

EMERGENCY APPEAL



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

Appeal no: 10/03
06 May 2003

ARGENTINA: FLOODS IN SANTA FE PROVINCE

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 178 countries.

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IN BRIEF

THIS APPEAL SEEKS CHF 607,000

(USD 453,879 or EUR 400,535)

IN CASH, KIND AND SERVICES

TO ASSIST 8,000 BENEFICIARIES FOR 3 MONTHS

The situation

The province of Santa Fe has experienced unusually heavy rains since early 2003. By mid-April, rainfall had exceeded 500 mm, which is twice the annual average. As a consequence the level of the Salado River rose, surpassing its maximum levels on 28 April (rising at the rate of 2 centimetres per hour to 7.88 metres), resulting in flooding in the western and southern parts of the city of Santa Fé. The worst hit areas in the province are the departments of General Obligado, Vera, San Cristóbal, San Justo, San Javier, Garay, La Capital, Las Colonias, and San Martín. A state of emergency was declared in 35 localities within the affected departments of the province. Many of the access roads to the city of Santa Fé are flooded, while others were closed as a preventive measure. Given inclement weather conditions, helicopters were not able to fly, further impeding access to the city. In addition, electricity was cut off in the flooded areas, while in the rest of the city electricity is functioning with rotating power outages. To date, 23 fatalities have been reported, but this number is expected to increase as the level of the water descends and more bodies may be found. There are currently 900 people reported missing.

Around 150,000 residents from towns close to the river are in danger and it is estimated that more than 100,000 people have been evacuated or have left their homes. More than 200 centres for evacuees have been set up, many of them improvised. Of the 100,000 people evacuated, 35,000 are sheltered in centres and the rest are housed with family or neighbours. Cases of looting of flooded houses and vehicles carrying humanitarian aid have been reported, and, as a result, it is estimated that approximately 5,000 persons stayed in their homes in upper floors and are likewise in need of food and clothing. The Minister of Justice and Security is coordinating a special security operation with the police and the army. Nevertheless, a high level of insecurity remains. At the moment, there is a curfew imposed in the flooded areas as of 6.00 PM and only the police and patrol boats are permitted to circulate.

Given the fact that large parts of the city remain under water, a thorough evaluation is difficult; however, provincial authorities indicate that there are an estimated 24,000 homes damaged of which 4,000 have been totally destroyed. Among the many buildings that were affected, the two branches of the Argentine Red Cross located in the flood-stricken area: Santa Fe and San Cristobal, were partially or totally flooded. The most modern

children's hospital in the country "Orlando Alassia" and a geriatric hospital had to be evacuated and will need significant renovation. Other private hospitals have also been evacuated, such as the Italian hospital, and 27 community health centres of in the flooded areas have been affected.

Red Cross and Red Crescent action

From the beginning of the emergency, the branch of Santa Fe organized search and rescue activities in coordination with the authorities of the area and more than 2,000 persons were rescued by Red Cross branch volunteers. In the first days of the emergency, nurses from the Red Cross Nursing School reinforced the hospital emergency services. The country network of branches, with the coordination of the headquarters, undertook a campaign to collect donations from the population and businesses of non perishable food, as well non food items such as clothing, mattresses and blankets. Within 20 hours of the onset of the emergency, 10 tonnes of food were sent from the Argentine Red Cross (ARC) central warehouse and distributed immediately on arrival in Santa Fe. Four teams of volunteers and equipment were sent during the first 48 hours to Santa Fé province.

An assessment team formed of experts in disaster management, logistics, health and information, members of the Argentine Red Cross, the Federation's sub regional office based in Buenos Aires, the regional delegation in Lima, the Pan American Disaster Response Unit (PADRU) and the Spanish Red Cross, were mobilized in the area in order to assess damage and needs and to work on a plan of action.

Given the rapid development of the emergency, many evacuation centres do not have a minimum standard of hygiene and sanitary conditions. Evaluations carried out in 56 evacuation centres by Red Cross volunteers indicated that the majority do not have problems with drinking water; however, there are difficulties with refuse disposal.

