

EL SALVADOR: EARTHQUAKE

14 May 2001

appeal no. 2/2001

situation report no. 13

period covered: 24 April - 9 May 2001

The rainy season has now begun in El Salvador and seismic activity has been intense over the reporting period, culminating on 8 May with a total of 30 tremors. The two largest tremors were of magnitude 4.8 and 4.6 on the Richter scale. The San Vicente branch reported 223 houses destroyed and 2 people seriously injured, as well as landslides. In response, the Salvadorean Red Cross Society (SRC) delivered 500 shelters to San Vicente and an intervention team for psychological support was deployed. Ministry of Health (MoH) / SRC health campaigns are underway in view of the threat of epidemics during the rainy season. Rain water collection projects have begun to ensure sufficient potable water in remote areas which will be difficult to access at the height of the rainy season.

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. The epicenter of the earthquake was some 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 heavily affected area was the neighbourhood of "Las Colinas" in the suburbs of Santa Tecla/Nueva San Salvador, where the earthquake triggered a landslide covering an estimated 400 houses entirely in mud. However, later assessments subsequently revealed a far broader impact as rural areas across the country were severely damaged, resulting in the displacement of whole communities.

One month to the day after this earthquake, an aftershock registering 6.6 on the Richter scale struck some 30 km east of San Salvador on the morning of Tuesday, 13 February at 8:22 a.m local time, reducing many rural communities to rubble, killing over 300 persons and causing major damage to water systems.

On Saturday, 17 February, at approximately 14.24 hours local time, El Salvador was shaken by a further tremor, the epicentre of which was in the south of the city of San Salvador. The quake measured 5.3 on the Richter scale, caused landslides and damaged more homes.

Latest events

The rainy season has now started and seismic activity in El Salvador has increased in recent days. According to the National Emergency Co-ordination Centre (COEN), between 1 and 7 May, there were 9 tremors averaging 3.8 in magnitude; however, on a single day, 8 May, 30 tremors shook the country. The two largest tremors were felt throughout the country and took place between 12.00 and 12.30 hours.

These tremors occurred in San Vicente and were of magnitude 4.8 and 4.6 on the Richter scale. The San Vicente branch reported 223 houses destroyed and 2 people seriously injured, as well as landslides on the Pan-American highway, Tecoluca road and in rural communities. In April, over the entire month, 24 tremors took place.

Red Cross/Red Crescent action

Objective 1: To meet the basic needs and support the resettlement of the population of the "Cafetalón" macro-shelter.

During the reporting period, as of 1 May, the local authorities and the national government identified and obtained land for the inhabitants of the Cafetalón macro-shelter. Therefore, as of this date, families have been transported from El Cafetalón, with support initially from the German Red Cross and, more recently, from the Spanish Red Cross, and will be resettled in the areas of El Charico and El Cobanal. The Salvadorean Red Cross Society continued the distribution of kits to the families leaving El Cafetalón, with support from the Spanish Red Cross, and to date, a total of 601 beneficiary families have received kits containing food, water, bedding, kitchen, hygiene and sanitation sets. Currently, 121 families remain in tents at the Cafetalón; therefore, it is anticipated that the date of closure and the conclusion of the agreements between the National Society, the local municipality and the Ministry of the Interior, set at 2 June, will be met. Red Cross assistance to the remaining families continues to include water and sanitation, supported by the American Red Cross, with a production of 13,500 litres of water daily. In addition, families at the Polideportivo shelter are also transferring to the areas designated by the authorities. In addition to the 601 families which have received kits to date, the total number of families which are to benefit from the return home programme will reach more than 664.

Objective 2: To provide the basic needs and support the resettlement of 30,000 (6,600 Federation case load) families in the departments of Sonsonate, Ahuachapán, Cuscatlán, San Miguel, San Miguel, Santa Ana, La Paz, Usulután, San Vicente and San Salvador.

- ***Relief Distribution 24 April - 9 May 2001***

To date, relief distributions have assisted a total of 15,750 families, more than double the number included in the original Federation plan. 9,900 families were assisted with food distributions and 5,850 families have received hygiene kits. Over the next few weeks, the remaining 1,250 hygiene kits will be distributed, concluding the distribution to 7,100 beneficiary families, supported by the Belgian Red Cross, in Sonsonate and Cojutepeque.

In response to the recent tremors, the Salvadorean Red Cross Society delivered 500 shelters to San Vicente, and an intervention team for psychological support was deployed. The national relief director of SRC and Federation representatives plan to travel to the affected area for further assessments.

