

## ***CENTRAL AMERICA/EL SALVADOR: EARTHQUAKE***

22 January 2001

*appeal no. 02/2001  
situation report no. 3  
period covered: 18 - 21 January 2001*

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*Search and rescue efforts are now drawing to a close as hopes of finding survivors dwindle. The Salvadorean Red Cross Society (SRC) has received an official request from the government to coordinate support to 50,000 earthquake victims housed in 130 temporary shelters. Assistance is concentrated in the areas of health care, psychological support, water and sanitation and distribution of relief items. 2,200 volunteers are currently working with the National Society. A cold front with unseasonal rains has been forecast, resulting in plans to distribute an additional 22,000 blankets together with plastic sheeting. Coordination meetings are held regularly and have resulted in a draft plan of action (PoA) supported by the PNS represented in El Salvador. The PoA is based on findings from the FACT team and SRC assessments which have presented evaluations related to damage and needs. A full Federation appeal will be launched by the middle of the current week, detailing outstanding needs and appealing for additional support in cash and kind.*

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### ***The context***

A major earthquake measuring 7.6 on the Richter scale occurred off the coast of El Salvador on Saturday 13 January 2001 at 11:33 am local time (17:33UTC). The epicentre of the earthquake was located at latitude 12.8 degrees north, longitude 88.8 degrees west, or about 105 km south-south east of the capital, San Salvador.

The earthquake caused major damage in the departments of San Miguel, Santa Ana, La Libertad, La Paz and San Salvador. The most severely affected area is the neighbourhood of “Las Colinas” in the suburbs of Santa Tecla/Nueva San Salvador, where 315 residents died as a result of a landslide triggered by the earthquake.

The President of El Salvador declared a national emergency and appealed for international assistance.

## *Latest events*

As damage assessment teams report from remote areas where access is still difficult, the scale of the disaster is now being revealed.

The official death toll has risen to 704, but this number may still rise. The government is no longer releasing statistics as to people missing; however, it appears that previous figures may have been over-estimated.

Around 170,000 houses have been damaged, 70,000 of which are completely destroyed. The disaster has directly affected more than 573,000 people - one in eight Salvadoreans.

Many of the people affected are still living in temporary camps in open spaces such as football pitches, fields and parks. An estimated 10% of those affected are housed in the 130 official temporary shelters which have been established in schools, churches and other public buildings. The largest is the “El Cafetelon” shelter which is housing around 7,000 people. An accurate system for official registration is yet to be established.

Prior to the earthquake, El Salvador experienced an outbreak of retro virus gastro-enteritis, which may now be exacerbated by limited access to clean water and sanitation. An estimated 40% of the affected population has no access to drinking water or sanitary facilities at present. Disease surveillance and education on communicable diseases are therefore considered to be particularly important. The Pan-American Health Organization (PAHO) has also stressed the need for strengthening immunization schemes and the maintenance of the cold chain, as well as emergency rehabilitation of health facilities. Whilst some hospitals were seriously damaged, the overall capacity is sufficient to meet the needs generated by the emergency.

The government estimates that the earthquake has resulted in over USD 1 billion in damages - almost half of the nation’s annual budget.

Water, electricity and telephone services are being resumed in urban areas, but continue to pose problems in rural areas. Most of the roads damaged by the landslides are reported to have been repaired, with at least partial access via provisional roads along the major routes. Some sectors such as Comasagua and Berlin remain difficult to access. The international airport incurred minor damage, but is now fully operational.

The national emergency committee (COEN) continues to coordinate the overall disaster response. The government has also set up a procurement agency including local entrepreneurs. In order to speed up distributions, the official distribution centre has been moved from the international fair premises to the airport.

Local residents of the “Las Colinas” neighbourhood are considering legal action against construction companies and/or authorities over controversial urbanization in a high risk area.

More than 2,000 aftershocks have been registered over the last week, with some reaching a magnitude of more than 5.0 on the Richter scale. Many people are still afraid to stay in their houses at night, preferring to stay outside.