There is particular concern regarding the possible outbreaks of disease since:

- there is a high level of stagnant water in many areas;
- many bodies and animal carcasses have appeared as the water recedes;
- living conditions are crowded and there is a lack of hygiene in the shelters;
- there is a lack of sanitation both in the centres and amongst families stranded on rooftops.

Unfortunately, the situation remains chaotic and the water is receding slowly. Local authorities hope that it will be possible to conduct a survey of damage incurred to buildings and estimate the possible return of those affected to their houses in the next few days.

The needs

Immediate Needs w

To assist the affected population during the initial phase of the emergency, food and non-food assistance including blankets, mattresses, kitchen sets, hygiene kits and linen are required. Cleaning kits, as well as water containers and cleaning supplies are also needed as people begin to return to their homes. In addition, first aid kits and medicine kits for the evacuation centres, as well as health kits for Red Cross branches in the area hit by the floods, are essential. In order for many of those affected to return to their homes, reconstruction and rehabilitation of housing will be necessary. Current estimates are that some 4,000 homes will need to be rebuilt. Other than for the rehabilitation of the ARC's Santa Fe branch at this time, the appeal does not include longer term reconstruction/rehabilitation.

The proposed operation

From the onset of the disaster, the Argentine Red Cross activated its Emergency Operations Centre at its headquarters and in the Province of Santa Fe. The situation continues to be monitored closely, and information is constantly collated from the National University and the Civil Protection. The ARC has mobilized 150 volunteers at the branch in Santa Fe, and an additional 500 volunteers in 20 other branches. The operation has received CHF 50,000 from the Federation's Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF) which has been allocated

to cover the immediate non-food relief needs of those affected by the floods. Following the assessment of damage and needs carried out together with other actors in the field, the ARC operation will focus on provision of food and non food items, hygiene and kitchen kits, and the promotion of hygiene in the evacuation centres. The operation also seeks to enhance community disaster preparedness in the event of future disasters.

The Argentine Red Cross will provide assistance to 8,000 persons (1,600 families) who are accommodated in 16 evacuation centers in Santa Fe. The assistance comprises one month of food assistance, hygiene kits, cooking sets, and water storage containers. In addition, further food assistance will be provided, together with psycho-social support to some 4,000 people obliged to remain in shelters for a longer period. On their return home, 800 families will be provided with cleaning kits consisting of two brooms, a large garbage bag and gloves to help them clean their homes. In addition, each beneficiary family will receive a 20 litre water storage container.

Relief: distribution of food and basic non-food items w

Objective 1: To provide humanitarian assistance in the form of food for one month, together with a kitchen set and a hygiene kit for 8,000 persons affected by the floods.

Family food packages, kitchen and hygiene kits:

Family food package	Kitchen Set	Personal Hygiene Kits
Rice (4 kg)	5 glasses	2 pieces of unscented soap
Sugar (2 kg)	5 plates	1 sponge
Soup broth (24 kg)	5 sets of knives, forks and spoons	5 tooth brushes
Noodles for soup (3 kg)	2 pans	2 tubes of tooth paste
Noodles (3 kg)	2 1 litre bowls.	12 sanitary towels
Lentilles (3 kg)	5 glasses	5 rolls of toilet paper
Beans (1 kg)	5 plates	1 bottle of shampoo
Cocoa (1 kg)	5 sets of knives, forks and spoons	1 10 litre bucket
Flour (3 kg)	2 pans	
Powdered milk (2.4 kg)		
Salt (50 kg)		
Tinned tomatoes (3 kg)		
Oil (3 l)		
Yerba mate (tea) (3 kg)		
Total (43.14 kg)		

Objective 2: To facilitate the return of evacuees to their homes and promote sanitary conditions.

- Distribution of cleaning supplies including brooms and garbage bags and gloves to families returning home.
- Promotion of community clean up and sanitation as the water recedes and people return home.

