

# FINAL REPORT



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

## ARGENTINA: FLOODS IN SANTA FE PROVINCE

22 December 2003

Appeal No. 10/03; Launched on: 6 May 2003 for 3 months for CHF 607,000 to assist 8,000 beneficiaries. Operation extended to 31 October 2003.

Appeal coverage: 103.4%

Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF) Allocated: CHF 50,000

*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 180 countries.*

For more information: [www.ifrc.org](http://www.ifrc.org)

### Summary

On 28 April of this year, after several days of intense rain, the province of Santa Fé, one of the richest in Argentina in terms of harvest and cattle, suffered a devastating flood when the Salato River broke its banks. Within just a few hours, one third of the capital city, Santa Fé and a vast area of the province was flooded. Around 150,000 people were forced to leave their houses and properties. A total of 26,000 houses had to be abandoned, 2,000 of which were completely destroyed. A state of emergency was declared in 35 communities in the province. The capital city and the regions of General Obligado, Monte Vera, San Cristóbal, San Justo, San Javier, Garay, Las Colonias, General López and San Martín were the hardest hit areas in the province.

Several access roads and bridges in the province were impassable or were blocked by authorities for security reasons, slowing down early rescue efforts. In addition, electricity was cut off in some parts of the city and the surrounding areas for several days, which led to security problems and exacerbated an already serious situation.



Beneficiaries in Santa Fé register to receive relief items such as food packages, kitchen sets and hygiene kits.

Despite the fact that the Argentine Red Cross (ARC) branches of Santa Fé and San Cristóbal were among the first buildings to be flooded, volunteers organized themselves immediately, rescuing more than 2,000 people in the city of Santa Fé during the first hours of flooding. The ARC helped organize the rescue and relief effort from the outset, working closely with the Federation, local and national public institutions, UN agencies, and NGOs. In addition, the ARC participated in setting up an inter-agency emergency room in the local Ministry of Health.

Make-shift evacuation centres, most of which with precarious health and hygiene conditions, sprang up in the provincial capital and other smaller towns, accommodating several thousand people. General conditions in these centres slowly improved and, after 45 days, the number of beneficiaries settled at around 5,000 individuals in 68 evacuation centres, including 9 large centres. Most of the other displaced persons found accommodation with friends and relatives.

Public buildings, hospitals, schools, health centres, farms, factories and shops were also affected along with private houses. The huge losses in the farming and agricultural sectors were estimated at USD 850 million. The most affected areas were crops, cattle, milk production, and local infrastructure. It has been estimated that it will take several years for the provincial economy and infrastructure to recover.

The gravity of the situation prompted a major demonstration of solidarity across the country. Private citizens, businesses, and civil associations contributed to collect thousands of tonnes of food and non-food items for the flood victims. These donations primarily benefited less seriously affected communities and evacuation centres while the more serious areas were included in the Red Cross appeal.

The Red Cross launched an emergency appeal in response to the flooding on 6 May. The immediate objectives of the appeal were to bring relief assistance to 8,000 beneficiaries in the form of food and non-food items, to facilitate the return of evacuees to their homes, to promote sanitary conditions and to provide psycho-social assistance to victims. Psycho-social assistance and disaster prevention and preparedness were included in the training for volunteers working in the field.

During the development of the relief operation, the plan of action was readjusted in order to meet the needs of the beneficiaries. For this reason, the appeal was extended until the end of October, however, purchasing and distribution of some relief items was delayed until the first week of November. No adjustments were made to the budget of the operation.

## **Coordination**

An assessment team made up 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, 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. Two delegates from the Pan American Disaster Response Unit (PADRU), a disaster management delegate and a logistician from the regional logistics unit (RLU), supported the ARC operation in Santa Fè in the early stages of the disaster. The disaster management delegate was then replaced by a regional intervention team member from the Ecuadorian Red Cross who was responsible for provision of support to the ARC in the coordination of the operation in Santa Fè.

