

DREF operation update



International Federation
of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

Paraguay: Wind and Hail Storm

DREF operation n° MDRPY004
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Update n° 1
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The International Federation's Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF) is a source of un-earmarked money created by the Federation in 1985 to ensure that immediate financial support is available for Red Cross and Red Crescent response to emergencies. The DREF is a vital part of the International Federation's disaster response system and increases the ability of national societies to respond to disasters.

Period covered by this update: 21 August 2008 to 9 November, 2008.

Summary: CHF 56,605 (USD 53,910 or EUR 34,620) was allocated from the Federation's Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF) on 20 August, 2008 to support the national society in delivering assistance to 106 agricultural working families from the district of Concepcion.

During this reporting period the Paraguayan Red Cross (PRC) completed the objective of providing 106 families affected by the storm with food items, seedlings and technical agricultural assistance. This operation is expected to be implemented over three months, and will therefore be completed by 19 November, 2008; a Final Report will be made available within three months after the end of the operation (by 19 February, 2009).

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Farmer families receiving food parcels as part of the DREF operation. Source: Paraguayan Red Cross

The situation

On 8 August 2008, the central government for the northern areas of Concepcion and San Pedro declared a state of emergency, due to the 200 km per hour winds that affected these areas on the night of 7 August. The heavy winds were accompanied by hailstones weighing up to one kg. The most affected departments were Presidente Hayes, San Pedro and Concepcion. The hailstones and winds damaged infrastructure and four electricity towers causing power outages, affecting 600,000 people for 72 hours. Over 1,800 hectares of agricultural crops were destroyed including corn, tomatoes, beans, carrots and bananas.

A total of 9,531 families (5,976 families in Concepcion, 3,515 families in San Pedro and 40 families in Presidente Hayes) were severely affected by the hail and windstorm: in addition to losing the agricultural

crops, their homes were damaged, as roofs were blown away making them even more vulnerable to the storm.

The National Emergency Secretary (Secretaría de Emergencia Nacional – SEN) reported other affected departments including Paraguari (staple crops), Amambay (trade affected due to electricity black-out), Alto Paraguay, Boquerón, Canindeyu (affected livelihoods, crops, houses, and livestock) and Caazapa. At the beginning of the emergency the government provided emergency relief assistance to 2,767 families with relief items such as food parcels, roof panels, mattresses, plastic tarps and blankets.

Coordination and partnerships

Since the beginning of the emergency, the Paraguayan Red Cross (PRC) along with other institutions such as local governments and fire departments, performed damage and need assessments and coordinated first action response activities.

The SEN identified the affected areas and provided blankets and tarpaulins that were distributed by the PRC. The PRC coordinated the distribution of the relief items included in this DREF operation with the municipalities and the local governments. Additionally, through its local branches, the PRC supported all the Emergency Operations Centres (Centros de Operaciones de Emergencia – COE) activated in the affected departments.

The International Federation, through the Pan American Disaster Response Unit (PADRU) and the Representative for the Southern Cone Regional Representation have been in close communication with the PRC since the beginning of the emergency.

Red Cross and Red Crescent action

The PRC after carrying out damage and need assessments with the Local Emergency Committee developed a Plan of Action (PoA) on the delivery of humanitarian assistance. The PRC has been assisting rural farmers, who produce several agricultural products, through an agricultural producers' association. The harvests were affected by the storm; therefore, the PRC has been focusing on providing humanitarian assistance to this selected group of farmers.

The following table demonstrates food items and seeds distributed by the PRC in the district of Horqueta with additional contributions provided by other sources.

District	Communities	Total families	Food Items		Seeds
			September	October	September
	Curupay Loma		0	102	106
Horqueta	Asentamiento 6	113	113	0	4
	Km. 31 San Marcos	59	59	0	59
Total Horqueta		172	172	102	169

Additionally, the local authorities with the Paraguayan Red Cross conducted a first National Contingency and Response Plan workshop in October. Several actors participated including the Ministry of Public Health, Fire department, Armed Forces, municipalities of Loreto and Concepcion, National Police and Ministry of Education and Culture. This workshop was headed by the PRC and it has initiated the process of elaborating a contingency plan for the department of Concepcion.

Progress towards objectives

Relief distributions (food and basic non-food items)

Objective: To assist 106 of the most vulnerable families in Concepcion with humanitarian aid in order to compensate the loss of their livelihoods.

Activities planned:

- Conduct rapid emergency needs and capacity assessments.
- Implement two month's distribution of complementary food parcels.
- Monitor, report and evaluate the relief activities.

- Develop an exit strategy.

Progress and impact:

106 small farmer families were provided with seeds for cultivation and/or sale in order to recover their livelihoods. An engineering consultant specializing in agriculture provided technical assistance during the timeframe of the operation (three months).

Seeds for 1 package (per family)	Quantity
Tomato	0,20 grs.
Pepper	0.15 grs.
Lettuce	0.06 grs.
Carrot	0.06 grs.
Cabbage	0.06 grs.
Watermelon	0.50 grs.
Melon	0.25 grs.
Corn	6 Kg.
Beans	7 Kg.
TOTAL	14.28 Kg.

Total food and seeds distributed by district and community.

Districts	Communities	Total families	Food items		Seeds
			September	Octubre	Setiembre
Concepcion	Comité Central de Potrerito	19	19	19	19
	Santa Rosa	31	31	31	31
	Sagrada Familia	10	10	10	10
	Teko Pora (Culantrillo)	10	10	10	10
	San Juan Bosco (Culantrillo)	12	12	12	12
	Sagrado Corazón de Jesús	14	14	14	14
	Juancito de León	10	10	10	10
Total Concepción		106	106	106	106

The small farmers received technical assistance throughout the entire sowing process. According to the engineer who is monitoring the district of Concepcion, 80 percent of the corn, 80 percent of beans and 50 percent of the vegetables have been cultivated so far. Additionally, the 106 affected families in Concepcion received complimentary food parcels as described below.

Challenges:

During this operation, two additional storms delayed the crop growing process. Due to weather forecasts the small farmers planned ahead and completed cultivating the seeds after the storms passed. The PRC was also responding to a drought emergency in the region of el Chaco stretching the national society's resources.

How we work

All International Federation 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 is committed to the [Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Disaster Response](#) (Sphere) in delivering assistance to the most vulnerable.

The International Federation's activities are aligned with its Global Agenda, which sets out four broad goals to meet the Federation's mission to "improve the lives of vulnerable people by mobilizing the power of humanity".

Global Agenda Goals:

- Reduce the numbers of deaths, injuries and impact from disasters.
- Reduce the number of deaths, illnesses and impact from diseases and public health emergencies.
- Increase local community, civil society and Red Cross Red Crescent capacity to address the most urgent situations of vulnerability.
- Reduce intolerance, discrimination and social exclusion and promote respect for diversity and human dignity.

Contact information

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