Health and Care w

Objective 1: To improve the health situation of those affected by the floods through health and hygiene promotion and disease prevention.

Activities to achieve this objective include:

- Distribution of personal hygiene kits in the evacuation centres.
- Distribution of cleaning kits in the evacuation centres.
- Training of 50 volunteers in health and hygiene promotion.
- Distribution of educational and health promotion material and good hygiene practices. These activities will be coordinated with the Ministry of Health and health centres.
- Distribution of health kits and training in their use as part of a first aid programme in the branches of Santa Fé, La Esperanza, and San Cristobal.

Through these activities those sheltered in evacuation centres will be organized to ensure their active participation in clean-up brigades in order to improve hygiene and sanitation, thereby preventing outbreaks of disease, until the evacuees are able to return to their homes. Hygiene promotion initiatives will be in line with the cultural norms of the population. Argentine Red Cross volunteers and members of the brigades made up of evacuees in the centres will receive appropriate training in monitoring through the implementation of the participatory hygiene and sanitation transformation (PHAST) methodology.

Educational campaigns will be implemented in evacuation centres and in the selected communities focusing on the importance of the treatment of solid waste. As part of this initiative, water treatment agents will be distributed among the members of the communities trained in their use. This work will be carried out with local authorities and NGOs in order to establish or improve the provision of water and waste management including the collection and disposal of refuse.

Objective 2: To reinforce the capacity of individuals to prevent and mitigate the effects of post traumatic stress experienced when affected by a disaster, thus facilitating the readjustment of disaster victims to their usual social, personal and work routines.

Activities to achieve this objective include:

- Organization of inter institutional meetings to exchange experiences and information.
- Training of 40 Red Cross volunteers on expected emotional effects experienced by disaster victims.
- Liaison with the media regarding psycho-social support.
- Provision of advice regarding the answering of telephone calls on the subject of family tracing.
- Visits to the evacuation centres and the selected communities to provide psychological support to those affected.
- Provision of psycho-social support to relief and rescue workers.

A preliminary training session in psycho-social support with the participation of 20 volunteers took place on 4 May.

Objective 3: To improve access to medicines and basic supplies by providing these to 16 evacuation centres and 10 primary health centres in the affected area.

Activities to achieve this objective include:

- Reaching of agreements with health authorities.
- Distribution of kits of medicine and basic supplies.
- Distribution of the medical kits in the evacuation centres in coordination with health authorities. The distribution will be carried out by the Argentine Red Cross and will be monitored through the signature of agreements.
- Free distribution to patients will prioritize the most vulnerable. The amount of kits distributed will be based upon previous demand and the kind of medicine included in the kit will be related to the illnesses detected among the population.

Disaster Preparedness w

Objective 1: To strengthen the preparedness and response capacity of the population for future emergencies and disasters through the promotion of community education in risk management.

This objective aims to strengthen capacity in risk management, through community participation, organization and management with the aim of preventing disasters and building on experience. Activities include the training of trainers, the holding of community workshops, the drawing up of risk maps and family and community emergency plans and the use of simulations. There will be a focus on shelter management given the problems encountered during floods emergency whereby evacuation centres were created on an ad-hoc basis and are encountering many problems. Disaster-hit communities in the city of Santa Fé in high-risk areas will be targeted and community education will take place through the identification of leaders, particularly in schools. The

Federation's Community-Based Disaster Preparedness (CBDP) methodology incorporating new models will be applied.