The ARC and the Federation ensured ongoing coordination with key partners involved in relief efforts, such as local institutions, the Ministry of Health, the Civil Defence, UNICEF and the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO).

## **Objectives, achievements, impact**

Almost all 77 ARC branches in the country participated in the relief operation by collecting donations for evacuees or sending volunteers to the field. More than 1,000 volunteers worked in Santa Fè while around 5,000 were mobilized in other branches. The National Societies of Austria, Finland, Japan, Norway, Sweden and the United States contributed to the appeal, together with the government of New Zealand, businesses, NGOs and private donors, while the German and Spanish Red Cross Societies and the government of the Netherlands made bilateral contributions.

## **Emergency relief (food and basic non-food items)**

During the relief operations, ARC volunteers surveyed and assisted a total of 445 evacuation centres that were hosting around 75,000 evacuees. All those centres not included in the appeal benefited from public donations gathered by ARC branches throughout Argentina. These donations included clothes, shoes, mattresses, toys for children and candles, as well as food, medicine, water and hygiene products. In total, almost 3,000 tonnes of items were donated.

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

ARC volunteers distributed more than 1,900 family food packages to an estimated 9,675 people. As of 3 November, the following centres had been assisted within the international appeal:

Evacuation centre/ Community	Family food packages	Kitchen sets	Personal Hygiene kits
Belgrano station and warehouse	41 62	29 21	49 67
La Florida	249	87	237
Telecom warehouse	21	11	22
Mitre station	7	12	12
Club Telefonos	57	34	65
La Tablada	90	33	78
Vialidad (Peñalosa and Hernanderias warehouse)	54	35	55
Cartonero warehouse	14	4	9
Individual deliveries	50	11	122
Special Centres *	121	45	49
Monte Vera Neighbourhood	1,151	278	0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1,917</b>	<b>600</b>	<b>765</b>

\*This figure includes 10 unofficial centres hosting evacuees

Food packages, which were made up according to the SPHERE guidelines were intended to feed a family for one month. Each package contained 39 kg of goods, including the following:

- 4 kg of rice
- 3 kg of sugar
- 24 units of broth
- 6 kg of pasta
- 2 kg of soybeans
- 1 kg of peas
- 1 kg of cacao
- 3 kg of tomato sauce
- 3 kg of wheat flour
- 3 kg of maize flour
- 3 kg of mate (tea)
- 5,8 kg of powdered milk
- 3 litres of oil

Kitchen sets contained the following:

- 5 glasses
- 5 plates
- 5 sets of knives, forks, and spoons
- 2 pans
- 1 dustbin

Personal hygiene kits contained the following:

- 7 bars of unscented soap
- 1 sponge
- 5 toothbrushes

- 2 tubes of toothpaste
- 70 sanitary towels
- 8 rolls of toilet paper
- 2 bottles of shampoo
- 1 comb
- 3 family towels
- 1 deodorant
- 1 box of refreshing tissue

To the extent possible, food received through private donations was packed according to the guidelines for family food packages established in the appeal. Packages were delivered to 3,200 families, for an estimated total of 16,000 beneficiaries.

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

Living conditions were extremely difficult for both those remaining in evacuation centres and those returning to their homes. People returning to their homes and communities were faced with distressing scenes of damage and a great deal of work to do in order to repair their properties after the devastation of the floods.

Apart from evacuation centres, ARC volunteers focused their attention on the neighbourhood of Monte Vera, a rural community on the outskirts of Santa F  that was severely damaged by the floods and was not provided with assistance by other humanitarian agencies.



The Red Cross distributed furniture and building supplies to beneficiaries to facilitate their return home after many had lost most of their belongings.

After a mid-term evaluation, new items were identified that could help beneficiaries improve their living conditions and resume normal lives once they had returned to their homes. Items were provided both to beneficiaries returning home and people still living in centres.

In addition, construction material was donated by OXFAM for the reconstruction of a water pipeline that provided running water to 483 residents. Thanks to another donation from OXFAM, 50 families from Monte Vera received materials and tools to build their own furniture sets, including 2 beds, 1 table and 1 kitchen cupboard.