Updated figures on the impact of the disaster are summarised in the table below:

<i>Department</i>	<i>Dead</i>	<i>Injured</i>	<i>Public buildings damaged</i>	<i>Houses damaged</i>	<i>Houses destroyed</i>	<i>Houses buried</i>	<i>Landslides</i>	<i>Persons affected</i>	<i>Hospitals damaged</i>	<i>Health centres damaged</i>
La Libertad	527	1,025	24	10,102	9,091	687	150	90,585	1	4
La Paz	32	137	32	21,790	16,038	0	55	144,783	1	6
Sonsonate	44	1,276	36	9,776	6,220	0	42	40,143	1	5
Santa Ana	12	295	5	725	944	0	25	8,395	0	1
Cuscatlan	20	37	47	4,401	2,068	0	16	30,576	0	0
Usulután	26	779	236	26,418	26,691	0	32	81,662	2	7
San Salvador	22	306	24	3,579	1,031	0	133	14,190	0	4
San Miguel	19	43	23	9,372	2,902	0	24	54,126	1	0
San Vicente	1	53	20	13,783	3,789	0	4	83,228	0	1
La Unión	1	10	67	1,685	226	0	1	8,541	0	0
Ahuachapán	0	80	27	2,957	693	0	10	15,985	0	0
Cabañas	0	7	31	180	4	0	4	855	0	0
Morazan	0	3	4	30	3	0	0	135	0	0
Chalatenango	0	4	6	67	14	1	0	405	0	0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>704</b>	<b>4,055</b>	<b>582</b>	<b>104,865</b>	<b>69,714</b>	<b>688</b>	<b>496</b>	<b>573,609</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>28</b>
	1,408									

Source: Salvador RC /COEN

Last updated: Sunday, 21 January 12:00

## ***Red Cross/Red Crescent action***

### **Salvadorean Red Cross Society/Federation •**

Search and rescue activities continue at various locations, including the “Las Colinas” area, but hopes of finding survivors are diminishing rapidly.

Distribution of relief items to earthquake victims has continued during the period. The SRC has distributed all relief goods which were brought in through the Federation, including those which arrived over land donated by neighbouring National Societies, as well as those flown in by air from National Societies.

As the weather forecasts predict the arrival of a cold front and unseasonal rain, the procurement and distribution of an additional 22,000 blankets and additional plastic sheeting has been defined as a priority.

The SRC is using the Supplies Management (SUMA) warehouse module developed by PAHO. Three field units were installed in the Comalpa international airport where all foreign aid has been arriving. Two months ago, using their own instructors, the SRC had organised a SUMA course for its staff. The SUMA central module has been set up by the National Emergency Commission.

Consolidated relief reports including distribution reports will be prepared on a monthly basis.

As of next week, the SRC will take over responsibility for the co-ordination of relief to all 130 temporary shelters in accordance with the official request of the Ministry of Health (MoH). The National Society will focus on the areas of basic health care, water and sanitation, psychological support and food assistance. The administration of the shelters, including registration and allocation of those affected, will remain a government responsibility. A committee consisting of representatives of the MoH, SRC, PAHO, and the Federation will co-ordinate supply of relief goods with other agencies. Numbers of shelters per department are detailed below:

<i>Department</i>	<i>Number of temporary shelters</i>
San Salvador	17
La Libertad	33
Santa Ana	15
San Sonate	14
San Vicente	5
Ahuachapan	17
Cuscatlan	1
La Paz	5
Usulután	1
Morazan	3
La Union	4
Cabañas	3
San Miguel	1
Others	11
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>130</b>

The SRC has established a preliminary plan of action, based on the evaluation of damage and needs (EDAN), supported by the National Emergency Committee (COEN) and the Federation FACT team. The figures are now based on detailed numbers, logistic interventions and food baskets and are in accordance with SPHERE standards. In the plan of action, the Salvadorean Red Cross identifies three phases of intervention:

- emergency phase (13 - 19 January)
- intervention, rehabilitation and humanitarian assistance (19 January -19 March)
- rehabilitation and reconstruction (19 January onwards).

