



## ARGENTINA: FLOODS

**DREF Bulletin**  
**no. MDRAR001**  
**21 April 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

This DREF Bulletin is being issued based on the situation described below reflecting the information available at this time. CHF 100,000 (USD 78,417 or EUR 63,517) was allocated from the Federation's Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF) to respond to the needs in this operation. Unearmarked funds to repay DREF are encouraged.

This operation is aligned with the International Federation's 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

The rainy season, which began in early 2006 in the northern Argentine provinces of Salta, Jujuy and Formosa, has intensified significantly since the end of March. Due to the mountainous terrain in the area, heavy rains have caused

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flooding and landslides near some of the region's main rivers, destroying at least 150 homes and several bridges. It has been difficult to determine the exact number of people affected given the large size of the area and difficulties in accessing the region, as well as the fact that many of the communities are extremely isolated; however, it is estimated that between 3,000 and 6,000 people have been affected. To date, some 1,500 people have been evacuated from the flooded areas, a large number of which are from aboriginal Guarani and Wichi communities. In addition, the Ministry of Health in the province of Salta has reported four cases of dengue. Meteorologists are predicting increased rainfall over the next three months.

Although at the onset of the floods municipal, provincial and national authorities, with the support of the Argentine Army and the National Police, were administering the evacuation centres and humanitarian assistance, there is still a high level of need, particularly in isolated communities. The Argentine government is working to improve infrastructure in the area through constructing and relocating homes, channelling river waters and increasing flood defence systems. The Argentine Ministry of Health has sent 16 tonnes of medicines, and has also begun vaccination campaigns directed at the general public and the evacuation centres.

Organizations such as Red Solidaria, Caritas and Scouts of Argentina, have opened donation collection centres in various locations in Buenos Aires and, in the case of Caritas, throughout the country.

### **Red Cross and Red Crescent action**

The Salta branch of the Argentine Red Cross (ARC) carried out a damage and needs assessment on 6 April. The assessment team was also sent to review the situation in Jujuy, as there is no ARC branch in that province. The Salta branch of the ARC has experience in flood operations as it participated in the emergency operation following severe flooding in province of Santa Fe in 2003. However, the assessment team experienced difficulties in determining the full extent of the emergency due to the large size of the area and logistical constraints. In addition, since completing the damage and needs assessment, several days of incessant rain have further aggravated the situation. Based upon the findings of the assessment, the Salta branch began local collections of donations and coordinated activities with NGOs active in the area and the Argentine Army.

On 10 April, the ARC drew up a plan of action to support 4,000 people in the city of Tartagal, in the province of Salta, over a period of 30 days. With the active participation of the affected communities, the ARC will survey the areas within an 80-km radius of the city in order to determine additional needs as the situation develops and will distribute relief items. The provincial government's Civil Protection Agency officially requested that the ARC provide food, bed sheets, shoes and disposable diapers. The ARC has also determined that there is a need for drinking water, personal hygiene kits, cleaning kits, kitchen kits and milk. The ARC will identify other organizations working in the area in order to establish agreements that will help to improve the level of assistance provided to beneficiaries and reduce duplication of efforts. As the rains continue, two members of the National Intervention Team (NIT) were sent the area to support the relief operation, to carry out additional damage and needs assessments and help draw up the preliminary plan of action. The plan of action may be modified to address the changing needs of the population.

The ARC has established communications with the "Casos Blancos" Commission in order to immediately identify and prioritize the humanitarian assistance to be provided by the National Society. The ARC has also established logistics agreements for storage and transport with the Salto Food Bank and the Argentine Army. In addition, "Aerolíneas Argentinas" is providing free space on one of their flights to send urgently needed visibility items. The ARC situation updates are available on the National Society's website at [www.cruzroja.org.ar](http://www.cruzroja.org.ar).

To support the plan of action, CHF 100,000 have been provided from the Federation's Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF).

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