

ECUADOR: FLOODS

**appeal no: 6/98
06 March 1998**

***THIS APPEAL SEEKS CHF 373,000
IN CASH, KIND AND SERVICES
TO ASSIST 16,286 BENEFICIARIES FOR 2 MONTHS***

Summary

The El Niño weather pattern is still causing strong climate anomalies in parts of the Americas, including Ecuador, which has been experiencing floods and landslides for the past nine months. Recently the country is also suffering from drought. Assistance to those affected has exhausted the relief resources of the Ecuadorian Red Cross, forcing it to turn to the international community for support in meeting needs engendered by the latest round of floods and in reconstituting its disaster relief supplies.

The Disaster

El Niño related disasters were first registered in Ecuador in July 1997. Although the meteorological phenomenon appeared to have reached its peak this February, its impact is still being felt throughout the country, in the form of mud slides, flash floods and , in the case of the country's Andean provinces, drought.

Between September 1997 and February 1998, natural disasters due to El Niño directly affected 937 families and some 24,000 persons had to be evacuated. According to the United Nations Office for the Co-ordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) 111 people are reported dead, 42 injured and 14 missing; 6,842 homes were damaged and 688 destroyed. According to the Ecuadorian Red Cross Society, this year's El Niño has already surpassed the record damage of the previous El Niño, in 1992. The worst affected areas are the coastal provinces of Esmeraldas, Los Ríos, Manabí, Guayas and El Oro, and the Andean provinces of Loja, Cotopaxi and Bolívar. Many cities and communities in these provinces have suffered floods which have damaged roads and hampered commerce. Secondary effects include an increased number of cases of malaria, dengue, leptospirosis, diarrhoea, and broncho-pulmonary diseases.

In the coastal provinces almost 40% of the crop harvest was lost and sowing for the next crop cycle in April and May may not be possible. The acute drought in the Andean provinces seriously threatens the potato, bean and maize harvest.

The Response so far

Government Action w

The Government has closely tracked the effects of El Niño and, according to the Ecuadorian Red Cross, has incurred a debt of USD 327 million as a result of its response to the disaster, which has mainly focused on the rehabilitation of bridges and roads. The Armed Forces, the National Institute for Children and Family and the Ministry of Social Welfare are in charge of food security and shelter management, but this help is being provided only to families living in shelters. Those who did not want to leave their communities or who live in isolated areas are not being reached.

Red Cross/Red Crescent Action w

The Federation launched an appeal on 25 November 1997 for "El Niño in the Americas" (27/97) seeking funding for immediate preparedness measures and strengthening of the response capacity of National Societies in Latin America. It also foresaw the launching of individual, country-specific appeals, when necessary.

The Ecuador Red Cross began preparedness measures in May 1997, conducting a capacity self assessment and identifying high risk zones. Floods in September / October 1997 forced the fire brigade, Civil Defence and the Red Cross to jointly evacuate people, conduct search and rescue activities, and provide assistance to victims. The National Society was principally involved in damage assessment and shelter management, later handed over to government institutions. Members of high risk communities in the province of Guayas who had already received training through the Red Cross Community Based Disaster Preparedness Programme have been assisting in the shelter management.

The Ecuadorian Red Cross has concentrated on relief and assistance to vulnerable communities in isolated areas not being assisted by other organisations. It has so far provided 198 tons of food stuffs and 100 tons of household items and clothing. Furthermore, 480 Red Cross volunteers have been involved in search and rescue activities, evacuation measures and food distribution. Specialised evaluation teams were sent to the disaster zones for rapid assessments.

The Spanish Red Cross has donated six rubber motor boats which will be essential to reach isolated communities in the affected provinces.

A bilateral cash donation from the Chinese Red Cross enabled the National Society to provide 500 peasant families in the provinces of Guayas and El Oro with complementary food assistance. These funds were also used to cover initial operation costs and for the partial restocking of the Society's emergency warehouses.

The French Red Cross is providing assistance to 2,000 families in the province of Manabí through an ECHO funded (ECU 500,000) operation, supplying foodstuffs, kitchen sets and blankets and rehabilitating drinking water pipelines. The first distribution took place on 27-28 February.

Other Agencies' Action w

According to the Ecuadorian Red Cross the majority of organisations helping El Niño victims have focused on the provision of food, clothing and kitchen sets. ECHO is funding an operation of "Organización Solidaridad Internacional" in four marginalised urban communities in the province of Guayas. Approximately 8,000 families will benefit from the establishment of health brigades to work on environmental sanitation.

Co-ordination w

The office of the President of Ecuador has established a special co-ordinating body, called COPEFEN, for all El Niño related activities of governmental and non-governmental institutions. This entity and PAHO designated the Ecuadorian Red Cross as responsible for the SUMA system (a relief distribution database) in Ecuador.

The Intended Operation

Because of its shrinking resources, coupled with the increased needs of peasants who have lost their short-cycle harvest, the National Society has decided to request international assistance in order to cope with ongoing needs.

Assessment of Needs •

The damage and needs assessment was carried out by five Red Cross assessment teams. The compiled information was shared with PAHO, OFDA and MSF representatives in the field. On 26 February the Regional Disaster Preparedness Delegate from the Guatemala Regional Delegation travelled to Ecuador to provide technical support to the Society in further verifying available information and preparing input into this appeal.