During the rehabilitation and humanitarian assistance phase, the SRC will focus on the following support:

- *Coordination of 130 temporary shelters* - (estimated 50,000 persons)
  - Distribution of food and non-food items including blankets and hygiene articles.
  - Basic health care, monitoring of the health situation and health education.
  - Water and sanitation.
  - Psychological support.
  - Coordination with agencies involved.

- *Relief distributions to targeted rural communities*
  - Water & sanitation.
  - Food and non-food items.
- *Construction of temporary housing* (target 30,000 units)
  - Donation of wooden frames, iron sheets and plastic sheeting
  - Technical supervision

The draft plan of action (PoA) is currently being developed more fully. The PoA will also form the basis of the Federation's full appeal and PNS cooperation. All PNS present in El Salvador have been involved in the preparation of the PoA and have pledged full support. The FACT team has completed a detailed assessment of the situation and of human, financial and material needs. Together with the field assessment conducted by the SRC, this will provide the basis of the final PoA for the next phase of the relief action and for the Federation's full appeal.

Since the earthquake hit, an estimated 2,200 volunteers have been active. The Federation's team in San Salvador continues to support the Salvadorean Red Cross in the co-ordination of its relief activities and external relations with authorities, Red Cross partners and other donors, as well as with the media. Daily co-ordination meetings are held with the SRC and PNS representatives. Communication and co-operation between the different components of the Movement is efficient. There is general acceptance of the concept that support will be provided to the National Society in order for it to lead the operation.

The logistics delegate has been providing support for the handling of relief goods arriving at the international airport, ensuring the tracking of all in-kind donations received as part of the Federation's appeal.

An ICRC tracing delegate has arrived to assist the SRC in developing its tracing services, in close collaboration with American and Canadian Red Cross Societies.

## ***Outstanding needs***

As a result of the official request by the Salvadoran government to take responsibility for the 130 temporary shelters, the SRC has substantially modified its plans for the second phase of response. It has indicated that this major commitment requires close coordination and technical support from the Federation. In order to meet the human resource needs, the Federation is urgently looking to fill the following delegate positions:

- Head of Delegation/Head of Programme (pending decision on formal status)
- Shelter programme manager
- Logistician
- Water and sanitation delegate.

As all necessary relief goods can be purchased locally, there is no further need for in-kind donations and/or transport of relief goods.

In order to meet the most immediate needs in the next few weeks, the release of funds already pledged for this phase is urgently needed. The full Federation appeal is expected to be launched by mid week.

## ***External relations - Government/UN/NGOs/Media***

The SRC continues its close co-ordination with the authorities and other disaster management services through the National Emergency Response Centre (COEN). In addition, there have been regular meetings with various government departments and Ministries.

The SRC has also been asked to lead an NGO information sharing forum, which will meet at regular intervals.

At a meeting between the Ministry of Health, the Salvadorean Red Cross, the Federation and the American Red Cross, operational guidelines for health activities following the disaster were established. These include basic sanitation, health monitoring and health education, as well as psychological support.

As part of an initial USD 200,000 emergency response, the World Food Programme (WFP) has delivered food by truck and helicopter to La Libertad, La Paz, Usulután, Don Rua, Tecoluca and Comasagua. WFP has sufficient food stocks until the end of the month, but will launch an international appeal for the following phase. WFP has proposed that SRC collaborate in its emergency food distribution and the proposal is being studied.

Excellent coordination has been established with OXFAM UK. A working committee consisting of the SRC, the Federation and OXFAM has prepared a joint plan of action. Activities will initially focus on distribution of water, waste management and basic sanitation in temporary shelters, as well as in some small communities in rural areas which have received no support so far.

A second inter-agency meeting focusing on water and sanitation and including other NGOs is scheduled to take place in the next few days. It has been agreed that such meetings will be held twice weekly in order to share information.

Media attention remained high during the period, from both local, regional and international newspapers, radio and television stations. A joint press conference was held in Guatemala City including representatives from the Guatemalan Red Cross, American Red Cross, Spanish Red Cross and the Federation's regional delegation.

