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Information Bulletin No. 4 Ecuador: Earthquake

 International Federation
of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

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This bulletin is being issued for information only and reflects the current situation and details available at this time. A Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF) for 407,778 Swiss francs (CHF) was issued on 18 April 2016. An emergency appeal will be issued today.

The situation

A 7.8-magnitude earthquake struck northern Ecuador at 6:58 pm local time on 16 April 2016. According to situation report 30 (20 April 2016) from Ecuador's Secretariat for Risk Management (SGR), there have been 570 deaths; 155 people remain missing; 7,015 people injured; 24,442 people have sought shelter in emergency collective centres; 1,125 buildings were destroyed and 829 others have been damaged; and 281 schools have been affected. Water services are operating at 80 per cent in Esmeraldas province and 57 per cent in Manabí province.



Non-food items stocked in the IFRC warehouse in Panama, which included donations from the National Societies of Norway and Canada, were sent on a charter flight to Ecuador. Source: IFRC

IFRC information from the canton of Pedernales (Manabí province) reports damage in several multi-family apartment buildings. There are 5 collective shelter centres established. The ICRC is supporting the shelter sector working group, at the request of the Ministry of Interior. Discussions are underway to determine if camps for the affected population be established. A portion of the affected population is migrating to other regions in the country. Some of the population in this canton have set up make-shift living quarters on the streets in front of their collapsed homes, living in patios of other people or settling on higher ground out of fear of a tsunami. The Ecuadorian government has not issued a tsunami alert.

Clean water is generally being distributed in plastic bottles. To date, no attention has been given to the waste generated by this practice. The Spanish Red Cross (SRC) has installed water purification equipment with a capacity of 35,000 litres daily. The Colombian Red Cross Society (CRCS) is coordinating with the Ecuadorian Secretariat for Water for the implementation of a 45,000 litre-capacity water purification plant.

The National Society, with support from the IFRC, will begin distribution of hygiene kits on 22 April.

Action by the authorities

The Ecuadorian government declared a state of emergency with a red alert in six provinces on 16 April 2016: Manabí, Esmeraldas, Santo Domingo, Los Ríos, Santa Elena and Guayas. The area of Pedernales (Manabí province) has been declared a disaster zone.

Search and rescue efforts started immediately. The Armed Forces is coordinating all search and rescue operations in the country. The Ecuadorian Urban Search and Rescue (USAR) team, mainly firefighters, is composed of 316 people who are active in different affected areas throughout the country. There are currently 25 search and rescue teams, 3 of which are international, working in the Pedernales canton.

The Ministry of Transportation and Public Works, with private sector support, has restored transit routes to all the affected areas and is coordinating rubble clean-up. The Ministry of Public Health through its deployed mobile units, with MSP in the affected areas is providing health care as well as coordinating all national and international institutions working in the health sector, including the 113 Ecuadorian medical professionals who are volunteering their services in the field. The Ministry of Economic and Social Inclusion has set up donation centres throughout the country to receive, sort and send essential food and non-food items to the affected areas. The Armed Forces and 4,282 members of the National Police have been deployed to provide assistance, including medical assistance and reception and transportation of humanitarian items, and to guarantee public order.

The Ecuadorian government solicited support from the United Nations to complement its response efforts. A 12-person UNDAC team is now in Ecuador. The UNOSAT satellite service is activated. The Pan-American Health Organization (PAHO) has deployed a health in emergencies specialist to Ecuador to coordinate the arrival and organization of medical equipment and professional teams.

The countries of El Salvador, Chile, Colombia, Cuba, Mexico, Peru, Spain and Venezuela have deployed approximately 370 technical teams in support of the Ecuadorian government response effort. A platform of the Humanitarian Network has been established to register the entry and departure of humanitarian actors in the field.

In Ecuador, risk management activities are coordinated from the National Decentralized System, involving all public and private institutions as advising entities, which in turn are part of eight technical task forces (in normal situations) and of the Emergency Operations Committees (in emergency and disaster situations), which are led by the relevant state ministries. The Ecuadorian Red Cross (ERC) actively participates in 5 of the 8 technical task forces at the canton, provincial and national level. Additionally, the ERC is an active member of the Humanitarian Country Team, which holds weekly meetings for information sharing and coordination among non-government organizations (NGOs) and international institutions.

