

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

COLOMBIA: EARTHQUAKE

24 February 2005

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 over 181 countries.

In Brief

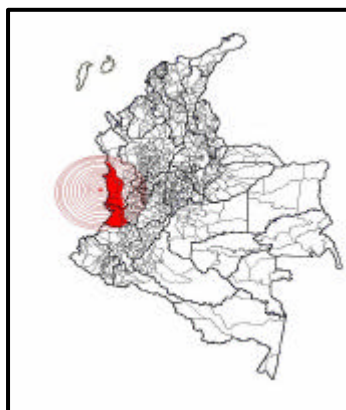
This Information Bulletin (no. 03/2005) is being issued to report the closure of the operation. CHF 50,000 were allocated from the Federation's Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF).

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All International Federation assistance seeks to adhere to the [Code of Conduct](#) and is committed to the [Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Disaster Response](#) in delivering assistance to the most vulnerable. For support to or for further information concerning Federation programmes or operations in this or other countries, or for a full description of the national society profile, please access the Federation's website at <http://www.ifrc.org>

The situation



A powerful earthquake struck the Pacific coast of Colombia on 15 November 2004, registering 6.7 on the Richter scale. The epicentre of the earthquake was located in the Pacific Ocean, approximately 50 kilometres from the coastal municipality of Bajo Baudó, in the department of Chocó. The event caused structural damage and some injuries, although, given the magnitude of the earthquake, the damage was relatively minor. This was due in large part to the fact that the area nearest the epicentre is fairly sparsely populated. The most affected departments were Valle del Cauca and Chocó, where 66 communities suffered significant damage. In total, 1,440 families (7,165 persons) were affected, of which 4,000 were children. Chocó is the poorest department in Colombia and is very prone to earthquakes. The department has also been affected by the country's ongoing internal armed conflict.

Red Cross and Red Crescent action

Funds provided through the Federation's disaster relief emergency fund (DREF) were used to conduct damage and needs assessments, mobilize personnel to the affected areas and provide immediate humanitarian assistance to affected families, including food, water and shelter, in coordination with the government. The difficult security conditions in the area required the presence of additional Colombian Red Cross Society (CRCS) relief personnel in Bajo Baudo, Choco, where the relief activities were being coordinated.

Damage and needs assessments were carried out in 70 communities in Choco and Valle del Cauca with the support of a disaster management delegate from the Federation's Pan American Disaster Response Unit. It was determined that the Colombian Red Cross Society would cover the basic needs of the affected population through the purchase, transportation and delivery of food packages and complete tool kits to support house repair and rebuilding. In the days following the earthquake, the Colombian Department of Disaster Preparedness and Response provided funding from the National Disaster Fund for the purchase of 2,020 food packages, 1,010 hygiene kits, 1,010 kitchen kits and 1,010 tool kits for 1,010 families in Choco. These funds were channeled through the National Disaster Preparedness and Response System, which includes the CRCS. Based on this initiative it was agreed that the CRCS would support the housing repairs by completing the tool kits with other necessary tools such as set squares, machetes, shovels and power saws. Other duties of the CRCS included providing logistics assistance to enable the operation to reach 58 communities of Choco. The CRCS also transported 70 additional food packages and kitchen kits from Cali to Buenaventura in Valle del Cauca to attend 70 affected families in that department.



School in Bajo Baudo that was damaged by the earthquake

Another focus of the CRCS activities within this earthquake response operation was the development of emergency school plans for local schools.

Relief items delivered during this operation

DEPARTMENT	MUNICIPALITY	AID DELIVERED				BENEFICIARY FAMILIES	BENEFICIARY PERSONS
		Food packages	Hygiene kits	Kitchen kits	Tool kits		
Choco	Bajo Baudo	1,076	538	538	538	538	2,688
	Medio Baudo	642	321	321	321	321	1,578
	Litoral del San Juan	302	151	151	151	151	754
Valle del Cauca	Buenaventura	70		70		70	346
TOTAL		2,090	1,010	1,080	1,010	1,080	5,366



One of the main focuses of the CRCS relief operation was repairing homes damaged by the earthquake.

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

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