## ***Contributions***

See Annex 1 for details.

Ericsson has provided essential communications and search and rescue tools to the Salvadorean Red Cross Society in the context of Ericsson Response Programme including 8 generators, 5 pickup vehicles, 12 cellular phones, 10 metal cutters, 300 spades and 300 hatchets.

The European Community Humanitarian Office (ECHO) approved 4 emergency grants totalling EUR 2,000,000, as follows:

- German Red Cross - EUR 600,000 (focus on emergency distribution and temporary housing)
- Spanish Red Cross - EUR 500,000 (emergency distributions of food and non-food items)
- French Red Cross - EUR 400,000 (distribution of medical supplies and health care)
- OXFAM UK - EUR 500,000 (water and sanitation).

Some donor contributions are still being processed.

## *Conclusion*

The relief initiatives led by the Salvadorean Red Cross Society have now entered into the second phase and are progressing well. Coordination efforts have proved positive and are working towards maximising the efficiency of the emergency response. The Federation will launch a full appeal for support to the Salvadorean Red Cross in order to assist victims of the earthquake by mid week since full damage and needs assessment reports are now available and access has been gained to affected locations in remote areas.

Peter Rees-Gildea  
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**This and other reports on Federation operations are available on the Federation's website: <http://www.ifrc.org>**

Central America / El Salvador, earthquake						ANNEX 1
APPEAL No. 02/2001 Prelim.		PLEDGES RECEIVED			01/22/01	
DONOR	CATEGORY	QUANTITY	UNIT	VALUE CHF	DATE	COMMENT
<b>CASH</b>						
REQUESTED IN APPEAL CHF ----->				1,112,360		<b>TOTAL COVERAGE 148.1%</b>
CASH CARRIED FORWARD						
BRITISH - GOVT (DFID)		98,039	GBP	242,156	16.01.01	EARMARKING TO BE SPECIFIED
CANADIAN - RC		70,000	CAD	77,112	16.01.01	
CANADIAN - RC		150,000	CAD	165,240	17.01.01	
DANISH - RC		92,500	DKK	18,657	19.01.01	
FINNISH - RC		43,729	EUR	65,773	15.01.01	
ICELANDIC - RC		1,000,000	ISK	19,411	15.01.01	
IRISH - RC		20,000	IEP	38,190	16.01.01	
ITALIAN - RC		100,000,000	ITL	77,700	18.01.01	EMERGENCY SHELTER MATERIALS & FOOD
JAPANESE - RC				37,000	16.01.01	
KOREA, REPUBLIC - RC				30,000	17.01.01	
NEW ZEALAND - RC		100,000	NZD	71,770	16.01.01	
NORWEGIAN - RC		250,000	NOK	46,350	18.01.01	
OPEC		200,000	USD	335,000	18.01.01	EMERGENCY RELIEF SUPPLIES
SINGAPORE - RC				23,000	22.01.01	
SWEDISH - GOVT/RC		600,000	SEK	104,580	15.01.01	
TURKISH - RC				50,000	17.01.01	
<b>SUB/TOTAL RECEIVED IN CASH</b>				1,401,939	CHF	126.0%
<b>KIND AND SERVICES (INCLUDING PERSONNEL)</b>						
DONOR	CATEGORY	QUANTITY	UNIT	VALUE CHF	DATE	COMMENT
NETHERLANDS - RC		360,489	NLG	246,015	16.01.01	EMERGENCY HEALTH KITS, GENERATORS, DISPENSARY TENTS, FAMILY TENTS, REINF. PLASTIC SHEETING, JERRY CANS, KITCHEN SETS
<b>SUB/TOTAL RECEIVED IN KIND/SERVICES</b>				246,015	CHF	22.1%
<b>ADDITIONAL TO APPEAL BUDGET</b>						
DONOR	CATEGORY	QUANTITY	UNIT	VALUE CHF	DATE	COMMENT
<b>SUB/TOTAL RECEIVED</b>				0	CHF	
<b>THE FOLLOWING PROJECTS ARE LINKED TO THIS APPEAL:</b>						
PSV507						