- ***Water and Sanitation***

In addition to the above mentioned distributions, families are currently continuing to receive potable water: 40,000 litres per day for 700 families in five communities. These families were relying on river or spring water before the earthquakes, which is no longer possible since, following the earthquakes, the water sources are now buried under landslides.

The rains have started in most parts of the country, and at the height of the rainy season it will be impossible to reach many rural villages, including those currently benefiting from the tanker water distribution, mainly because of the bad road conditions. Therefore, as a solution, water and sanitation projects will focus over the next few weeks on collecting rain water, obtaining water from large roofs such as those of schools and churches, for these communities. At present, project activities include co-ordination with community leaders to ensure appropriate use of the water and maintenance of the equipment by the community itself. In addition, with the involvement of the youth department of the Cojutepeque branch, a project for the development of hygiene promotion targeted at school children is to be initiated.

The two month emergency hygiene promotion project in 25 communities has been concluded, and activities for branch capacity strengthening is still in its first stages of organisation. The four water tanks in the field are considered necessary, and will therefore not be dismantled as previously anticipated; two remain in Sonsonate and two in Cojutepeque.

Objective 3: To prevent the outbreak of epidemics by providing primary and preventative health care for targeted displaced populations.

As the first light rains of the season have begun, the health risks to vulnerable families in temporary shelter increase. The Ministry of Health (MoH) continues its role of ensuring and coordinating health care to populations affected by the earthquakes. In addition, the Ministry is putting in place measures to prevent epidemics such as dengue through the organisation of countrywide campaigns in collaboration with other organisations including the Salvadorean Red Cross Society.

The cartoon character “Cruzrojin” (little red cross) continues to appear in 30-minute health education programmes televised during peak children’s viewing times. This initiative of the SRC, supported by the American Red Cross, is both promoting the image and visibility of the Red Cross and providing simple messages on the prevention of diarrhoea. The project has extensive coverage and will continue to be a tool for future Red Cross messages.

The SRC continues to coordinate health activities with the MoH and other organisations. Food, shelter, safe water supplies, psycho-social support and the prevention of disease through education are presently the emphasis of Red Cross activities.

Objective 4: To provide psycho-social support to the affected population and volunteers.

In the aftermath of the devastating earthquakes, psycho-social support has become a priority for both the people of El Salvador and the Ministry of Health (MoH). In addition, previously unidentified needs in this area have come to the fore. A recent national mental health forum focused on these issues. In response, the MoH has identified mental health reform, violence, child and juvenile mental health, substance abuse, depression and mental health in disasters as its priority areas of focus. The Salvadorean Red Cross participated in the forum and gave a presentation on psycho-social support in times of disaster. Special emphasis was placed on the need to adapt interventions to the local culture and to build on local capacities.

The Salvadorean Red Cross Society is presently developing the capacities of its health team by employing a local expert to identify the lessons learned from the emergency and to develop the psycho-social support strategy within the organisation. A psychological support delegate from the Federation has begun a two-month mission to explore the current mental health priorities with the Salvadorean Red Cross and to give advice on future programme development.

The SRC psycho-social support teams funded by the Italian, American and French Red Cross Societies continue interventions in communities most affected by the earthquakes (Sonsonate, La Paz, Cuscatlán and San Vicente). Community members have expressed satisfaction at the results achieved, in terms of increased community organization and cohesiveness. This, together with increased knowledge of psycho-social issues has resulted in communities and its members becoming more resilient in the face of potential disasters and everyday problems.

Objective 5: To improve the health of communities affected by the disaster through the development of community health brigades.

The Salvadorean Red Cross Society has reduced the number of health brigades as medical access to populations affected by the earthquakes is beginning to return to normal. Presently there are two mobile health teams working with the Ministry of Health and communities in the areas of La Paz, San Vicente and La Libertad. As part of their visits, the Red Cross teams are assisting the MoH in the formation of community health committees and providing training to local people in the area of preventative health. The Salvadorean Red Cross medical brigades are supported with assistance from the Japanese and French Red Cross Societies.

In the coming months, the Salvadorean Red Cross Society will ensure curative and preventative health capacity in order to provide rapid and appropriate assistance to communities affected by the forthcoming rainy season which is traditionally associated with tropical storms. Additionally, health brigades will provide Red Cross branches with the necessary medical expertise to evaluate community health needs and to train Red Cross volunteers in health promotion activities.

