

# OPERATIONS UPDATE



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

## PARAGUAY: DROUGHT

14 January, 2003

*This Ops Update is intended for reporting on emergency appeals.*

*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 178 countries. For more information: [www.ifrc.org](http://www.ifrc.org)*

*Appeal No. 31/02*

*Launched on 24 October 2002 for CHF 418,000 for five months*

*Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF) Allocated: CHF 70,000*

*Beneficiaries: 5,950*

*Operations Update No. 2; Period covered: 8 November - 27 December 2002; Last Update: 8 November 2002; Next Update 3 expected February 2003*

### IN BRIEF

*Appeal coverage: 46.9% (this coverage figure primarily reflects multilateral support and is in line with the attached list of contributions; in fact, this appeal is over 100% covered when bilateral support is taken into account; further details of the funding situation and the appeal budget will be provided with the next Operations Update)*

*Related Appeals: 1.18/2002 Pan American Disaster Response Unit; 01.22/2002 South America; 31/01 Central America: Drought and Food Insecurity*

*Outstanding needs: Given the bilateral funding received, there are currently no outstanding needs.*

*Summary: The operation to assist drought affected communities in the Chaco central region is showing good progress. Given excellent coordination and cooperation between the Paraguayan Red Cross and Red Cross and external partners, optimum assistance is ensured to the most vulnerable indigenous farming families. Distribution cycles of food and emergency potable water distributions took place in both November and December. The number of target beneficiaries has been increased from 1,193 families to 4,970 families in 51 communities thanks to funding from ECHO granted to the Spanish Red Cross. Currently an environmentally appropriate system is being designed for potable water tanks and the contract tendering process has been undertaken. A Pan American Response Unit (PADRU) disaster management delegate is working in Paraguay with the National Society and is carrying out training in Federation disaster response procedures. The operation seeks to build capacity in the National Society headquarters and the Boqueron branch, particularly in respect of future disasters related to floods and drought.*

### Operational Developments w

An extended drought has affected the departments of Alto Paraguay, Boqueron and Presidente Hayes in western Paraguay over the last two years. For a period of eight months, there was no rain and the situation

deteriorated. As a result, on 2 October, a national state of emergency was declared. In Boqueron, the drought has had a particularly negative impact on agriculture, affecting 4,968 rural indigenous farming families in 56 communities who live principally on subsistence crops. Traditional water supply systems called “tajamares”, excavations where rain water is collected and distributed to the community, are completely dry and communities have exhausted their food and water reserves. Underground water sources do not offer a viable



alternative given the cost of drilling wells and the difficulty in locating water of sufficient quality for human consumption. Some rainfall occurred in the Chaco central region as of early November, although scarce and insufficient for the planting of crops. In 2001, seeds were distributed to indigenous farming communities in the area, which did not germinate given lack of rain and irrigation as a result of the shortage of water. This may lead to a prolonged period of hunger.

Diseases associated with malnutrition have begun to appear, together with illnesses related to contaminated water and the local health system is unable to meet demands, given a lack of medicines and other resources. The one medical centre in the region is at a significant distance from the affected communities.

The operation under implementation consists of three components: a) provision of immediate humanitarian food and water aid; b) increasing the collection and water storage capacity in the target communities specifically during dry periods; and c) contributing to maintaining the quality of water throughout the water collection and distribution chain through improving community and family hygiene practices. The combination of these three interrelated processes is designed to reduce the vulnerability of the target communities affected by water shortages and water borne disease.

### **Coordination w**

Effective coordination is taking place. The Paraguayan Red Cross is working closely with the regional delegation in South America and the Pan American Disaster Response Unit. At present, in addition to the Paraguayan Red Cross, the Spanish Red Cross and several organizations are working to implement relief activities, including USAID/OFDA, ECHO, COOPI (Cooperazione Internazionale) and other small church and local groups. Cooperation meetings were held in Asuncion, the Paraguayan capital in December. The various organizations have agreed to work together in several areas, which includes coordination of the amounts of relief items for distribution. At present, the Spanish Red Cross is working with ECHO to agree upon a food ration that matches that of the Federation supported operation. This coordination has resulted in an agreement that the Red Cross partners will operate in the department of Boquerón and the other agencies will operate in the department of Presidente Hayes.

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

Beneficiary criteria for Paraguayan Red Cross assistance to vulnerable drought-affected families were set as follows: communities made up of subsistence farmers; communities and families whose food reserves have been exhausted; communities at a large distance from urban centres; communities and families with high levels of illnesses associated with malnutrition.

