE



International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies
Fédération Internationale des Sociétés de la Croix-Rouge et du Croissant-Rouge
Federación Internacional de Sociedades de la Cruz Roja y de la Media Luna Roja
الاتحاد الدولي لجمعيات الصليب الأحمر والهلال الأحمر

EL SALVADOR: FLOODS AND VOLCANIC ACTIVITY

3 February 2006

The Federation's mission is to improve the lives of vulnerable people by mobilizing the power of humanity. It is the world's largest humanitarian organization and its millions of volunteers are active in over 181 countries.

In Brief

Appeal No. 05EA020; Operations Update no. 02; Period covered: 15 December 2005 – 2 February 2006; Appeal coverage: 48.3 %; ([click here to go directly to the attached Contributions List, also available on the website](#)).

Appeal history:

- Launched on 6 October 2005 for CHF 487,000 (USD 379,798 OR EUR 315,055) for 4 months to assist 21,000 beneficiaries (4,200 families).
- Revised Appeal launched on 24 October 2005 for CHF 1,288,347 (USD 1,000,432 or EUR 835,891) to assist 21,000 beneficiaries (4,200 families) for 6 months.
- Operation extended by one month, until 6 May 2006, in mid December 2005.
- Disaster Relief Emergency Funds (DREF) allocated: CHF 149,400 (USD 114,820 OR EUR 96,262)

Outstanding needs: CHF 666,292 (USD 520,982 or EUR 432,895)

Related Emergency or Annual Appeals: Central America, Mexico and Haiti: Floods from Hurricane Stan Appeal 05EA021; Central America: Annual Appeal (Appeal 05AA043); Pan American Disaster Response Unit: Annual Appeal (Appeal 05AA040)

Operational Summary: Over the last four months since volcanic activity and flooding hit El Salvador, the Salvadorean Red Cross Society (SRC) has distributed food and non food relief items, including: food, hygiene, and kitchen kits, blankets, buckets, plastic sheeting, mattresses and drinking water in the municipalities of El Congo, Santa Ana, Sonsonate, Izalco, Armenia, Nahuizalco, and Juayua. The National Society is carrying out activities outlined in the overall country plan, as funding permits, and to date has assisted 11,555 vulnerable families affected by the floods and volcanic activity with contributions provided by the Federation, the Spanish Red Cross with ECHO funding, the Spanish Agency of International Cooperation, the Swiss Red Cross, the German Red Cross and other national donors. The SRC is now initiating activities under the rehabilitation component of the Appeal, the most recent being the distribution of educational kits for 1,000 families whose children were relocated from high-risk communities near the Ilamatepec volcano and will now have school supplies for their use. Volunteers are being provided with boots and rain gear; radio equipment which will improve communications with the branches has been procured and is currently being installed. In addition, rehabilitation of water systems is planned, depending on the receipt of further funding. At present, nine schools are still being used as shelters by affected families and the commencement of the school year has been postponed. Furthermore, families affected by the disaster continue to drink untreated water, given that quantities of clean water are insufficient to meet their basic needs and the risk of intestinal illnesses and parasites is growing. The Appeal coverage stands at only 48.3 percent and additional funds are required to implement the Appeal objectives in their entirety.

The Salvadorean Red Cross Society is working in the framework of a two year "Country Plan" which the National

Society drew up in order to address the needs resulting from the volcanic activity and floods emergencies. Should you be interested in receiving the El Salvador country plan for volcanic activity and floods in the wake of Hurricane Stan, please contact the National Society.

For further information specifically related to this operation please contact:

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All International Federation assistance seeks to adhere to the [Code of Conduct](#) and is committed to the [Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Disaster Response](#) in delivering assistance to the most vulnerable. For support to or for further information concerning Federation programmes or operations in this or other countries, or for a full description of the national society profile, please access the Federation's website at <http://www.ifrc.org>

For longer-term programmes, please refer to the Federation's Annual Appeal

The situation

In October, El Salvador was struck by two natural disasters causing much suffering, hardship and, in many cases, separating individuals from their families. Firstly, the Ilamatepec volcano began hurling out hot lava rocks on 1 October, killing at least two people and forcing more than 2,000 to flee. Secondly, the country experienced heavy rains, flooding and landslides as a result of the passage of Hurricane Stan through the region in early October. Rains brought on by Hurricane Stan killed at least 69 people in 11 departments of El Salvador; 26 in La Libertad, 22 in San Salvador, 5 in La Paz, 4 in Usulután, 3 in Sonsonate, 2 in Cuscatlán, 2 in San Vicente, 2 in Santa Ana, 1 in Ahuachapán, 1 in La Unión and 1 in Morazán.

