



COLOMBIA: FLOODS

DREF Bulletin
no. MDRCO001
29 June 2006

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 183 countries.

In Brief

This DREF Bulletin is being issued based on the situation described below reflecting the information available at this time. CHF 160,000 (USD 132,642 or EUR 103,320) was allocated from the Federation's Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF) to respond to the needs in this operation. This operation is expected to be implemented over 3 months, and will be completed in late August 2006; a Final Report will be made available three months after the end of the operation by November 2006. Unearmarked funds to repay DREF are encouraged.

This operation is aligned with the International Federation's Global Agenda, which sets out four broad goals to meet the Federation's mission to "improve the lives of vulnerable people by mobilizing the power of humanity".

Global Agenda Goals:

- Reduce the numbers of deaths, injuries and impact from disasters.
- Reduce the number of deaths, illnesses and impact from diseases and public health emergencies.
- Increase local community, civil society and Red Cross Red Crescent capacity to address the most urgent situations of vulnerability.
- Reduce intolerance, discrimination and social exclusion and promote respect for diversity and human dignity.

For further information specifically related to this operation please contact:

- *In Colombia: Walter Cotte, National Director of Operations and Relief, Colombian Red Cross Society, Bogotá; email: walter.cotte@cruzrojacolombiana.org Phone (571) 437-6300, fax (571) 473-6301*
- *In Colombia: Javier Barrera, Federation Representative, Bogotá; javier.barrera@ifrc.org, Phone (571) 428-5138, fax (571) 660-7010*
- *In Panama: Stephen McAndrew, Coordinator, Federation Pan American Disaster Response Unit, Panama; email stephen.mcandrew@ifrc.org, phone (507) 316-1001, fax (507) 316-1082*
- *In Geneva: Olaug Bergseth, Federation Regional Officer, Americas Department, Geneva; email olaug.bergseth@ifrc.org, phone (41 22) 730-4535, fax (41 22) 730-0395*

All International Federation assistance seeks to adhere to the [Code of Conduct for the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and Non-Governmental Organizations \(NGO's\) 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>

Background and current situation

Although the rainy season has come to an end, rainfall continues in a number of Departments in the Andean region, the Piedemonte plains and on the Caribbean coast. A red alert remains in force between Barrancabermeja in Santander and Calamar in Bolívar as well as along the river Cauca, from Caucasia in Antioquia as far as its junction with the River Meta; warnings related to river levels are also in place in the region of the Piedemonte plains.

Between 1 January and 15 June a total of 67,976 families (325,775 people) have been affected by flooding; 139 people have died, 250 have been wounded and 18 remain missing. A total of 1,527 houses have been destroyed and 24,518 have been damaged throughout 316 municipalities in 28 Departments; the rains have struck 29% of the country to date. Around 60 per cent of those who have been affected are farming families who survive on basic agriculture, fishing and small scale cattle farming and who live in rural areas; other groups are those who live along the riverbanks in flood zones and in semi-rural regions which are difficult to access, as well as people living in an urban environment who are residents of underprivileged areas characterized by vulnerability and poverty. In addition, a number of those affected by the floods are living in urban areas, having built houses without taking into consideration safety standards and urban planning guidance.

Red Cross and Red Crescent action

To date, the Colombian Red Cross Society (CRC) has assisted 8,639 families, providing emergency food and non-food relief goods such as sheets, foam mattresses, cooking utensils and hygiene articles in the Departments of Antioquia, Arauca, Boyacá, Caldas, Casanare, Cundinamarca, Choco, Risaralda, Sucre Putumayo, Tolima and Valle. The following organizations participated, together with the Colombian Red Cross Society, in the provision of this aid: the Directorate for Prevention and Response to Disasters; Regional and local disaster prevention and response committees, the Ministry of Social Protection, AFIDRO, private businesses such as Kellogs, Servientrega, Transgraneles S.A, Fundación Saldarriaga Concha, OCENSA, BBVA, Conexión Colombia, Canal RCN, City TV, COMCEL, Ericsson, organizations and agencies such as OXFAM GB, the United Nations, the Italian Government, the American Embassy / USAID, together with contributions from private citizens and small organizations. The table below details the emergency assistance provided as of 14 June.