The Paraguayan Red Cross is currently completing the reporting on the second cycle of food distributions. Emergency water distributions are continuing and are supported by the Paraguayan Red Cross through the international appeal. The Spanish Red Cross has received funding from ECHO to cover part of the emergency water distributions, the installation of 25 water storage tanks and the next three cycles of food distributions. The health promotion project focusing on water and sanitation will be a joint initiative supported by the Paraguayan Red Cross through the Federation appeal and the Spanish Red Cross with ECHO funding.

The Federation is also supporting the Paraguayan Red Cross in various areas of capacity building. Currently, training is under implementation through the PADRU delegate, supported by the American Red Cross International Disaster Response Unit, who has been seconded to Paraguay. Training is focusing on Federation response systems, tools and reporting methods. Federation supported training sessions will be held in January and February 2003 including a Participatory Hygiene and Sanitation Transformation (PHAST) workshop, and a national intervention team (NIT) training session focusing on strengthening the Paraguayan Red Cross relief and disaster departments through activities such as needs assessments, health in disaster situations and financial reporting.

## **Red Cross and Red Crescent Society w**

The Paraguayan Red Cross is currently expanding its disaster response department through the recruitment of personnel for the implementation of drought response activities. The Federation and the Spanish Red Cross are assisting through targeted funding support to Paraguayan Red Cross personnel.

## **Objectives, activities and results w**

### **Relief w**

**Objective 1:** *To contribute to the nutritional requirements of 1,193 families affected by the drought through the provision of supplementary food packages for five months.*

The first cycle of food distributions was implemented in November. 56,071 kilos of food were distributed to 1,193 families in 25 communities. Each family received a 47 kilo ration that contained the following:

- 10 kg. of rice
- 5 kg. of flour
- 5 kg. of sugar
- 2 kg. of salt
- 10 kg. of beans
- 5 kg. of noodles
- 5 litres of cooking oil
- 5 kg. of tea (yerba mate)

The second distribution cycle was implemented in December and has been completed. 76,675 kilos of food were distributed to 1,683 families in 44 communities. The increase in beneficiaries for the second cycle was due to the support of the USAID mission in Paraguay and in addition to drought-affected communities in Boquerón, assistance was provided to communities in the departments of Alto Paraguay and Presidente Hayes with OFDA funding. Following the second cycle of food distributions, as a result of increased coordination with other organizations working in the drought affected states, the Paraguayan Red Cross/Federation operation will focus on Boquerón, since the other affected areas are receiving coverage from a number of organizations.

Three further distribution cycles are planned for January, February and March. The ensuing distribution cycles will cover 4,790 families in 51 communities. The operation under implementation by the Spanish Red Cross is the reason for the increase in the number of beneficiaries targeted, As a result the overall programme covers all drought affected communities in Boquerón.

### **Water and Sanitation w**

**Objective 1:** *Ensure a three month supply of potable water to 1,193 families affected by the drought.*

The first distribution of emergency water took place on 8 November and these are continuing. Through the support of the local government in Boquerón, the Paraguayan Red Cross was able to secure the use of three water tankers for use in the operation. The tankers have a capacity of 10,000 litres and are operating on a daily basis. In November, 2,470,000 litres of water were delivered to over 1,193 families in 29 communities. As of 19 December, 1,380,000 litres have been delivered to 23 communities. For distributions taking place from January 2003, the number of families targeted under this objective has been raised to 4,970 in 51 communities. The initial objective was set in accordance with the initial DREF funds available and the capacity of the Paraguayan Red Cross. The increased beneficiary target is a result of the support of the Spanish Red Cross ECHO funded project which, in addition to the Federation supported operation, will make it possible to deliver emergency potable water to all communities in need in the entire department of Boqueron.

**Objective 2:** *Increase the water storage capacity in the target communities with a safe and permanent rainwater collection system.*

The installation of new community water systems is scheduled to begin in the first week of January. Currently an environmentally appropriate system is being designed for potable water tanks and the contract tendering process was undertaken during the week of 23 December. The original target of 1,193 families in 25 communities to receive water storage assistance has now been raised to 4,790 families in 51 communities, thanks to the ECHO grant to the Spanish Red Cross.