The Ilamatepec volcano, also known as Santa Ana, located 66 kilometres (41 miles) west of the capital, began rumbling and emitting thick plumes of smoke that reached more than 10 kilometres (nine miles) into the sky on Saturday, 1 October. The volcano began to expel magma on the side of the town of San Blas, while the ash was carried by a south-south-westerly wind. The municipalities of Nahuizalco and Juayúa in the department of Sonsonate and La Hachadura in the department of Ahuachapán were also affected. The National Emergency Committee (COEN) declared a red alert in the area within 4,000 metres of the volcano, and a yellow alert in other nearby areas. Some 20,000 people live in the area surrounding the volcano.

El Salvador was also seriously affected on 4 October by heavy rains when Hurricane Stan, at that time a category one hurricane, passed over the Gulf of Mexico, near the Yucatan Peninsula. Hurricane Stan, the 18th named storm of an extremely busy Atlantic hurricane season, first formed as a tropical depression off the east coast of Mexico's Yucatan peninsula. It quickly strengthened to a tropical storm as it moved across the peninsula, bringing heavy rains to El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras and southern Mexico. The storm continued to build strength once it was again over the waters of the Gulf of Mexico and became a category one hurricane just before coming ashore in the Mexican state of Veracruz. Rains brought by Stan were particularly heavy on the Pacific coast of Central America.

The rains from Hurricane Stan were compounded by a particularly heavy rainy season in El Salvador; according to the national service for territorial studies (SNET), the country received 500 percent more rain during September than the historical average for that month. In addition, in May the country experienced heavy rains due to the passage of the first hurricane of the hurricane season in the eastern north Pacific. COEN declared a red alert as the intense rains caused severe flooding in many areas of the country and several of the country's rivers and lakes overflowed, resulting in flooding in 12 departments. The National Legislative Assembly also declared a State of Public Calamity and National Disaster, effective 4 October 2005.

The Salvadorean Red Cross Society, in coordination with other relief agencies, evacuated thousands of people affected by the flooding and volcanic activity and transported them to shelters that were set up in the affected areas. At the height of the emergency, 69,603 people were accommodated in 653 shelters in 14 departments.

Operational developments

More than four months after volcanic activity and floods struck the country, the majority of the people who were forced to evacuate their homes have been able to leave the shelters and return. However, it is worrying that many families who live near the foot of the volcano have decided to return to their homes, despite warnings of the possibility of renewed volcanic activity. At present, there are 61 shelters operating in the departments of Ahuachapán, Cuscatlán, La Libertad, San Salvador, Santa Ana and Sonsonate, housing 4,992 people.

Department	No. of people in shelters	No. of shelters
AHUACHAPAN	17	2
CUSCATLAN	140	3
LA LIBERTAD	420	4
SAN SALVADOR	1,882	18
SANTA ANA	2,513	33
SONSONATE	20	1
TOTAL	4,992	61

Today, in El Salvador, 9 schools continue to be used as shelters in the municipalities of El Congo, Coatepeque, San Salvador and La Libertad, where in 2005, 9,615 children had been attending school. This year for thousands of children it was not possible to begin classes scheduled for 16 January, and the Ministry of Education hopes the shelters in the Municipalities of La Libertad and in San Salvador will soon be vacated.

Despite the fact that many shelter residents have been able to return to their homes, there is still a high level of need among the affected population. Many of the communities are heavily dependent on fishing, coffee and tourism, which have been almost totally destroyed by floods and volcanic ash. Many residents are subsistence farmers who rely on crops of corn beans and sorghum or the sale of animals to meet their basic needs. Long term recovery activities will be necessary to ensure that these families have food and shelter and can pay school and medical costs.

On 25 January, primary school children affected by the Ilametepec Volcanic eruption began receiving school kits provided by the SRC with the support of the Federation.

Red Cross and Red Crescent action - objectives, progress, impact

Emergency relief (food and non-food)

Objective: 1,000 families affected by the volcano and 3,200 families affected by the floods will have benefited from the distribution of food and non-food relief items.