Department	Municipality	Families Assisted	Assistance Provided
Antioquia	Bello, Caicedo, Santa Helena, Yondo, La Estrella, Turbo, Necocli, Apartado, Medellín, Yondo, Caldas, Carepa, Uraba Taraza	1.367	Food, hygiene articles, sheets, blankets and foam mattresses.
Arauca	Araucuita	163	Food and cooking utensils
Boyacá y Casanare	Muzo, Quipame, San Miguel de Sema, Socota, Moniquira, Otanche, Sogmoso, Puerto Boyacá, Villa de Leyva (Villanueva), Yopal	1.204	Food, hygiene articles, foam mattresses and clothing.
Caldas	La Dorada, Manzanares, Anserma, Marmato	282	Food, hygiene articles, cooking utensils, foam mattresses and sheets.
Cundinamarca and Choco	Zipacón, Simijaca, Guacheta, Guaduas, Chipaque, Girardot, Soacha	2.510	Food, hygiene articles and foam mattresses.
Risaralda	Pereira, Balboa, Marsella, Desquebradas	1.371	Food, hygiene articles, cooking utensils, foam mattresses, sheets and blankets.
Sucre	San Marcos, Sucre	1000	Food, hygiene articles, cooking utensils, foam mattresses, sheets and blankets.
Valle	Buenaventura, Jamundi, Argelia	382	Food, hygiene articles and cooking utensils.
Putumayo and Tolima	Mocoa (Putumayo); Ibagué (Tolima)	360	Food, cooking utensils and hygiene articles.
TOTAL	12 Departments and 48 Municipalities	8.639	

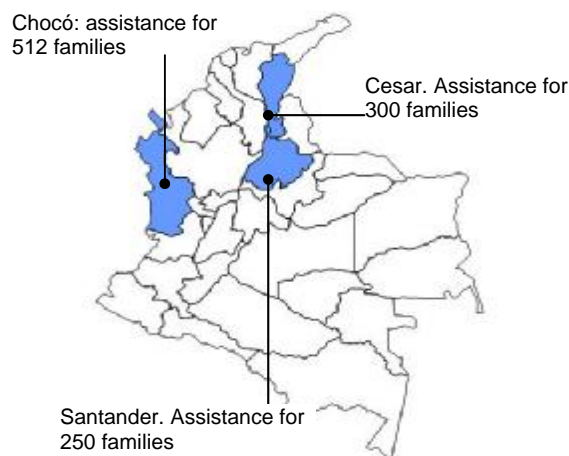
Colombia: Floods DREF Bulletin MDRCO001; Update no. 2

With assistance provided by OCHA and the Italian government, 300 families have been reached in the municipalities of Turbo (120 families), Necocli (120 families) and Apartado (60 families) in the Department of Antioquia. On 24 and 25 June, goods will be distributed in the municipalities of Magangué (189 families), Achi (231 families) and in San Jacinto de Cauca (120 families) in the Department of Bolívar.

The overall plan of the Colombian Red Cross Society is to reach 10,000 families (14.71% of those affected by the rainy season) with humanitarian assistance.

DREF funding provided by the Federation will finance relief assistance for 1,062 families, as follows:

Nº	Department	Municipalities	Nº of Beneficiaries
1	Santander	Puerto Wilches	150
		Barrancabermeja	100
2	Cesar	Gamarra	150
		Tamalameque	100
		La Gloria	50
3	Chocó	Itsmína	150
		Condoto	100
		Medio San Juan	162
		Tado	100
TOTAL			1.062 families



The original target was of 1,000 families; however, a number of savings will enable the National Society to assist a further 62 families. Distributions of relief goods provided with Federation funding began on 20 June. The situation in the various municipalities will be reviewed together with the regional and local emergency committees in order to ensure that relief is targeted to the most vulnerable areas.

Beneficiary criteria focus on the degree to which families have been affected by the floods, the community and social context, and assistance received to date in coordination with the National System for Prevention and Response to Disasters (SNPAD). Relief goods consist of a food parcel, a hygiene kit, a kitchen set, three blankets for warm climate and three mosquito nets.

In Santander Department, the Colombian Red Cross Society has carried out surveys together with the Civil Defence, and vulnerable communities have been relocated to schools and safe areas. Those affected are slowly beginning to return to their homes, however, rains are continuing and the level of the River Magdalena has not dropped. In the Department of Cesar, overflowing rivers have caused a great deal of damage to the river-side population and data received to date indicates that over 2,600 families have lost yucca, maize and plantain banana crops. A number of municipalities remain flooded and skin diseases, intestinal problems and snake bites are reported. The National Society has been ensuring appropriate care of those injured (with the exception of those engaged in hostilities for whom the agreements set up with the ICRC remain in force), and an assessment of affected families is taking place. The CRC has also provided psychosocial support, particularly for children and is ensuring coordination with the local and regional authorities. In Chocó Department, the status of alert is still in force and continuous assessments are taking place; affected families have not yet received assistance and many communities are still under water.

Colombia: Floods DREF Bulletin MDRCO001; Update no. 2

The CRC continues to provide basic medical support, to work in health and sanitation promotion and is ensuring coordination with the local health system and the Ministry of Social Protection.

Overall, the flooding has been more serious than in 2005 and a number of the affected regions will recover slowly given the large quantities of flood waters and the time it will take for the river levels to drop.

Given that the rainy season has ended, the Federation and the CRC have decided not to launch an emergency appeal, as the situation is expected to improve.

The CRC continues its rehabilitation activities in Buenaventura Valley area, in close coordination with local and national authorities. Specific rehabilitation programmes will be promoted in other areas in order to reduce the number of people who are affected every year by the recurrent rains.

[Click here to return to the title page or contact information](#)