The following is a list of articles that have been

provided as of 3 November:

- gas stoves with gas tank (10 kg): 189 units (all to evacuation centres)
- washing machines (private donation): 40 units (all to evacuation centres)
- furniture sets: 593 units (278 to Monte Vera and 315 to evacuation centres)
- transistor radios: 195 units (to elderly persons living on their own in the neighbourhoods of Villa del Parque and Santa Rosa de Lima)

Each furniture set included:

- 2 beds
- 2 mattresses
- 2 pillows
- 2 blankets
- 1 table
- 4 chairs

- 1 cupboard

Mattresses, pillows and blankets were added to the relief goods distributed by the Red Cross, although not originally included in the plan of action, as a result of private donations.

As a part of the hygiene campaign run during the relief operation, 933 cleaning kits were distributed to beneficiaries during awareness raising activities on cleanliness and public health, including 564 kits to Monte Vera and 369 to evacuation centres. Each cleaning kit included :

- 1 brush
- 1 broom
- 1 pair of gloves
- 5 litres of detergent
- 3 litres of chlorine
- 50 plastic bags for garbage
- 3 soaps
- 1 bucket (10 litres)
- 1 sponge
- 1 wringer
- 2 cloths
- 1 dishcloth



The Argentine Red Cross distributed items such as gas stoves and radios to help evacuees return to their homes and return to their normal lives.

## Health and Care

The public health situation in the province of Santa F  has already returned to normal, and no cases of epidemics or diseases have been reported since the first days of the emergency. ARC activities, which in the last phase of the operation included awareness campaigns on hygiene and public health, and water and sanitation interventions, came to an end during the period covered by this report.

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

UNICEF made a donation of the kits below, which were distributed to beneficiaries in evacuation centres:

- 20,000 personal hygiene sets for women containing the following items:

Item	Quantity
Sanitary towels	40 units
Neutral soap	2 units
Deodorant	1 unit
Refreshing tissues	70 units

- 350 hygiene kits containing the following items:

Item	Quantity
Detergent	10 litres
Bleach	10 litres
Shampoo	5 litres
Cloth	10 units
Duster	10 units
Sponge	10 units
Neutral soap	10 units
Garbage bags	100 units
Toilet paper	40 rolls
Toothpaste	10 units
Toothbrush (adult and child)	40 units
Disinfectant	10 litres

A health and hygiene awareness campaign run by the Argentine Red Cross included a component addressing HIV/AIDS and family planning, as well as the distribution of condoms and leaflets. A total of 608 beneficiaries received information about reproductive health and sexually transmitted diseases (STDs) during private talks and open workshops held by trained ARC volunteers in evacuation centres. During the campaign, ARC volunteers distributed 1,000 posters addressing health and care, as well as 10,000 flyers addressing HIV/AIDS and 11,000 condoms.

Water and sanitation activities, including installing and repairing sewers, toilets, showers and pipelines, have been run by ARC volunteers and beneficiaries, in cooperation with experts from OXFAM and with the support of local municipalities. These activities, which were organized with the help of beneficiaries, proved extremely important and contributed effectively to reducing disease and improving the well-being of people living in evacuation centres.

**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.**

Since the beginning of the operation, the ARC has been one of the few organizations addressing the problem of post traumatic stress and providing psycho-social assistance to the flood victims. Some 650 ARC volunteers from the various branches operating in Santa F  received training and worked together with health professionals, nurses and medical staff in order to provide psycho-social assistance to around 6,000 beneficiaries in evacuation centres and communities. Throughout the operation, special emphasis has been placed on the most vulnerable members of society, such as children, elderly people and families at risk.



Volunteers have held community and individual speeches, and distributed 20,000 brochures and other supporting materials to beneficiaries addressing psycho-social assistance. Articles on stress reduction appeared in local newspapers and on the ARC web site. In addition, local radio and television programmes focused on this difficult aspect of relief.