Progress/Achievements (activities implemented within this objective)

Immediately following the disasters, the Federation's Pan American Disaster Response Unit (PADRU) dispatched from Panama 17,500 blankets, 3,500 hygiene kits and 3,000 kitchen kits to the Salvadorean Red Cross Society for use in the operation, of which 10,000 blankets, 2,000 hygiene kits and 2,000 kitchen sets were mobilized on behalf of the Spanish Red Cross. To date, the Salvadorean Red Cross has provided emergency relief food and non food items to 11,555 vulnerable families affected by floods and volcanic activity through the distribution of food and non-food items. These actions by the SRC have been made possible through the support of national and international donations, with a total of 500 families who have been assisted through direct contributions from the Federation's emergency Appeal.

In addition to the 500 families assisted by the Federation through this Appeal, 2,000 families have been assisted by the Spanish Red Cross with ECHO funding, 1,000 families have been assisted by the Spanish International Cooperation Agency (AECI), 1,500 families were assisted by the Swiss Red Cross and some 1,500 additional families were assisted with additional hygiene and kitchen kits and roofing materials in the departments of Santa

Ana, Sonsonate and La Libertad by the German Red Cross. These additional distributions made possible by the German Red Cross were completed on 31 December 2005. In addition to the distributions of food and non food items, the SRC is also giving educational talks on hygiene, nutrition and mental health as part of the emergency relief phase of the operation.

The following table shows the distribution of food and non-food items to families affected by floods and volcanic activity in 11 departments in El Salvador as of 25 January 2006. In addition to the below items, private donors have provided powdered milk and water to those affected by the disasters.

Department	Persons	Families	Hygiene Kits	Food Kit	Kitchen Kits	Blankets	Buckets	Plastic Sheeting	Roofing materials	School kits
Ahuachapán	1,145	229	229	229	0	0	229	0		
Cuscatlan	1,325	265	361	175	0	260	225	27		
La Libertad	7,761	1,666	2,349	1,590	744	4,344	856	0	500	
La Paz	8,638	1,857	1,164	802	523	1,156	80	393		
La Unión	175	35	35	35	0	70	35	0		
Santa Ana	4,418	885	900	634	731	945	157	0	200	
San Miguel	2,260	452	445	445	0	890	445	0		
San Salvador	9,447	1,487	1,410	1,016	140	2,545	576	152		
San Vicente	7,165	1,521	2,015	1,228	1,228	6,000	757	681		
Sonsonate	7,537	1,572	1,572	18	700	1,544	397	0	800	
Usulután	7,400	1,586	1,498	1,584	0	0		0	36	
Total	57,271	11,555	11,978	7,756	4,066	17,754	3,757	1,253	1,536	3,020

Impact

The SRC response to the two natural disasters, which struck El Salvador on 1 and 4 October, have provided families with essential relief supplies which are helping them to recover from the effects of the floods and volcanic activity. These activities have also had a positive impact on the overall mental health of the beneficiaries, and particularly school aged children by providing much needed support.

Constraints

The relief distributions have been implemented with no particular problems.

Shelter

Objective 1: 1,000 families (5,000 people) whose homes were destroyed by the floods will have constructed temporary houses enabling them to move back to their communities and Red Cross branches damaged by the floods will have been repaired.

In the departments of Santa Ana, Sonsonate and La Libertad, 1,500 families were provided with roofing materials by the German Red Cross; in addition, the Swiss Red Cross provided roofing materials for 36 families in Usulután. The SRC plans to work with the government and UNICEF in order to promote the rehabilitation of damaged schools so that children can resume classes as soon as possible once the occupants are able to leave the shelters, and in order that facilities are in place in the event of the future need to use these schools as emergency shelters in a disaster situation.

Impact

The impact has been positive as many families have lost their homes.

Constraints

There are no constraints to report to date with regard to this activity.

Water and Sanitation and Health

Objective 1: 1,000 families (5,000 people) will have access to clean drinking water, benefit from improved sanitation and will have increased awareness of sound hygienic practices.

The SRC is planning the rehabilitation of 4 water systems, including protective structures for water distribution, intake and collection tanks, and repair of pumps and of valves, as funding levels permit. In addition, the SRC will undertake the repair, cleaning and disinfection of wells damaged by the hurricane in the following communities: El Jicaró, San Matías; El Zaité, Zaragoza; and Ojos de Agua y Santo Tomás, Tesispeque.