Coordination w

Meetings with the Health Secretary of the Province of Santa Fe have been held related to different roles to assist evacuees, focusing on preventive health and hygiene. Likewise, coordination has taken place with UNICEF which is considering working in psycho-social support with children in shelters for which the ARC will provide support. Meetings with UNDP have also been held, with the Provincial Directorate of Education, directors of schools and the governmental Crisis Committee and representatives of other national and international organizations. Coordination with the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO) has resulted in logistical support for the headquarters in Buenos Aires and in the province of Santa Fe which will ensure tracking of relief supplies received and their distribution. The Crisis Committee is currently overwhelmed by the scale of the emergency. However, through close coordination with the Minister in charge of the Crisis Committee, a proposal has been formulated and agreed upon, whereby the Argentine Red Cross supported by the Federation, the Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Social Development, PAHO and other humanitarian organizations together with the government of the province of Santa Fe and the Municipality of the city of Santa Fe should form a coordinating body to ensure optimum response to the disaster and avoid duplication of activities. The Argentine Red Cross has various operational agreements: with UNICEF for the distribution of brochures with health recommendations; with UNDP for the assessment of evacuation centres; with the Scouts for logistical support to Red Cross members working in the warehouses and with a team of mental health experts to undertake psychological support initiatives. One of the benefits of the flood response operation is that cooperation between the Argentine Red Cross and the Ministry of Health has been enhanced. The governmental Crisis Committee has also recognized the work carried out by the ARC and has solicited the support and advice of the Red Cross in its efforts to organize and provide effective response.

Advocacy w

Objective 1: To promote the reduction of potential tensions between social groups through appropriate design and implementation of humanitarian activities.

In order to achieve this objective, programme coordinators and volunteers will be trained in the use of the Better Programming Initiative (BPI) methodology and in Vulnerability and Capacity Assessment (VCA).

Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement -- Principles and priorities w

- The planned operation, as well as search and rescue and emergency assistance activities carried out to date, are based on the principle of humanity; beneficiary selection criteria focus on the level of vulnerability of those affected, respect of the culture of the beneficiaries, ensuring gender sensitivity and prioritizing assistance to children and elderly people.
- Activities are based on the SPHERE project humanitarian charter and the code of conduct for emergency response.
- The operation is guided by principles and rules relating to transparency in the drawing up and dissemination of narrative and financial reports.
- All objectives put forward in the appeal are in line with Strategy 2010, as well as the Strategy for the Movement and the Principles and Rules of the Movement.

Media/Public Information Plan w

The Argentine Red Cross, together with the Federation's information officer, have identified spokespersons and are organizing interviews and media reports with the audiovisual and written press. The ARC web page includes a section on response to the floods and is constantly updated. In addition, news articles are being written for the Federation's web page and information is posted on the Federation's DMIS on a daily basis. A file on the operation has been compiled for distribution and will continue to be provided, together with the appeal, to representatives of the media, businesses, organizations and Embassies.

Capacity of the National Society w

The Argentine Red Cross has 78 branches throughout the country, as well as 38 schools of nursing. The ARC is currently implementing an operation in response to the social crisis in the country which is unprecedented in the history of Argentina. The National Society has formed a technical team which is leading this operation, through which immediate response to the flood disaster was organized at branch level. There are three Red Cross branches in the flood-affected zone of the country, which with the support of over 180 volunteers, will implement the operation in response to the flooding. The remaining branches which are close to the disaster area will send volunteers and equipment to support the operation. A significant number of Red Cross volunteers have, themselves, been affected by the flooding in Santa Fé province. The branches located in the flood-affected zone are supported by personnel trained as members of the regional intervention teams (RITs) and Field Assessment and Coordination Teams (FACT), and a RITs-trained member of staff is coordinating the operation at headquarters level.

A priority of the flood response operation will be the improvement of the disaster management capacity of the branches, as well as the strengthening of volunteer management and of governing bodies. Red Cross branches will receive training in the technical areas linked with the operation: water and sanitation, community health, as well as in the identification, drawing up and management of projects.

A major emphasis of capacity building will be strengthening of disaster response, particularly of the Santa Fé branch. Disaster response preparedness will be enhanced through work relating to planning, establishing of procedures and definition of standards. The ARC will be assisted by a disaster relief expert, trained in the RITs methodology, with support from the Pan American Disaster Response Unit. Volunteers and staff will also benefit from training in health education and hygiene promotion.