Immediate Needs •

There are a number of El Niño-hit communities which until now have received little or no assistance. The Ecuadorian Red Cross has identified a total of 3,382 families in this situation: 2,362 families in the province of El Oro and 1,020 families in the province of Loja.

Due to the assistance provided by the National Society in recent months the financial resources of its branches have reached an alarming low, restricting the response capacity, especially in the provinces of El Oro and Loja. Restocking the emergency warehouses is a matter of urgency.

Anticipated Later Needs •

Provision should be made for further emergency aid, rehabilitation and reconstruction which may become necessary in the coming weeks, even if the El Niño phenomenon is already past its peak.

Red Cross Objectives •

The Ecuadorian Red Cross objectives are to:

- | Provide food security over a period of six weeks to 2,362 families in the province of El Oro and 1,020 families in the province of Loja.
- | Strengthen the Red Cross response capacity by providing basic working tools for search and rescue teams and restocking the Society's emergency warehouses at branch level.



National Society/Federation Plan of Action

Emergency Phase: March 1998 •

Depending on the response to this appeal the Ecuadorian Red Cross plans to distribute one food parcel to each of the selected families.

The selected communities and the number of families targeted by this operation are as follows:

Province	Community	Number of Families
El Oro	Huaquillas	88
El Oro	Arenillas	1,463
El Oro	Las Lajas	811
Loja	Zapotillo	215
Loja	Célica	150
Loja	Puyango	410
Loja	Pindal	170
Loja	Paltas	40
Loja	Macará	35

The food parcels consist of the following items:

Item	Quantity	Unit
Vegetable oil	1.00	litre
Oats	2.00	kg
Rice	8.00	kg
Sugar	6.00	kg
Salt	1.00	kg
Noodles	6.00	kg
Beans	4.00	kg
Wheat flour	4.00	kg

In addition, every family will receive 1 water container, 2 bottles of household cleaner and 2 mosquito nets. All items will be purchased locally. The Ecuadorian Red Cross will deploy 30 volunteers over a period of six weeks to pack and distribute the parcels and the household items. They will be supervised by a project co-ordinator posted in each of the two provinces.

Phase Two: March-April 1998 •

In order to strengthen its operational capacity, the National Society needs 120 pairs of waterproof boots and 120 pairs of working gloves, as well as 80 flashlights and 80 waterproof working jackets. To restock its emergency warehouses in Loja, Azuay, Tungurahua and Pichincha, the Society needs funds to buy 3,000 sets of bed linen, 1,000 water containers and 3,000 mosquito nets. It also plans to strengthen the telecommunications network in the province of El Oro through the installation of a VHF base radio, and 2 mobile and 3 hand set VHF radios.

Capacity of the National Society •

The Ecuadorian Red Cross is one of the few National Red Cross Societies to have a Disaster Plan integrated into its Disaster Management System (Series 3000).

Present Capacity of the Federation in Ecuador •

The Guatemala Regional Delegation has been in frequent contact with the National Society to monitor the effects of the El Niño phenomenon. The Federation will provide a Relief Delegate for the National Society for two months. This delegate will be recruited from a National Society within the region.

Evaluation •

During the life span of the operation the Federation Relief Delegate will monitor the operation and compile relevant information for evaluation purposes. The final evaluation of the operation will be done by the National Society assisted by the Regional Disaster Preparedness Delegate.

Budget summary

See Annex 1 for details.

Conclusion

The Ecuadorian Red Cross Society was well prepared for this year's El Niño phenomenon and has been complying with its role as auxiliary to the public authorities by providing expertise and service whenever needed. It has now exhausted its financial resources and needs external assistance in order to assist the most vulnerable among the victims of the latest El Niño related floods and to re-establish its previous level of disaster response capacity.

Margareta Wahlström
Under Secretary General,
Disaster Response & Operations Coordination

George Weber
Secretary General

BUDGET SUMMARY**APPEAL No. 6/98
IN CHF**

ANNEX 1

NEEDS IN KIND (OR CASH)**Non Food Items**

Sheets (3.000 x CHF 6.57)	19,700.00
Clothes (working gears x 120 units)	6,200.00
Mosquito nets (9.800 units x CHF 8.76)	86,000.00
Water tank (4.400 units x CHF 8.76)	38,600.00
Ustensils (flash light x 80 units)	1,700.00
Chemical (6.800 bottles of bleach x CHF 3.65)	25,000.00

Food Items

Beans (13.600 kgs x CHF1.02)	13,900.00
Rice (27.200 kgs x CHF 1.17)	31,800.00
Salt (3.400 kgs x CHF 0.45)	1,600.00
Sugar (20.400 x CHF 1.17)	23,900.00
Oil (3.400 lt x CHF1.75)	6,000.00
Other food expenses	40,600.00

TOTAL NEEDS IN KIND (OR CASH)	295,000.00
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NEEDS IN CASH

Capital equipment (Radio equipment)	5,700.00
Transport, storage & vehicle costs	4,500.00
Personnel (1 delegates / 2 months)	20,000.00
Personnel (local staff)	7,000.00
Travel & communications	2,500.00
Information	3,000.00
Administrative, office & general expenses	18,000.00
Secretariat operational support	17,300.00

TOTAL NEEDS IN CASH	78,000.00
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TOTAL APPEAL CASH & KIND	373,000.00
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LESS CASH ON HAND	0.00
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NET REQUEST CASH & KIND	373,000.00
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Note: All items can be purchased locally