In order to promote awareness of health and hygiene issues, the SRC is using the relief distributions as an opportunity to share information with the beneficiaries about food preparation, personal hygiene and disaster preparedness. Posters are being hung in shelters, schools and other public areas containing educational messages on these themes.

Psychosocial support

Objective 1: The Salvadorean Red Cross Society's capacity in psychosocial support is strengthened and care is offered to vulnerable families targeted by the appeal as well as volunteers and staff working in the disaster operation.

As part of the ongoing distributions of relief items, the SRC is providing psychosocial support sessions to beneficiaries. In addition, SRC volunteers, in coordination with the National Intervention Teams, organized recreational activities for children in shelters to help them cope with the disaster. The implementation of further activities is subject to the receipt of additional funding towards the emergency appeal.

Impact

The impact has been positive for the beneficiary families and their children.

Constraints

There are no constraints to report to date with regard to this activity.

Agricultural Support

Objective 1: 1,000 families (5,000 people) will have sown crops with the perspective of a successful harvest, thus contributing to ensuring the availability of adequate food.

Activities under this objective which focuses on the distribution of seeds and fertilizer to families who have lost their crops, have not been carried out as yet, and are subject to the receipt of additional funding. A similar project was launched in El Salvador in the context of the severe drought which hit the region in 2001 and 2002; the project which assisted farmers with seeds and tools was a particular success in El Salvador, producing a good harvest and boosting farmers' livelihoods.

Educational Support

Objective 1: 2,000 families' children will have school stationery and supplies, facilitating their continued attendance in class.

On 25 January, the Salvadorean Red Cross began the distribution of educational kits estimated to benefit 1,000 families (approximately 3,000 children) in the departments of Santa Ana and Sonsonate, who were relocated outside of the high-risk zones near the volcano following the eruptions in October 2005. Each kit included a backpack, note book, coloured and normal pencils, an eraser, notepad, glue and scissors. Many families were forced to flee from their homes without their personal belongings, including school supplies. The distributions were coordinated by the SRC departmental branches, the National Intervention Teams and volunteers, in conjunction with the Ministry of Education and the Civil Protection.



On 25 January, 2006, the distribution of 3,020 school kits by the Salvadorean Red Cross began in the Santa Ana and Sonsonate departments.



Children in the Colonia San Luis School, located in the department of Santa Ana, received their school kits.

Impact

The beneficiary families expressed their thankfulness as many did not have school supplies to begin the new school year.

Constraints

There were no constraints to report related to this activity.

Disaster Preparedness for Response

Objective 1: The Salvadorean Red Cross Society has restocked essential emergency relief items and has received additional training in response and preparedness activities in order to facilitate future disaster response.

A total of 500 SRC volunteers have been provided with boots and 500 rain coats are also to be distributed.

Further activities under this objective are planned but have not been carried out as yet and are subject to the receipt of further funding. In order to facilitate efficient response to a disaster situation, the SRC ensures that emergency relief items are pre-stocked and can be mobilized immediately. It was this policy that enabled the National Society to distribute hygiene kits, blankets and water containers to over 2,000 families during the first 72 hours of the emergency. It is essential that these relief items be restocked in order to ensure that the SRC has the capacity to respond to future disasters.

Objective 2: National Society branches communicate effectively by radio in the event of a disaster.

The SRC branches in Santa Ana, Sonsonate and Juayua were provided with portable radio communication equipment during emergency operations, as well as equipment to repair the repeater that is being used near the volcano. Two additional repeaters were moved from the National Society headquarters in San Salvador to the affected areas to further facilitate communication. In order to facilitate effective communication in the event of a disaster, the Salvadorean Red Cross Society has procured radio equipment for the branches of Usulután, Santa Rosa de Lima, La Unión, Sensuntepeque, Mercedes Umaña, Santa Lucía, Jiquilisco, Atiquizaya, Concepción de Ataco, Nahuizalco, Nueva Concepción, Metapan, Tacuba, Tepecoyo and Teotepeque. In the branches of Quezaltepeque, Ciudad Arce, Coatepeque, Zacatecoluca, Cojutepeque, San Vicente and San Salvador, new equipment has been procured and installed.

Impact

The portable radio communication equipment used during the emergency operations proved to be invaluable in facilitating communication. Furthermore, the installation of radio equipment in more branches will boost communication between the headquarters and the branches.

