

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

PERU AND BOLIVIA: SNOWSTORMS

9 August 2002

Information Bulletin N° 2

Disastr Relief Emergency Fund (DREF) allocated: CHF 80,000

This Information Bulletin is being issued based on the needs described below. A DREF allocation of CHF 80,000 has been released. Unearmarked funds to repay the DREF have been provided by the American Red Cross and Britain's Department for International Development (DFID) and the British Red Cross. This operation will be reported on through the quarterly DREF update.

The situation

A major cold front, accompanied by the heaviest snowfalls in 30 years, critically affected populations in Peru and Bolivia during the month of July. Especially hard hit was the department of Potosi in Bolivia and several regions in southern Peru.

• Peru

The high plains and southern coastal region of Peru was severely impacted by snowfall, extremely cold temperatures and strong winds during the month of July. Hardest hit were the departments of Arequipa, Moquegua, Tacna, Cusco, Apurimac, Huancavelica, Ayacucho and Puno. 59 people died as a result and 86,8111 people were directly affected. Temperatures reached 26 degrees below zero causing the death of an estimated 80,000 livestock, principally llamas, and 23,048 hectares of crops were destroyed. Over 17,000 homes were damaged, 198 of which were totally destroyed.

The Peruvian government, together with humanitarian organizations, continue to experience difficulty in delivering assistance to the zone given weather and road conditions; in addition, many areas remain completely cut off. To date, the Civil Defense (INDECI) and other government agencies have distributed 450 tons of relief items. The Ministry of Health has dispatched all available health personnel in order to control an outbreak of respiratory ailments. Heavy machinery has been sent to the affected areas in an attempt to clear a passage to communities and the Ministry of Agriculture has begun to assess damage to both crops and livestock.

• Bolivia

Snow and cold temperatures severely affected the province of Sud Lopez in the department of Potosi located in southwestern Bolivia. More than 2,520 families (12,600 people) located in 60 communities in 4 provinces were isolated because of precarious road conditions and as a result of the quantity of snow that has fallen. More than 100 people have disappeared in the storms and nine people, including two children, have died as a result of the frigid temperatures. Hundreds of people have been treated for hypothermia and frostbite. While snowfall has diminished during the last 10 days, temperatures still remain below freezing.

Authorities from the Ministry of Health calculate that 1.5 million dollars has been lost in the agricultural sector resulting from the loss of crops and the death of an estimated 65,000 llamas, severely impacting the subsistence economies of communities the area. According to the national census carried out in September 2001, 79.7% of

the population of the region lives below the poverty line, and 36.1% of the overall population lives in absolute poverty. This places already vulnerable and high-risk communities in a very precarious situation.

Red Cross/Red Crescent Action

CHF 80,000 was released from the Federation's DREF to support operations in both countries (this is being repaid by the British Red Cross with funds from the Department for International Development in the amount of CHF 65,000 and the American Red Cross in the amount of CHF 15,000). The release of these funds have proved critical in enabling the operating national societies to carry out timely distributions of humanitarian supplies to many of the most affected communities.

• Peru

Since Information Bulletin no. 1 which was issued on 19 July, the head office and the corresponding branches of the Peruvian Red Cross (PRC) have continued to play a pivotal role in the national response to the disaster. The national and regional operational centres continue to be focal points, providing logistical support and maintaining warehouses. Volunteers remain on high alert and have been involved in distributing relief items and providing health services throughout the affected areas.

As a result of inter-institutional meetings, the PRC has taken on the responsibility of providing food packages (each 68 kgs) and two blankets to 320 of the 479 affected families in the departments of Huancavelica and Apurimac in order to meet immediate needs of the population. The operation is being carried out in the following geographical areas:

DEPARTMENT	PROVINCE	DISTRICT
Huancavelica	Huancavelica	Huancavelica, Ascencion, Huanchocoipe, Palca, S.J. Acobamilia, Nuevo Occoro, Manta
	Castrovirreyna	Santa Ana, Castrovirreyna
	Acobamba	Paucara, Acobamba
	Angaraes	Cochaccasa, Lincay, Secclia, Anchonga, Callanmarca
	Churcampa	Churcampa, Anco, Locoja
	Huaytara	Ayavi, Tambo
	Tayacaja	Pampas, Huando, Huaribamba
Apurimac	Pampachiri	Chiligua, Llancama, Torohuichocana

Food packages to be distributed will consist of the following:

ITEM	QUANTITY
Rice	20 kg.
Sugar	15 kg.
Quinoa	10 kg.
Pasta	10 kg.
Cooking Oil	2 lt.
Salt	1 kg.
Wheat	10 kg.

In addition to the relief items above, the PRC provide health services to affected population including the distribution of health education materials.

During the course of the operation, the PRC will undertake a continuous re-evaluation of the damage and needs assessment. A survey of beneficiaries will be completed as well as the distribution of Red Cross identity cards to all those who will receive humanitarian aid. All procurement will be carried out in accordance with Federation standards.

• Bolivia

The Bolivian Red Cross (BRC), through its branches in Potosi and Tupiza, responded immediately to the disaster. Volunteers from the BRC branches provided first aid to those affected, as well as the transportation of the injured to health facilities. They also provided support to the government and other agencies such as the World Food Programme and CARE in the distribution of food and other relief items in very difficult

circumstances. Only in recent days has heavy machinery been able to clear snow from the roads in order to reach isolated communities. The BRC also carried out ongoing damage and needs assessments in conjunction with the Civil Defense, the local authorities and international NGOs.

The Civil Defense has officially requested the BRC to provide humanitarian aid to 500 families (1,820 people) in the province of Sud Lopez in the department of Potosí. The operation will cover the following geographical areas:

PROVINCE	MUNICIPALITY	COMMUNITIES
Sud Lopez	San Pablo de Lipez	Cerrillos, Polulos, Rio San Pablo, Relave, San Antonio de Lipez, Santa Isabel, Viluyo, Quetana Grande, Quetana Chico, Collpani
	San Antonio de Esmoruco	Rio Mojon, Esmoruco, Guadalupe
	Mojinete	Mojinete, Cienaga, Casa Grande

The BRC plan of action includes the distribution of food packages (each 45 kgs) and two blankets to each of the 500 families. Food packages will consist of the following items:

ITEM	QUANTITY
Rice	15 kg.
Sugar	10 kg.
Lentils	10 kg.
Pasta	6 kg.
Cooking Oil	2 lt.
Salt	2 kg.

The BRC has already begun the operation. All purchasing has been completed in accordance with Federation standards and distribution will begin shortly. Logistics remain difficult due to poor access to the targeted communities.

During the course of the operation, both national societies will continue to assess the needs of the population. Both the Peruvian and Bolivian Red Cross Societies continue to participate in inter-institutional committees set up by the government. There are, at present, no plans to launch an international appeal. The regional delegation for South America, the PRC and the BRC, will continue to monitor the situation and will take action, should this be necessary, once the governments of both countries have clarified rehabilitation plans.

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

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>

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