

# ***NICARAGUA: EARTHQUAKE***

*17 July 2000*

## ***Information Bulletin N° 01***

### ***The Disaster***

On July 6th, at 13.30 hours local time, a strong earthquake measuring 5.4 on the Richter scale shook the main central coastal region of Nicaragua. Its epicentre was situated in the Laguna de Apoyo region, 6 kilometres from Masaya City and 37 kilometres from the capital Managua, resulting in significant damage to populated mountainside villages and infrastructure.

On July 7th, at 18.19 hours, another earthquake situated on the north side of Masaya City was registered, measuring 5.2 in the Richter scale. These two earthquakes were followed by 331 aftershocks in the Laguna de Apoyo and Masaya regions. According to the official Civil Defence Report, 1,913 houses have been damaged, 7 people are dead, 443 people are injured, and a total of 5,267 people have been transferred to shelters.

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

CHF 50,000 has been released from the Federation's Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF) to initiate the assistance operation. Red Cross staff and volunteers immediately started salvage, rescue and first aid, and evacuation activities.

Through a talkathon at the Telenica Channel 8 TV Station, the Nicaraguan Red Cross received both cash (111,000 Cordobas equivalent to USD 8,710) and in-kind support. Donations of clothes and various food items have been distributed, as well as Nicaraguan Red Cross Reserve relief material.

The Spanish Red Cross provided food and first aid material during the first phase of the emergency, and will contribute USD 13,000 for further psycho-social and health (tropical disease) support. A further USD 10,000 will be contributed for the food distribution operation.

The American Red Cross provided food and plastic sheets during the first phase of the emergency, and pledged a further USD 10,000 to support the intended assistance operation.

The French Red Cross assisted by transferring the homeless and the injured, and managed the delivery of American Red Cross plastic sheets during the first phase.

The Canadian and Dutch Red Cross placed resources at the disposal of the National Society, and the Costa Rican Red Cross offered the delivery of two trucks containing relief aid (food, soap and chlorine) as well as support staff.

The Federation Delegation in Nicaragua deployed its Disaster and Reporting Delegates to support the Nicaraguan Red Cross.

***Government Action:***

The National Emergency Committee assumed control of emergency management. The Departmental and Local Emergency Committee was activated, as well as the National Civil Defence System.

***Other Agencies Action:***

The World Food Programme (WFP) placed some 8 tons of food at the disposal of the Government to respond to the needs of the affected population concentrated in shelters. The Canadian International Development Agency has indicated cash support for the operation.

***Coordination:***

The National Society is coordinating all its actions with the Government, state institutions, and NGOs which operate in the area, and will maintain close coordination with the PNS delegations currently present in the country as well as with the Federation Delegation in Nicaragua.

## ***Red Cross Objectives:***

The main assistance will be the supply of food packages to 800 families in four municipalities. This assistance is intended to compensate for two weeks of lost income as well as two more weeks while temporary houses are being built. More specifically:

- the family food package will consist of rice, beans, corn, sugar, wheat, salt, oil, and soap.
- personal hygiene products for 800 families affected by the earthquakes will be distributed.
- plastic material for temporary houses for a total of 800 families will be supplied.
- The affected population will be trained in psycho social support and tropical disease prevention.

***Plan of Action***

The National Society divided its humanitarian action into two phases:

***Phase one: 6 - 16 July, 2000***

The Nicaraguan Red Cross has concentrated on victim rescue, salvage and search labours, transfer of those affected to shelters, support to the shelter organisation and delivery of essential aid in the Masaya Department.

***Phase two: 17 July - 16 August, 2000***

In the Tisma, Catarina, Diría and Diriomo regions, assistance will be targeted to agricultural day workers. Distributions will be carried out according to established procedures and norms, families selected by census.

## ***Needs:***

The immediate needs are being covered through local resources covering basic food and hygiene products, temporary shelters, and psycho social support. The Nicaraguan Red Cross will continue their local fund-raising campaign. Donors are requested to contribute to the Federation to replace funds allocated from the Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF).

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