

INFORMATION BULLETIN



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

BOLIVIA: HAIL AND RAINSTORMS

25 January 2003

Information Bulletin N° 1/03

Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF) Allocated: CHF 30,000

- This bulletin is being issued based on the needs described below. A DREF allocation of CHF 30,000 has been released, and the Federation does not anticipate further needs. Unearmarked funds to repay DREF are needed. This operation will be reported on through the quarterly DREF update.*

The Situation

On 21 January between 18.00 and 19.15 hours, heavy rains together with hail, hit the Bolivian capital, La Paz. A preliminary assessment indicates that four people died and 25 people were injured. Eight houses collapsed. There were several mudslides and many homes were flooded. In Río Abajo on the outskirts of the city, flood waters drained from the capital and water accumulated in the areas of Palomar, Huayhuasi and Huaricana where 400 families lost their crops, swept away by the swollen river. In Achocalla, near the capital, 18 families were evacuated and are now living in tents provided by the civil defence, which is also supplying food rations.

In the area of La Asunta and Guanay, torrential rainfall over several weeks caused the river Bopi to overflow, as a result of which the crops of 400 families were ruined. An assessment was carried out by the civil defence, which requested the Bolivian Red Cross (BRC) to provide food.

In Bermejo in the department of Tarija, in the south of Bolivia, heavy, persistent rain has resulted in the rivers Grande and Bermejo bursting their banks, particularly affecting the small towns of Naranjitos and Campo Grande and causing damage to 40 houses and the loss of crops for 300 families.

Red Cross/Red Crescent Action

On 21 January, once a red alert was issued by the emergency operations centre, of which the Bolivian Red Cross forms part, the National Society, with 26 volunteers from the headquarters and the La Paz branch, began assisting disaster victims in La Paz. They provided first aid services, evacuated those at risk from flooding and transported patients needing treatment. The National Society also worked to drain water from flooded houses. The Bolivian Red Cross, in coordination with the local government, carried out assessments in the west and north east of the capital where high risk areas are concentrated. Coordination meetings are held together with other bodies such as the fire brigade, the centre for

disasters within the Ministry of Health, the civil defence and volunteer groups. In Bermejo, the Bolivian Red Cross, in coordination with the provincial emergency committee, provided first aid and helped evacuate people in danger from the flooding.

Disaster relief emergency (DREF) funding has been granted through the Federation to assist those affected in La Asunta and Bermejo. The Bolivian Red Cross is targeting 700 families in these areas and is also seeking the support of the Spanish and German Red Cross Societies for provision of relief in other areas of the country that have been affected. 700 beneficiary families in La Asunta and Bermejo will receive 15 kg of rice, 10 kg of sugar, 5 kg of maize, 6 kg of beans, 2 kg of salt and 2 bottles of cooking oil.

The Federation's regional delegation in Lima and the Pan American Disaster Response Unit (PADRU) are liaising with the Bolivian Red Cross to ensure a coordinated and effective response to the disaster.

Donors are encouraged to provide funding in order to ensure reimbursement of the DREF allocation.

For a full description of the National Society profile, see www.ifrc.org

For further details please contact :

- *The Bolivian Red Cross, La Paz; Phone 591 22 02930; Fax 591 22 359 102; email, cruzrobo@caoba.entelnet.bo*
- *Olaug Bergseth, Phone 41 22 730 45 35 ; Fax 41 22 733 0395; email olaug.bergseth@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.

For support to or for further information concerning Federation operations in this or other countries, please access the Federation website at <http://www.ifrc.org>

For longer-term programmes, please refer to the Federation's Annual Appeal.

John Horekens
Director
External Relations

Santiago Gil
Head
Americas Department