Objective 6: To ensure the capacity of the National Society to deliver effective disaster response services in the immediate and medium term future.

The finalised National Society contingency plan has been disseminated in three branches. The plan aims to assist communities in case of flooding and landslides in areas previously identified through field assessments and outlined in risk maps. This plan is supported by the Federation both in its design as well as through internal and external dissemination.

A proposal for a two day workshop has been concluded and forwarded to the regional delegation. The objective of this workshop is to measure the impact of development workshops as well as the effectiveness of community response to previous disasters. As a complement, a survey took place at community level and the results demonstrate tangible outcomes. Efforts to promote a prevention culture are proving that prevention is the most efficient alternative for counteracting disaster situations.

Objective 7: To strengthen the disaster response capacity and preparedness of the SRC and of communities to explore and implement appropriate mitigation measures at the local level and to strengthen the links between National Society branches and vulnerable communities.

The long-term disaster preparedness programme continues to work towards meeting the objective of strengthening the organisational, technical and operational capacity of the National Society. This programme is built on Strategy 2010, recommendations following recent operations in the region including hurricane Mitch, hurricane Georges and floods in Venezuela, together with response analysis in the wake of the recent earthquakes. The main aim is to strengthen the national relief department and its structures through an implementation plan of one or two years' duration. To date, support identified includes telecommunications with the assistance of the American and Netherlands Red Cross, and a community disaster education programme, supported by CIDA, Canada. Between 16 and 18 May, a regional disaster preparedness and prevention conference is scheduled to take place in El Salvador. The conference will cover issues such as human resources, organisational development, coordination, communication, community level disaster preparedness, community brigades and relief.

Objective 8: To increase the social well being of the affected population through increased respect for the rights of the most vulnerable - including children and the elderly - and a reduction of family violence.

On 5 - 6 May, "Techos" activities, supported by the Japanese Red Cross, included the launching of capacity building initiatives, as well as the construction of the first temporary homes. The manufacturer instructed leaders and volunteers as to the construction of the techos and four pilot temporary homes were constructed. The number of constructions to date are as follows: Tacuba 30, La Montaña 21, Pandadura 27 and Nispero 32. Volunteers from the youth department have been instructed in Santa Tecla, delivery of material is currently underway, and construction will start in the next few days.

As a complement to the "Techos", or temporary housing project, the Federation will carry out a field assessment on the above mentioned sites in order to evaluate the situation and identify volunteers to implement a water and sanitation project including latrine construction. The nine classrooms in San

Esteban Catarinas have been built and will soon be functional, thanks to support from the Netherlands Red Cross. A recent SRC planning meeting brought to the fore the need to promote programme components which aim to improve social well-being and seek to reduce violence, at the same time, strengthening branches and increasing visibility. The global long-term vision foresees further work in primary health care and disaster preparedness.

Objective 9: To strengthen the National Society branches and to increase their ability to address the needs of the most vulnerable through sustained and effective programming and service delivery. Phase III.

The Federation delegation held an internal meeting in order to provide an update on the status of projects, as well as in view of future long term planning. The finalisation of the national development plan of the SRC, which will focus on strengthening of the branches, is the main priority for more specific planning over the next two years.

Objective 10: To promote a coherent Red Cross image.

Planning and organisation for the seminar for journalists on disaster information is underway. Contacts with participants are taking place and the dates for the event have been set at 8 - 10 June. The seminar is an initiative of SRC with Federation support. The goal of the seminar is to create a network of journalists able to deal with the flow of information during a disaster, to promote coverage of Red Cross activities, to create awareness of the importance of information during disasters, and to strengthen Red Cross media relations.

Outstanding needs

At a meeting between the SRC and the Federation the new head of delegation was introduced and discussions successfully addressed issues of providing a more accurate overview of past activities, the rehabilitation phase of the operation, and anticipating the longer-term future of Federation support to the National Society. As a result, a need for further institutional development was highlighted together with the recommendation for a more solid health team guided by a coordinator. The Society seeks to concentrate its activities in the areas of health, disaster preparedness and institutional development.

External relations - Government/UN/NGOs/Media

The SRC celebrated 8 May, Red Cross Day, with a press conference and acknowledgements to two of its most outstanding volunteers. One of the volunteers received the award for 25 years of service and was acknowledged by the SRC for being the ambassador volunteer for El Salvador nominated by the UN. Another volunteer was acknowledged by the SRC for his 50 years of service, and was acknowledged as one of the 16 most outstanding volunteers in the world nominated by the Red Cross Movement. In addition to the press conference at the national SRC headquarters, which was satisfactorily covered by the press, the local branches celebrated Red Cross day with Cruzrojin, activities and food, and the SRC published half a page in one of the leading newspapers, thanking all donors.