For the first 15 days of the emergency, a telephone number was set up at the ARC headquarters in Buenos Aires so that people could phone in and receive answers to questions or psycho-social assistance from health care professionals.

Playing with children was an important part of the Red Cross's psycho-social assistance programme to address post-traumatic stress.

The following is a list of evacuation centres that received psycho-social assistance from ARC volunteers during the relief operations :

Evacuation Centre	Number of Beneficiaries assisted
Campo Universitario	190
Telecom Warehouse	100
Florida tent camp	500
Belgrano station and Belgranito warehouse.	816
Vialidad Warehouse	112
Club Teléfono Warehouse	180
National Tech. University	300
Gym club	80
Almirante Brown school	500
Vecinal República del Oeste	160
Normal school	500
Predio Ferial	700
Colon school	400
La Tablada tent camp	185
Sindicato de la Carne	102
Mitre Station	125
La Florida neighbourhood	1,000
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>5,950</b>

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

All the medicine distributed by the ARC was donated by institutions, enterprises and citizens, and stocking and delivery procedures were organized according to PAHO's SUMA standards. While at the beginning of the operation medicine was delivered directly to beneficiaries and evacuation centres, once the emergency situation abated it was decided to deliver the medicine to the drugs department of the Ministry of Public Health for their distribution.

The total amount of medicine delivered during the operation is as follows:

ITEM	Quantity supplied (Units)
Analgesics	361,349
Allergy medicine	1,004
Anaemia medicine	1,242
Asthma medicine	505
Antibiotics	4,896
Epilepsy medicine	514
Anti-inflammatory	1,309
Parasite/malaria medicine	1,187
Cough medicine	1,133
Hypertensive medicine	3,596

Antispasmodics	790
Hormones	820
Diabetes medicine	1,100
Psychotherapeutics	2,101
Vitamins	1,553
Steroids	1,100
Gastro-intestinal medicine	2,067
Muscle relaxing cream	69
Hydroelectrolite balance	7
Anaesthetics	30
Disinfectants	6
Diuretics	302
Plasma	5
Vaccines	745
Basic solvents	5
Ophthalmic solutions	14
Ear, nose and throat (ENR)	1
Local use	82
Other	5,768
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>393,300</b>

## Disaster preparedness

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

Due to the need to focus efforts on emergency relief, health and reconstruction projects, this component of the plan, which was aimed at increasing awareness of disaster preparedness and response, has not been implemented at the community level. However, basic awareness activities have been carried out by volunteers in evacuation centres and information provided to the media included elements of disaster preparedness. In addition, a training session addressing disaster preparedness was held by the ARC in Buenos Aires for those volunteers operating in Santa F , including members of the Santa F  branch.

## Advocacy

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

This objective was incorporated into all other components of the relief operations. The Argentine Red Cross used transparent criteria to select beneficiaries and designed programmes with respect for the culture and living conditions of the beneficiaries as a means of reducing potential tensions. In addition, assistance to children and elderly people and gender issues were given priority throughout the operation.



Red Cross volunteers and staff regularly checked the health and living conditions of those living in emergency evacuation centres after their homes and belongings were damaged by the floods. A total of 26,000 houses had to be abandoned, 2,000 of which were completely destroyed. A state of emergency was declared in 35 communities in the province.

This component of the plan of action was particularly important during the first months of the operation when living conditions in evacuation centres were most difficult, due to the high number of beneficiaries and the precarious health situation. During this time, volunteers visited evacuation centres and gave speeches aimed at facilitating relations among beneficiaries, consulted beneficiaries on changes in the relief supplies to be distributed and provided psycho-social counselling to beneficiaries in need.

### **Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement -- Principles and initiatives**

- The objectives of this appeal are in line with Strategy 2010, as well as the Strategy for the Movement and the Principles and Rules of the Movement.
- Beneficiary selection criteria focused on the vulnerability of those affected.
- Activities carried out adhered to the SPHERE guidelines and the code of conduct for emergency response.
- Transparency has been ensured through the production and distribution of narrative and financial reports.

