

# DREF Bulletin 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

## ECUADOR: VOLCANIC ERUPTION

**MDREC001.**  
**Update no. 2**  
**17 August 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 183 countries.*

### In Brief

Period covered by this update: 20 July to 17 August 2006.

History of this Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF)-funded operation:

- CHF 85,000 (USD 68,079 or EUR 54,092) allocated from the Federation's DREF on 19 July 2006 to respond to the needs of this operation; given that anticipated funding has not been forthcoming, donors are encouraged to assist in reimbursing the DREF funding allocation.
- This operation is expected to be implemented for 3 months, and will be completed by 19 October 2006; a DREF Bulletin Final Report (narrative and financial) will be made available three months after the end of the operation (by 18 January 2007).

The International Federation undertakes activities that 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.

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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.*

*For longer-term programmes in this or other countries or regions, please refer to the Federation's Annual Appeal. For support to or for further information concerning Federation programmes or operations in this or other countries, or for national society profiles, please also access the Federation's website at <http://www.ifrc.org>*

## **Background and current situation**

Ecuador's Tungurahua volcano, located 180 kilometres south of the capital of Quito, began emitting loud and frequent explosions in May of this year, showing increased activity since re-awakening nearly seven years ago, after having been inactive for eight decades – prompting a limited state of emergency at the time.

At 17.00 hours on Friday, 14 July 2006, the Tungurahua volcano began spewing ash, gas and molten rock – with ash rising 15 kilometres, and molten rock being thrown 500 metres above the crater. The Ecuadorian Geophysics Institute reported that the 5,023 meters high volcano had changed its behaviour drastically by expelling at least four lava flows - the first since activity resumed in May. From that day on, the volcano showed variation in its activity, presenting different degrees of risk to the nearby population at different stages. Some explosions were strong enough to be seen from Ambato, Riobamba, and even from Quito. At this time the cloud of smoke was 15 kilometres high. The explosion also generated pyroclastic flows that poured down La Hacienda, Achupasal, Cusúa and Mandar creeks. Until 31 July, the volcano's activity remained stable with minor variations. On 30 and 31 July lava was seen to rise some 300 metres above the crater and a small amount of ash was expelled. Recent rains in the area have washed down mud from the heights of the volcano. The volcano's activity continues to be closely monitored for variations, and preparations are being made in light of a 70 percent probability of a more significant eruption within a year's period, as stated by the director of the Geophysics Institute. Authorities have declared a red alert in zones near to the volcano and in other more distant cities, an orange alert was declared.

On 16 August, Tungurahua volcano erupted once again and evacuations are currently taking place from regions around the volcano: Juive, Grande, Cusua and Bilbao; those who wish to evacuate from the most affected areas are being transferred to temporary shelters. There are reports of ash and volcanic gravel falling in the area to the southwest of the volcano and to the north. Official reports from local authorities state that up to 3,200 people have been evacuated. The largest pyroclastic flow yet reached the River Chambo causing the river to dam. Since the last eruption there have been official reports of one loss of human life, 13 injured and up to 60 people have disappeared.

## **Red Cross action**

At the onset of the emergency, the Ecuadorian Red Cross (ERC) mobilized 15 National Intervention Team (NIT) members and volunteers from the affected Branches: Bolívar, Tugurahua, Chimborazo and Pastaza to assist with with evacuation and assistance to those affected. Also mobilized were teams specialized in psychosocial support, telecommunications, rescue, information, logistics and first aid. By 16 July, the ERC had mobilized more than 240 volunteers, six ambulances with paramedic personnel, five pick ups, one truck, two motorcycles and two four-wheel drives.

The ERC has received in kind donations of relief items such as clothes, kitchen utensils, shoes, food, blankets, mattresses, water, protective gear, saline solution and hygiene items. Distributions of these items to the affected communities started on 17 July in coordination with Operational Emergency Committee (COE). Evacuation, search and rescue, first aid and psychosocial activities continue to be carried out by the National Society. In kind donations that have been received in National Society headquarters and Branches have been moved to a warehouse loaned by the Coca Cola Company to ERC for three months in the community of Tortoras, which is close to the Tungurahua Branch.

100 volunteers were trained in psychosocial support by the ERC in the provinces of Tungurahua, Chimborazo, Pastaza and Bolívar so that they can continue providing this service to the affected population in the coming months. The Tungurahua Branch is holding psychosocial support sessions in shelters and communities and the ERC Headquarters has put together a proposal for psychosocial support for volunteers in line with a request from the

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provincial Branches. The basic needs of the population in shelters are being met, and most residents continue to leave the shelters during the day to tend their crops and to see their properties and are returning to the shelters to spend the night.

Although the Plan of Action set out to assist 500 affected families (2,500 persons), this was increased to reach 537 families. The additional 37 families will receive food parcels and hygiene kits comprising items donated by the public. The ERC started distribution of the hygiene kits purchased with DREF funds together with food parcels of 11 kilograms made up of donations of food received by ERC, on Monday 14 August and Tuesday 15 August. The goods are benefiting the 537 families, which are located in the following communities:

Province	Canton	Communities
Tungurahua	Pelileo	Condorahua, Rosario, Rumichaca
	Patate	Loma Grande, La Victoria
Chimborazo	Guano	Manzano, Puela

In addition, distribution of food parcels put together with donations made to the Carchi branch are taking place in the communities of El Progreso, Mirador, Cruz Loma and Silviche in the Province of Tungurahua for a total of 120 families in need of assistance.

The 22-kilogram food parcels to be purchased with DREF funds will be distributed during a second round of distributions in mid-September.

Given the most recent eruption of the volcano, a member of the Regional Intervention Team (RIT) was deployed to Ecuador to the areas close to the volcano to assess the situation. Additional National Intervention Team (NIT) members have been activated in Tungurahua, Chimborazo, Pastaza and Bolivar provinces to support the voluntary evacuations and the ongoing relief operations.

The need for additional resources to assist those affected will be reviewed and further information provided in due course.

## **Information and Coordination**

The National Society continues to attend United Nations Emergency Technical Team (UNETE) meetings, and continues to coordinate with Civil Defence, government authorities and other organizations active in the affected area, including The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), OXFAM and the International Organization for Migration (IOM).

[\*Click here to return to the title page or contact information\*](#)