

# MINOR EMERGENCY



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

ME no. 05ME060  
14 October 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

**CHF 55,000 (USD 42,751 OR EUR 35,496) HAS BEEN ALLOCATED FROM THE FEDERATION'S DISASTER RELIEF EMERGENCY FUND (DREF) TO RESPOND TO THIS OPERATION.**

**UN earmarked funds to repay DREF are encouraged.**

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All International Federation assistance seeks to adhere to the [Code of Conduct for the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and Non-Governmental Organisations \(NGO's\) in Disaster Relief](#) and is committed to the [Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Disaster Response \(Sphere\)](#) in delivering assistance to the most vulnerable.

For longer-term programmes in this or other countries or regions, please refer to the Federation's Annual Appeal. For support to or for further information concerning Federation programmes or operations in this or other countries, or for national society profiles, please also access the Federation's website at <http://www.ifrc.org>

### The situation

A period of prolonged drought is affecting 4,900 families in the department of Boquerón in Paraguay, where little to no rain has fallen since April. In the Chaco region of Paraguay, which includes the department of Boquerón, two different types of cisterns have been used for rainwater harvesting: cisterns or storage tanks called *aljibes*, and cutwater cisterns called *tajamares*. These cisterns are now totally dry. The drought has damaged crops throughout the area, which is primarily populated by subsistence farmers.

On 26 September 2005, the Paraguayan National Conference declared national emergency in the Chaco region for six months. Government ministries, the National Emergency Secretariat (SEN) and other organizations working in the region will work together with farmers and residents to provide assistance in response to this situation. An estimated total of 11,518 families (52,990 people) in 265 communities in 3 departments have been affected, as shown below:

Department	Affected families	Affected people	Number of communities
Presidente Hayes	4,920	20,000	102

**Paraguay: Drought; Minor Emergency no. M05ME060**

Boquerón	4,182	20,910	83
Alto Paraguay	2,416	12,080	30
<b>Total</b>	<b>11,518</b>	<b>52,990</b>	<b>265</b>

Source: SEN – Assistance Programme database CEN/COOPI – Asociación de Cooperación Indígena Menonita – Gobernación de A. Paraguay – Red Cross census – Statistics and Census Department.

**Red Cross action taken so far**

The Paraguayan Red Cross<sup>1</sup> is working to create and train a community based team to promote better practices in water and sanitation management and to improve the use and availability of safe water. This process is being done in close coordination with other relevant national actors.

The National Society plan of action also includes the distribution of food supplements to 1,150 families in 22 communities using funds provided by the Federation's Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF). The PRC is also working to better organize the communities in order to better manage food distributions.

**The needs***Health*

There has been an increase in the incidence of infectious diseases related to the lack of clean drinking water. Health personnel in region stress that there is little they can do without the necessary resources.

*Agriculture*

Both commercial and subsistence farmers have been hard-hit by this disaster. Community food reserves have already been used as the previous year's crops were also affected by low amount of rain.

Based on surveys carried out in the affected departments, it has been determined that the Red Cross will provide food supplements to 1,150 families in 22 communities in the department of Boquerón. Communities that are reliant on locally grown crops, have exhausted their food reserves and are located far from urban centres will be prioritized. The Red Cross will also work to improve the water supply system and to promote good hygiene practices in the affected areas.

**Coordination**

The Paraguayan Red Cross is working in close coordination with other institutions and organizations, including the National Indigenous Institute, government bodies, municipalities, representatives of indigenous communities and other organisations, in order to carry out an assessment of the communities affected, taking into account their capacities, resources, existing technology and prioritised needs into account in order to plan further actions.

[\*click here to return to the title page and contact information.\*](#)

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.cruzroja.org.py/>