Capacity of the Federation w

The Federation benefits from the following structure in the region:

- ***Sub regional office for the Southern Cone and Brazil:*** based in Buenos Aires in the offices of the Argentine Red Cross. The office is staffed by a sub regional coordinator, a finance officer, an information officer, a technical assistant and the regional focal point for the humanitarian values programme. The team also benefits from the support of a health consultant and a reporting delegate who are assigned to the social crisis operation. There may be a need to strengthen the capacity of the sub regional office for a short period of time in order to provide additional relief support to the ARC operation.
- ***Regional delegation for South America in Lima:*** the regional delegation has a staff of delegates and personnel working in the fields of disaster management, health, information, reporting and finance. The disaster preparedness delegate is currently in Buenos Aires supporting the finalization of the plan of action and its initial implementation.
- ***The Pan American Disaster Response Unit:*** based in Panama with delegates in the field of logistics, disaster management and water and sanitation. A PADRU delegate is supporting with the National Society in Santa Fé, in the coordination, the assessment and the development on the plan of action.

Monitoring and Evaluation w

Monitoring with regard to the implementation of activities outlined in this appeal and objectives set out in the plan of action will be carried out jointly by the National Society with support from the and the Federation. The Federation will also provide support to the National Society in and will be responsible for the drawing up of narrative and financial reporting for donors. The Federation's regional delegation in Lima and together with through the sub regional office, will ensure coordination of the appeal on behalf of the Federation.

Budget summary

See Annex 1 for details.

For further details please contact:

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- *In Geneva: Olaug Bergseth, Federation Desk Officer, Phone: 41 22 730 45 35; Fax: 41 22 733 0395; email Olaug.bergseth@ifrc.org.*

All International Federation Assistance Operations seek to adhere to the Code of Conduct and are committed to the Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Disaster Response (SPHERE Project) in delivering assistance to the most vulnerable.

In line with the Minimum Reporting Standards, the first operations update on this appeal will be issued within 30-days of the launch and the second will be issued over the course of the operation; a final narrative and financial report will be issued no later than 90 days after the end of the operation.

This operation seeks to administer to the immediate requirements of the victims of this disaster. Subsequent operations to promote sustainable development or longer-term capacity building will require additional support and these programmes are outlined on the Federation website.

For support to or for further information concerning Federation operations in this or other countries, please access the Federation website at <http://www.ifrc.org>

Abbas Gullet
Director
Disaster Management and Coordination

Didier J. Cherpitel
Secretary General

		ANNEX 1
<u>BUDGET SUMMARY</u>	APPEAL No. 10/2003	
Argentina - floods		
TYPE	VALUE	
<u>RELIEF NEEDS</u>	IN CHF	
Shelter & constructions (plastic sheets)	27'000	
Clothing & textiles (mattresses, blankets)	50'000	
Food & seeds (food parcels, bulk food)	168'000	
Water and sanitation (hygiene kits)	50'000	
Medical & first aid kits	18'000	
Other relief supplies (kitchen kits, drums, gas tanks, etc.)	77'000	
TOTAL RELIEF NEEDS		390'000
<u>CAPITAL EQUIPMENT</u>		
Telecom. equipment, computers	15'000	
<u>PROGRAMME SUPPORT</u>		
Programme support (6.5% of total)	39'000	
<u>TRANSPORT STORAGE & VEHICLE COSTS</u>		
Transport and storage	32'000	
Vehicle costs	3'000	
<u>PERSONNEL</u>		
Expatriate staff	18'000	
National staff	51'000	
<u>ADMINISTRATIVE & GENERAL SERVICES</u>		
Travel & related expenses	6'000	
Information expenses	11'000	
Administrative & general expenses	25'000	
External workshops & seminars	17'000	
TOTAL OPERATIONAL NEEDS		217'000
TOTAL APPEAL CASH, KIND, SERVICES		607'000
LESS AVAILABLE RESOURCES (-)		0
NET REQUEST		607'000