Contributions

See Annex 1 for details. The appeal coverage currently stands at 108.8 per cent

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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						PLEDGES RECEIVED
						12.05.2001
DONOR	CATEGORY	QUANTITY	UNIT	VALUE CHF	DATE	COMMENT
CASH						
REQUESTED IN APPEAL CHF ----->				7'645'698		TOTAL COVERAGE 108.8%
CASH CARRIED FORWARD						
AMERICAN - PRIVATES				8'626	24.01.01	
AMERICAN - 2 PRIVATES				2'688	02.02.01.	
AMERICAN - PRIVATES		5'400	USD	8'791	15.02.01	
ANDORRAN - RC				31'976	02.02.01	
ARGENTINIAN - RC		1'896	ARS	3'087	16.03.01	
AUSTRIAN - RC		1'000'000	ATS	111'799	15.01.01	
AUSTRALIAN - GOVT		100'000	AUD	91'330	23.01.01	FOOD, MEDICINES, SHELTER MATERIALS AND BLANKETS
AUSTRALIAN - RC		65'000	AUD	58'429	14.02.01	
AUSTRALIAN - RC		33'595	AUD	30'199	06.04.01	
BELGIUM - GOVT/RC		5'437'402	BEF	207'355	22.01.01	PURCHASE OF 7'172 HYGIENE KITS
BRITISH - GOVT (DFID)		98'039	GBP	242'156	16.01.01	EARMARKING TO BE SPECIFIED
BRITISH - RC				170'000	12.02.01	REIMBURSEMENT DREF
BRITISH - GOVT (DFID)		55'792	GBP	134'459	19.02.01	2X WATER TANKERS (MAX. 6 MONTHS)
BRITISH - RC		90'000	GBP	216'900	02.03.01	
BRITISH - PRIVATE		100'000	GBP	241'000	15.03.01	
BRITISH - PRIVATE				126	29.01.01	
CANADIAN - RC		70'000	CAD	77'112	16.01.01	
CANADIAN - GOVT		150'000	CAD	165'240	17.01.01	CANNOT BE USED FOR PURCHASE OF FOOD ITEMS
CANADIAN - RC		150'000	CAD	162'375	02.02.01	WATER & SANITATION TRAINING & DP
CANADIAN - RC		150'000	CAD	162'375	16.02.01	HEALTH CLINICS & WATER SANITATION
CANADIAN - RC		300'000	CAD	324'750	19.02.01	CANNOT BE USED FOR PURCHASE OF FOOD ITEMS
CANADIAN - RC		200'000	CAD	216'500	19.02.01	HEALTH & CAPACITY BUILDING
CHILEAN - RC		11'000	USD	17'908	20.02.01	
CYPRUS - RC				5'270	14.02.01	
DANISH - RC		92'500	DKK	18'657	19.01.01	
DANISH - RC		185'000	DKK	38'110	15.02.01	
FINNISH - RC		43'729	EUR	65'773	15.01.01	
FINNISH GOVT		159'778	EUR	245'802	02.03.01	
HONG KONG - RC				57'631	26.02.01	
ICELANDIC - RC		1'000'000	ISK	19'411	15.01.01	
IRANIAN - RC		20'000	USD	34'264	17.04.01	
IRISH - RC		20'000	IEP	38'190	16.01.01	
IRISH - GOVT		200'000	IEP	381'900	15.01.01	
IRISH - RC				136'710	20.03.01	
ITALIAN - RC		100'000'000	ITL	77'700	18.01.01	EMERGENCY SHELTER MATERIALS & FOOD
ITALIAN - PRIVATE				335	02.02.01	
JAPANESE - RC				37'000	16.01.01	
JAPANESE - GOVT		498'870	USD	812'160	16.02.01	TEMPORARY DWELLINGS (2'500 KITS)
JAPANESE - RC				142'000	16.02.01	COSTS OF DELEGATE TO BE CHARGED
JAPANESE - RC		347'933	USD	566'435	16.02.01	MOBILE COMMUNITY HEALTH BRIGADES PROGRAMME (3 BRIGADES 3 MONTHS)

