

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

Information Bulletin
no. 01/2007
3 August 2007.

COLOMBIA: FLOODS

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 185 countries.

In Brief

This Bulletin is being issued for information only, and reflects the situation and the information available at this time. The Federation is not seeking funding or other assistance from donors for this operation at this time.

The International Federation undertakes activities that are aligned with its Global Agenda, which sets out four broad goals to achieve 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 Lima: Natalia Gómez de Travesedo, Acting Head of Regional Delegation for South America, email: natalia.gomezdetravesedo@ifrc.org Phone (511) 221-8151, fax (511) 441-3607*
- *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 Panama: Jose Garcia-Lozano, Head of Zone, Americas, email: jose.garcialozano@ifrc.org, phone (507) 317 13 00; fax; (507) 317 13 04*
- *In Panama: Xavier Castellanos, Deputy Head of Zone, Americas, email: xavier.castellanos@ifrc.org, phone (507) 317 13 00; fax; (507) 317 13 04*

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>

The Situation

Since March 2007, the annual rainy season has caused floods and landslides affecting a total of 578,109 people (117,310 families) in 276 municipalities located in 28 of the 32 departments of Colombia. The most affected departments so far are Bolívar, Sucre, Córdoba, Magdalena, and Choco.

The need for humanitarian assistance in the department of Córdoba and in La Mojana region is beyond the local government's capacity. Consequently, the government declared a "state of public calamity" in Córdoba (July 11) and named the La Mojana region as a "disaster zone" (June 28). Although this allowed for more funds to be allocated for its integrated emergency and recovery plan, the critical situation in both regions requires integrated and additional emergency humanitarian support.

Due to the 158 reported floods, 46 landslides, 45 strong winds, 2 avalanches and 1 electrical storm, 58 people have died, 107 have been wounded and 11 remain missing. A total of 11,367 houses have been damaged, while at least 514 were completely destroyed.



**Burst of the Sinú river banks in Córdoba
July 2007. Source: CRC??**

International response

According to the report of the United Nation Office for Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) of 26 July 2007 the following international response has been undertaken:

The United Nation (UN) system, led by the Humanitarian Coordinator, mobilized a cash grant of USD 160,000 for the construction and equipment of shelters in La Mojana region, that is being managed by the National Direction for Disaster Prevention and Response (Dirección General para la Prevención y Atención de Desastres - DGPAD) and the Colombian Red Cross Society.

The United Nations Emergency Technical Team in Colombia (UNETT Colombia) subscribed a coordinated request for a rapid response grant to Central Emergency Response Funds (CERF) of the United Nations. Consequently, the World Food Program (WFP), United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and International Organization for Migration (IOM) have prepared their proposals to address lifesaving needs in the affected regions through food aid, shelter and non-food items and Water and Sanitation coordinated projects. It is worth noting that other UN agencies are working in the area (e.g. Pan American Health Organization (PAHO), United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and OCHA), and therefore all actions will coordinate with and enhance existing efforts. PAHO and OCHA continue supporting the emergency response through information and coordination.

Action Against Hunger is supporting food security, Water and Sanitation and shelter programs in Córdoba in coordination with WFP. Diakonie and BENPOSTA are supporting food security and Water and Sanitation programs in the municipality of Lorica (Córdoba) and have been accompanying the affected population.

OXFAM carried out a needs assessment of water and sanitation conditions in Córdoba and have been undertaking actions in that matter both in Córdoba and La Mojana. Save the Children UK is supporting the coordination process for the response in Córdoba.

Red Cross and Red Crescent action

Since the onset of the emergency the Colombian Red Cross Society (CRC) has undertaken the following activities to assist those affected by the flooding:

- Provide assistance with the equipment and administration of shelters.
- Provide humanitarian assistance through distribution of food and non food relief items.

- Provide Telecommunication assistance in the most affected areas (Radios, High Frequency (HF), Very High Frequency (VHF) and satellite telephones).

The CRC has mobilized assistance from around the country to manage this disaster using local capacities. Thanks to in kind donations of the Colombian public, the Presidential Agency for social action and International Cooperation (Social Action), and private companies such as Quala SA and Kellogs Colombia, the CRC has received in kind donations for an amount of 888.913.062 Colombian pesos to assist those affected by the flooding.

Cash donations have been allocated in the following way:

- 10,000 U.S dollars donated by Microsoft will be used to purchase and distribute food and non food items.
- An amount of 2,069,180,000 Colombian pesos (USD 1,052,482) has been allocated from the partnership between the National Emergency fund and the Colombian Red Cross to provide assistance to the temporary shelters, water and sanitation activities and to provide subsidies to the departments of Sucre and Bolívar.
- The UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) has allocated 60,000 U.S dollars to purchase elements for the Water and Sanitation program. OXFAM will also donate 14,173 Euro (USD 19,536) in order to provide Water and Sanitation assistance.

Due to these donations the Colombian Red Cross Society (CRC) has been able to assist 6,000 families (approximately 30,000 people) with the provision of food and non food items such as: one food package, one Family hygiene kit, one Kitchen kit and 1 set of dishes. The families also received three sheets, three mattresses, three hammocks, three mosquito nets and three blankets for warm and cold weather.

The content of the kits is based on the SPHERE project humanitarian charter and the code of conduct for disaster relief:

Food package	Family hygiene kit	Kitchen kit	Set of dishes
- 2 pounds of lentils - 1 pound of corn flour - 3 pounds of rice - 2 pounds of sugar - 2 pounds of peas - 1 pound of salt - 2 pounds of panela - 1 pound of coffee - 1 pound of chocolate - 1000 cc of oil - 400 grs. powdered milk - 500 grs. of bocadillo - 370 grs. of tuna Weight: 13,27 kilograms Kcal.:46.889,7	- 3 toothbrushes (adult) - 2 toothbrushes (children) - Toothpaste 150 cm3 - 2 bars of soap 140 grs. - 1 sanitary towels package: (10 units) - 2 razors - 1 plastic comb - 300 grs soap for washing clothes - 2 cotton towels of 90 cm x 50 cm. - 2 rolls of toilet paper - 1 deodorant for men 65 grs. - 1 deodorant for women 65 grs.	- 1 pot # 24 - 1 frying pan # 22 - 1 chocolate pot # 3 - 1 wooden spoon 26 cm. - 1 grinder - 1 box of matches	- 4 deep plastic plates - 4 flat plates - 4 small cups - 4 aluminium spoons

According to the Plan of Action, the CRC is currently in the process to obtain more resources in order to provide another 4,000 affected families with the same food and non food relief items.

Coordination

The CRC has been in close coordination with the National Direction for Disaster Prevention and Response (DGPAD) on a National, departmental and local level, in order to coordinate humanitarian relief and avoid duplication of efforts.

The Federation's Pan American Disaster Response Unit (PADRU), the Regional Representation Office for South America and the Federation Representative in Colombia are monitoring the situation and are on stand-by for further emergency response to support the Colombian Red Cross Society.

Communication

A press release was issued by the CRC in order to raise funds and develop a better understanding of the mission of the Colombian Red Cross Society and the activities the organization undertakes in serving affected communities. With the same purpose of raising funds to assist those affected by the flooding, the CRC, in coordination with the United Nations office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), has organized a public concert with the contribution from several local artists on 1 August.

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