Red Cross and Red Crescent action

An emergency operations centre (EOC) for this operation was opened in the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) Americas Regional Office (ARO) on the morning of 17 April 2016. On this same day, ARO leadership and staff along with the American Red Cross, Canadian Red Cross Society and Norwegian Red Cross, present in Panama, started regular teleconferences with the National Society, participating National Societies, sister National Societies and IFRC delegates and staff in the region. These conferences, initially several times a day, are now held daily.

The IFRC has deployed several regional staff members to Ecuador to assist the National Society with the emergency response efforts. The disaster management coordinator for South America arrived in

Ecuador less than 18 hours after the earthquake to assist in the coordination of humanitarian relief and initial damage and needs assessments. From the Americas Regional Office, the shelter delegate and water, sanitation and hygiene point person, also representing the Norwegian Red Cross, were deployed to assist in damage and needs assessments in both areas. The shelter delegate is in Pedernales canton.

The ARO Director conducted a short mission to Ecuador to coordinate with the National Society governance and management boards. The coordinator of the country cluster for the Andean countries is supporting the National Society in its political coordination with Ecuadorian government authorities and institutions; the finance analyst for South America from this same office is embedded in the ERC national headquarters. A logistics officer and the communications coordinator from the ARO arrived in Ecuador on a charter flight with relief supplies on 20 April.

This IFRC charter flight contained the non-food items (NFIs) that were in stock in the PADRU warehouse in Panama. A portion of these NFIs, as described below, were donated by the Norwegian Red Cross (NRC) and Canadian Red Cross (CRC), as well as the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC):

- 1,000 cleaning kits
- 1,000 hygiene kits
- 600 household kits
- 3,000 plastic tarpaulins (1,000 of which were donated by the NRC)
- 2,000 jerry cans
- 1,500 shelter tool kits (500 of which were donated by the NRC)
- 6,000 blankets (donated by the CRC)
- 3 ICRC standard kits to attend to proper care of cadavers (directly funded by the ICRC)

In addition to the technical support provided from the Pan-American Disaster Unit (PADRU) and the Global Logistics Services for the Americas, the IFRC country cluster office for the Andean countries in Lima alongside the Pan-American Disaster Unit (PADRU) is providing support services for logistics, administration and finance, and PMER, as well as facilitating coordination with other National Societies in the Andean sub-region.

The IFRC issued a Regional Intervention Team (RIT) alert and the Americas Regional Office is directly coordinating with the secretariat headquarters regarding the emergency response.

The IFRC activated an existing agreement with Airbus for the provision of helicopters to conduct damage assessments in communities that cannot be accessed by land or for transportation of response equipment.

The ERC continues to lead a tireless effort to respond effectively and efficiently to the emergency humanitarian needs following the 16 April earthquake. Volunteers from Ecuadorian Red Cross provincial boards and local branches in the area of heaviest impact were the first responders and immediately supported by staff and volunteers from ERC national headquarters and other branches.

The National Society is using its human and material resources to respond to this emergency. All Movement actions in the field are conducted under the leadership of the Ecuadorian Red Cross.

The ERC has activated a general alert for all its components to respond to the aftermath of the earthquake. To date, it has engaged 598 volunteers, which includes 400 students of the ERC Technical Institute- ISTCRE specialists in medical emergencies and risk management, in the most affected areas in the field, in addition to its staff and volunteers working in the national headquarters and other branches to support the humanitarian response in the field. The National Society has divided its teams into geographic areas for the current damage and needs assessments in three cantons of Manabí: Manta, Pedernales and Puerto Viejo. As of 21 April 2016, the ERC, with

International Movement support, has established a base camp in Pedernales for the National Society, participating National Societies and other Movement components present in the field.

The ERC, with CRCS guidance and support from psychology students from the Universidad de Cuenca, has proved psychosocial support (PSP) to approximately 1,044 people in Pedernales. Due to the nature of the earthquake and the replicas, the population has a great demand for psychosocial support. The National Society with the CRCS is currently creating a PSP strategy to be used in the operation. One psychologist is specially focused on providing psychosocial support to volunteers in the field.