KOREA, REPUBLIC - RC				30'000	17.01.01	
KUWAIT - RC		50'000	USD	83'950	28.02.01	
LIECHTENSTEIN - RC				53'150	13.02.01	
LIECHTENSTEIN - RC				42'650	17.04.01	HEALTH AND WATER
LIECHTENSTEIN - PRIVATE				15'000	27.02.01	
MALTESE - RC				29'725	16.02.01	
MONACO - RC		200'000	FRF	46'900	14.01.01	
NETHERLANDS - GOVT		504'490	NLG	352'176	01.02.01	FOR PURCHASE OF HYGINE KITS, INDUSTRIAL KITCHENS, BED KITS, MANAGEMENT / OPERATION SUPPORT
NETHERLANDS - GOVT/RC		66'800	NLG	46'632	01.03.01	
NEW ZEALAND - govt		100'000	NZD	71'770	16.01.01	
NORWEGIAN - RC		250'000	NOK	46'350	18.01.01	
NORWEGIAN - GOVT		2'060'000	NOK	385'410	24.01.01	
OPEC		200'000	USD	335'000	18.01.01	EMERGENCY RELIEF SUPPLIES
PHARMACIA & UPJOHN FOUNDATION		25'000	USD	40'700	29.01.01	RELIEF ITEMS
SHELL INTERNATIONAL		25'000	USD	40'700	24.01.01	
SINGAPORE - RC				23'000	22.01.01	
SINGAPORE - RC				2'918	14.02.01	
SPANISH - PRIVATE				1'000	27.02.01	
SWEDISH - GOVT/RC		600'000	SEK	104'580	15.01.01	
SWEDISH - GOVT/RC		1'045'000	SEK	181'517	21.02.01	
SWEDISH - RC		502'895	SEK	87'353	19.04.01	
SWISS - PRIVATES				200	16.01.01	
SWISS - 10 PRIVATES				2'765	14.02.01	
SWISS - PRIVATE				300	26.02.01	
SWISS - PRIVATE				2'500	05.03.01	
SWISS - PRIVATE		679	USD	1'180	23.03.01	
TURKISH - RC				50'000	17.01.01	
UNITED ARAB EMIRATES		10'000	AED	4'433	05.02.01	
UNHCR STAFF				4'248	19.02.01	
VENEZUELA - PRIVATE		36'518'000	VEB	85'087	15.02.01	
WHO STAFF				2'000	22.01.01	
ONLINE DONATIONS		415	USD	687	30.01.01	
ONLINE DONATIONS				5'315	22.02.01	
ONLINE DONATIONS				11'865	26.02.01	
ONLINE DONATIONS				5'928	08.03.01	
SUNDRY INCOME - PRIVATES				188	27.02.01	
ONLINE DONATIONS				2'318	20.03.01	
ONLINE DONATIONS				4'741	10.04.01	
PRIVATE DONOR		3'000	USD	4'974	13.03.001	
SUB/TOTAL RECEIVED IN CASH				7'571'739	CHF	99.0%
KIND AND SERVICES (INCLUDING PERSONNEL)						
DONOR	CATEGORY	QUANTITY	UNIT	VALUE CHF	DATE	COMMENT
BRITISH - RC		7'487	GBP	18'044	27.02.01	MDPE PIPE, PUMPS, TAPS, SUCTION HOSE, TRANSPORTATION
ERICSSON		36'506	USD	59'432	15.01.01	SEE PMN FOR DETAILS
FINNISH - RC		6'500	EUR	10'000	15.01.01	FACT TEAM MEMBER COSTS
FRENCH - RC		223'430	EUR	343'725	21.02.01	160 TENTS 27 M2, 600 FAMILY TENTS 12M2
NETHERLANDS - RC		411'122	NLG	286'997	16.01.01	EMERGENCY HEALTH KITS, GENERATORS, DISPENSARY TENTS, FAMILY TENTS, REINF. PLASTIC SHEETING, JERRY CANS, KITCHEN SETS
Canada	Delegate(s)			14'620		
Great Britain	Delegate(s)			14'620		
SUB/TOTAL RECEIVED IN KIND/SERVICES				747'438	CHF	9.8%

ADDITIONAL TO APPEAL BUDGET						
DONOR	CATEGORY	QUANTITY	UNIT	VALUE CHF	DATE	COMMENT
SUB/TOTAL RECEIVED				0	CHF	
THE FOLLOWING PROJECTS ARE LINKED TO THIS APPEAL:						
PSV507						