Constraints

There are no constraints to report in relation to this activity.

Federation Coordination

The Salvadorean Red Cross Society is part of the National Emergency System (SISNAE), which coordinates all disaster response activities on the part of the Salvadoran government through the Emergency Operations Centre. The SRC is also coordinating its actions with international organizations, including the United Nations agencies and NGOs. The SRC is working in close coordination with the Panama Regional Delegation and the Pan American Disaster Response Unit.

The National Society is working closely with the Spanish Red Cross, the Spanish International Cooperation Agency, the Swiss Red Cross, and the German Red Cross in order to ensure that there is no duplication of efforts. As a result of this coordination, although contributions channeled through the Appeal have benefited 500 families, additional families have been assisted through the response of the Spanish, Swiss and German Red Cross Societies and the Spanish International Cooperation Agency which all worked in the framework of the Federation Appeal; these, as well as national donations have allowed the Salvadorean Red Cross Society to reach 11,555 families to date.

Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement -- Principles and Initiatives

- Beneficiary selection criteria focus on the vulnerability of those affected.
- The relief operation is prioritizing assistance to children and the elderly.
- Activities are based on the SPHERE Project Humanitarian Charter and the Code of Conduct for emergency response.
- Transparency is ensured through the production of regular reports and news bulletins.
- All objectives put forward in the appeal are in line with Strategy 2010, as well as the Strategy for the Movement and the Principles and Rules of the Movement.

National Society Capacity Building

The relief operation will further build the capacities of the Salvadorean Red Cross Society headquarters and branches. Now that the relief phase has been completed, further emphasis will be placed on the strengthening of branches and disaster preparedness and mitigation work in vulnerable communities, although this is dependent on the receipt of further funding. Previous to these most recent natural disasters, the SRC was able to significantly strengthen its national structure through the relief operation following Hurricane Mitch in 1998 and earthquakes in January and February 2001.

Communications – Advocacy and Public information

Communications and visibility activities are being carried out by the public relations department of the SRC, through its national communicators' network, which exists in all 14 departments in the country. From 1 October to date, communications and visibility activities carried out by the SRC public relations department include institutional activity write ups, articles on the operations and numerous information bulletins about the Salvadorean Red Cross Society and the provision of humanitarian aid to those affected by the disasters. Several of these articles have been made available on the Federation's web site - www.ifrc.org.

[Contributions list below; click here to return to the title page.](#)

El Salvador - floods and volcanic activities

ANNEX 1

APPEAL No. 05EA020

PLEDGES RECEIVED

31/01/2006

DONOR	CATEGORY	QUANTITY	UNIT	VALUE CHF	DATE	COMMENT
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CASH

REQUESTED IN APPEAL CHF ----->					TOTAL COVERAGE	
					1,288,347	48.3%
CANADIAN - GOVT/CIDA/HAPS		50,000	CAD	55,225	07.10.05	
CANADIAN - GOVT/CIDA/HAPS		50,000	CAD	54,410	02.11.05	
JAPANESE - RC		12,500	USD	16,175	14.10.05	
JAPANESE - RC		20,500	USD	26,250	09.11.05	
LICHTENSTEIN - PRIVATE DONOR				50,000	28.10.05	
MONACO - RC		5,000	EUR	7,785	25.10.05	
NETHERLANDS - GOVT		42,781	EUR	66,610	14.10.05	
NEW ZEALAND - GOVT		100,000	NZD	89,600	13.10.05	
SUB/TOTAL RECEIVED IN CASH				366,055	CHF	28.4%

KIND AND SERVICES (INCLUDING PERSONNEL)

DONOR	CATEGORY	QUANTITY	UNIT	VALUE CHF	DATE	COMMENT
SPANISH - RC				136,000		10000 BLANKETS, 2000 KITCHEN SETS, 2000 HYGIENIC PARCELS
SWISS - RC				120,000	07.10.05	BILATERAL: PROCUREMENT OF RELIEF ITEMS,
SUB/TOTAL RECEIVED IN KIND/SERVICES				256,000	CHF	19.9%

ADDITIONAL TO APPEAL BUDGET

DONOR	CATEGORY	QUANTITY	UNIT	VALUE CHF	DATE	COMMENT
SUB/TOTAL RECEIVED				0	CHF	