The Ecuadorian Red Cross will continue to hold regular coordination meetings with all Movement components in the country, and those in the Americas, to guarantee effective coordination in the field and to ensure the fulfilment of its humanitarian mission.

The SRC is the only participating National Society with a permanent office in Ecuador. The SRC is located in ERC national headquarters. From the first moment, the SRC began work with the ERC in the emergency operations centre and in the field to support the damage and needs assessments. The SRC currently has three delegates in Ecuador (one who arrived from the SRC office in Colombia) to support the National Society. On the chartered plane hired by the Spanish International Cooperation Agency for Development (AECID) that arrived in Quito on 21 April, the Spanish Red Cross sent 3,808 blankets and 450 plastic tarpaulins (4 x 6 metres). The SRC is coordinating with the Ecuadorian Red Cross to plan its support in water and sanitation, shelter, livelihoods and rehabilitation and reconstruction.

The Colombian Red Cross Society (CRCS) currently has 76 people in Ecuador to support the emergency response. This entails teams for search and rescue (with three dogs); water and sanitation; shelter; health (including psychosocial support); information technology (IT); and logistics. The CRCS sent two water purification plants from the CRCS branch in Pasto, which is located close to the border with Ecuador. The CRCS teams are located in the Pedernales canton. As part of the search and rescue, the CRCS team is training Ecuadorian Red Cross volunteers in this emergency response skill using USAR and K-SAR techniques, thus contributing to strengthening the National Society's response capacities for future emergencies.

The Mexican Red Cross has deployed a 20-person search and rescue team that will work in Puerto Viejo; the team arrived in Manta on 18 April.

Three volunteers from the Salvadorian Red Cross Society have been deployed as part of the multi-institutional Salvadoran government-led USAR team. This team will work in Esmeraldas province and Pedernales.

The Surge Information Management System (SIMS) has been activated, and a team from the British Red Cross is providing remote support on the Geographic information System (GIS).

The ERC has requested telecommunication equipment and human resources support from the American Red Cross (AMCROSS) and the IFRC. One AMCROSS staff member has accompanied the IFRC's assessment team on missions; furthermore, Relief/Cash and IT/Telecom teams are on standby and ready to be deployed if requested by the Panama-based IFRC Surge Desk that is providing support to both daily EOC shifts, specifically on information management. Additionally, relief supplies for approximately 3,000 families can be mobilized from Panama if requested. Lastly, American Red Cross Surge Information Management System (SIMS) support, in coordination with the British Red Cross, is available

The Canadian Red Cross Society has deployed two delegates to support the IFRC and National Society team on their assessments.

The Norwegian Red Cross WASH delegate, who is acting as the IFRC focal point for WASH, will be deployed for water and sanitation assessments. Water needs are extreme, and it is foreseen that sanitation will be a problem in the near future.

The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) has permanent representation in Ecuador. As part of this operation, the ICRC is providing its expertise in dealing with the dead with dignity and supporting public health measures. The ICRC, as stated above, has received three kits for this purpose. Additionally, the ICRC is supporting the ERC with Restoring Family Links (RFL) in areas where people have lost contact with their loved ones. The ICRC currently has six delegates working on the emergency response. The ERC in Pedernales already has attended 100 cases of RFL with a satellite phone. Moreover, the ICRC provided logistic support with four vehicles and field officials to facilitate the transport and entry of CRCS teams from Colombia. Lastly, the ICRC Special Fund for the Disabled (SFD) is sending a technical expert to Ecuador to assess the needs of physical rehabilitation following the earthquake in order to carry out an assessment with its long-term partner *Fondation Hermano Miguel* in Quito, and it will be coordinated with Handicap International and Cristoffel Blind Mission

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For further information specifically related to this operation please contact:

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How we work

All IFRC 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 the Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Disaster Response (Sphere) in delivering assistance to the most vulnerable.

The IFRC's vision is to inspire, encourage, facilitate and promote at all times all forms of humanitarian activities by National Societies, with a view to preventing and alleviating human suffering, and thereby contributing to the maintenance and promotion of human dignity and peace in the world.



The IFRC's work is guided by Strategy 2020 which puts forward three strategic aims:

1. Save lives, protect livelihoods, and strengthen recovery from disaster and crises.
2. Enable healthy and safe living.
3. Promote social inclusion and a culture of non-violence and peace.