**Objective 3:** *Promote good hygiene practices of community members in order to improve the quality of water and reduce instance of water based disease in the targeted communities.*

The project to provide hygiene promotion in the area of water and sanitation to targeted communities is proceeding as scheduled. A coordinator has been contracted in Paraguay and the Paraguayan Red Cross has identified 14 volunteers to be trained as hygiene promoters. This will be supported by the Pan American Disaster Response Unit which has identified an instructor for a PHAST workshop to be held in Paraguay in January. The project will benefit from regional Red Cross resources from neighbouring Red Cross Societies who will work in Paraguay as instructors and help with the organization of the project. The project will be adapted to meet the specific cultural norms of the target population and involves community meetings and exercises, together with continuous monitoring.

### **Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement -- Principles and Initiatives:**

- The Paraguayan Red Cross has come to the assistance of vulnerable communities affected by the slow onset of severe drought in chronically affected regions which received no rain over an eight month period in 2002.
- Hygiene promotion education will ensure respect for the cultural norms of the indigenous populations.
- Criteria specified under the SPHERE project have been taken into account in analyzing basic needs regarding provision of food and water to the most vulnerable.

### **National Society Capacity Building w**

The programme is striving to increase the capacity of the national headquarters and the Boquerón branch of the National Society to effectively respond to natural disasters, specifically drought and floods. The Federation has donated four water bladders for use in water distributions. The water bladders can be mounted on any flatbed truck and can be used to haul emergency potable water relief over long distances.

The Federation will train Paraguayan Red Cross volunteers and staff in health promotion techniques. The newly trained volunteers will participate directly in current appeal operations and will be a resource for the National Society for the future.

The Federation will also support a NITs training course, as mentioned above, that will focus on specifics of disaster response. Currently, while the Pan American Disaster Response Unit delegate is assigned to the operation, there is ongoing training in Federation disaster response procedures. The training demonstrates the use of the tools available on the Disaster Management Information System (DMIS). Some of the topics covered are narrative reporting, the use of relief tracking tools and of tendering standards in the procurement process.

### **Federation Delegation w**

The operation is being carried out with the technical assistance of a disaster management delegate from PADRU who is in Paraguay working in close collaboration with the National Society. The operation is also supported by the regional delegation for South America in Lima.

### **Advocacy/Public Information w**

Information and articles have been placed on the Federation's web site in order to draw attention to the plight of those faced with severe drought conditions in Paraguay. The most recent Paraguayan Red Cross newsletter included an article on Red Cross response to the drought.

### **Outstanding needs w**

In addition to contributions directly to the international appeal, given OFDA funding for the second food distribution, together with ECHO funding provided to the Spanish Red Cross whereby activities outlined in the appeal are both complemented and expanded, there are no current outstanding needs.

*For further details please contact: Olaug Bergseth, Federation Desk Officer, Phone 41 22 730 45 35 or Luis Luna, Federation Desk Officer Phone: 41 22 730 42 74, Fax: 41 22 733 03 95; email: bergseth@ifrc.org or luna@ifrc.org*

*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.*

*This operation seeks to administer to the immediate requirements of the victims of this disaster. Subsequent operations to promote sustainable development or longer-term capacity building will require additional support, and these programmes are outlined on the Federation's website.*

*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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Paraguay - drought						ANNEX 1	
APPEAL No. 31/2002		PLEDGES RECEIVED				13.01.2003	
DONOR	CATEGORY	QUANTITY	UNIT	VALUE CHF	DATE	COMMENT	
<b>CASH</b>							<b>TOTAL COVERAGE</b>
REQUESTED IN APPEAL CHF ----->				<b>418'000</b>		<b>46.9%</b>	
AUSTRIAN - RC		35'000	EUR	51'310	19.11.2002		
JAPANESE - RC		9'200	USD	13'671	01.11.2002		
MONACO - RC		5'000	EUR	7'332	24.10.2002		
NORWEGIAN - RC		100'000	NOK	20'120	28.10.2002		
SWEDISH - GOVT		400'000	SEK	64'560	05.11.2002		
SWITZERLAND - RC				38'850	06.12.2002		
SUB/TOTAL RECEIVED IN CASH				195'843	CHF	46.9%	
<b>KIND AND SERVICES (INCLUDING PERSONNEL)</b>							
DONOR	CATEGORY	QUANTITY	UNIT	VALUE CHF	DATE	COMMENT	
SUB/TOTAL RECEIVED IN KIND/SERVICES				0	CHF	0.0%	
<b>ADDITIONAL TO APPEAL BUDGET</b>							
DONOR	CATEGORY	QUANTITY	UNIT	VALUE CHF	DATE	COMMENT	
SUB/TOTAL RECEIVED				0	CHF		