

# INFORMATION BULLETIN



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

## ***BOLIVIA: HAIL AND RAINSTORMS***

27 May 2003

*Information Bulletin No. 2/03*

*Disaster Relief Emergency Funds (DREF) Allocated: CHF 30,000*

This Information Bulletin is the final report on the operation, for information only. The Federation is not seeking any funding or other assistance from donors for this operation at this time. DREF funding covered all costs of the operation.

### ***The Situation***

Generally, in Bolivia heavy rains fall during the first months of the year. This year, rainfall was moderate until 21 January when the capital city, La Paz, faced severe hail and rainstorms for one hour, affecting mainly the centre of the city. These storms generated the formation of rivers with violent currents which flooded the city, collapsed houses, killed four persons and injured a further 25. The rain also produced floods in the regions of Yungas and Altiplano, where communities near Lake Titicaca were affected. Official reports state that in La Paz alone there were 7,795 families affected by the natural disaster. In addition, many families lost all their crops.

### ***Red Cross/Red Crescent Action***

The Bolivian Red Cross (BRC) immediately formed rescue teams which assisted disaster victims with first aid for a period of five days. The BRC helped with the evacuation and transportation of the injured and assisted in the management of temporary shelters for evacuees. It also organized solidarity campaigns to collect and distribute relief goods.

The Civil Defence requested the BRC to provide support for 700 families in the communities of Asunta and Bermejo. The Federation designated CHF 30,000 from the disaster relief emergency fund (DREF) for the relief operation. However, given that Asunta and Bermejo were receiving assistance from other organizations such as the World Food Programme (WFP) and the US Agency for International Development (USAID), the BRC was then asked to provide relief support to another area hit by the disaster, the province of Camacho in the La Paz department.

Camacho belongs to the Municipality of Puerto Acosta and is divided in four districts: Escoma, Umanata, Chinaya and Parajachi, its communities are located on the shores of rivers Khalajahaira, Laguaya and Suches. As a result of the storms, 800 families were victims of flooding losing all their crops - agriculture is the main activity - and 108 also families lost their homes. The 800 families received aid in the form of food kits on 15 March.

The food kits for each family were made up of six items:

1. 15 kg of rice
2. 10 kg of sugar
3. 6 kg of noodles
4. 5 kg of corn
5. 2 lt. of oil
6. 2 kg of salt.

The selection of beneficiary families was based on the register of families affected by floods that had lost most of their property, homes or crops. Information from other organizations including NGOs and churches was also taken into account. Volunteers from La Paz branch met with local authorities and community representatives to proceed with the survey of disaster victims which took four days and was carried out by five volunteers. To ensure monitoring of the food distribution, families were identified by cards previously distributed by volunteers of the BRC during the survey.

The Bolivian Red Cross worked in collaboration with the Municipal Government of La Paz, the Departmental Service of Health, the Ministry of Agriculture, the meteorological institution (SENAMHI), the Ministry of Sustainable Development, the Civil Defence, UNDP, UNICEF and representatives of the community.

In the communities in Camacho which were hit by the floods, waters are now slowly receding from the land; for the next two months, the WFP will be assisting with food for work projects, placing special emphasis on rehabilitation of destroyed roads.

For a full description of the National Society profile, see [www.ifrc.org](http://www.ifrc.org)

*For further details please contact :*

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*All International Federation Operations seek to adhere to the Code of Conduct and are committed to the Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Disaster Response (SPHERE Project) in delivering assistance to the most vulnerable.*

*For support to or for further information concerning Federation operations in this or other countries, please access the Federation website at <http://www.ifrc.org>*

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