### **National Society Capacity Building**

The flooding in Santa F  has allowed the National Society to improve its capacity to respond to disasters. Several training courses on topics related to this appeal have been organized for volunteers and staff, both in Santa F  and in other branches. Training covered such topics as disaster response, water and sanitation, psychological counselling, disaster preparedness, public health and HIV/AIDS.

As a result of the coordination efforts of the National Society, a new department of disaster response was created and a new national emergency plan was created. The text of the national emergency plan is currently under revision.

### **Communication – Advocacy and Public Information**

Relations with the media have been positive throughout the relief operation, and Red Cross activities have been well covered in local and national media. Informational leaflets on the operation were distributed during public events, and a special section of the ARC web page was created that contains information on the development of the plan of action ([www.desastres.cruzroja.org.ar](http://www.desastres.cruzroja.org.ar)).

Video footage of the relief effort has been shot since the first week of the operation and has been shared with the media and other interested humanitarian agencies. The ARC is now working to create a documentary illustrating all the phases and activities of the operation. The first 30 minutes of the video have been edited, and the National Society is now completing the production with the last stages of the relief operation.

## Assessment and lessons learned

- The National Society raised its profile during this operation and demonstrated its capacity to successfully conduct an emergency operation.
- Experiences and lessons learned during this operation provided the National Society with the managerial, planning and logistical capacities necessary to respond in the event of a similar disaster in the future.
- Activities were carried out in coordination with the beneficiaries, which helped to disseminate the Red Cross mandate and principles. This also gave the ARC and its operational partners greater visibility in the country.

### *For further information please contact:*

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*All International Federation 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. The procurement for this operation was carried out in full compliance and conformity with the Federation's standard for international and local procurement.*

*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>.*

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



# Argentina - floods

ANNEX 1

APPEAL No. 10/2003

## PLEDGES RECEIVED

17/12/2003

DONOR	CATEGORY	QUANTITY	UNIT	VALUE CHF	DATE	COMMENT
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### CASH

REQUESTED IN APPEAL CHF ----->				607,000	TOTAL COVERAGE 103.4%	
AMERICAN - RC		15,000	USD	20,393	12.05.03	
ARGENTINA - GREENPEACE		1,500	ARS	746	19.06.03	
AUSTRIAN - RC		40,000	EUR	60,440	19.05.03	
FINNISH - RC		25,000	EUR	37,775	09.05.03	
GERMAN - GOVT/RC		62,000	EUR	93,682	16.05.03	BILATERAL
JAPANESE - RC		15,000	USD	20,393	15.05.03	
NETHERLANDS - GOVT		5,000	ARS	2,485	21.08.03	BILATERAL
NEW ZEALAND - GOVT		14,534	USD	19,635	16.06.03	
NORWEGIAN - RC		300,000	NOK	56,100	16.05.03	
PRIVATE DONORS				2,876	26.06.03	
PRIVATE DONOR BANCO COMAFI		7,766	ARS	3,859	21.08.03	BILATERAL
PRIVATE DONOR SHOW MIDACHI		66,669	ARS	33,134	21.08.03	BILATERAL
SPANISH - RC		63,106	EUR	97,751	21.08.03	BILATERAL
SPANISH - GOVT		44,488	EUR	68,911	21.08.03	BILATERAL
SWEDISH - GOVT/RC		500,000	SEK	80,000	19.05.03	
WHO - PRIVATE DONORS				1,000	22.05.03	
SUB/TOTAL RECEIVED IN CASH				599,180	CHF	98.7%

### KIND AND SERVICES (INCLUDING PERSONNEL)

DONOR	CATEGORY	QUANTITY	UNIT	VALUE CHF	DATE	COMMENT
UNICEF				28,525	21.08.03	BILATERAL, KITS
SUB/TOTAL RECEIVED IN KIND/SERVICES				28,525	CHF	4.7%

### ADDITIONAL TO APPEAL BUDGET

DONOR	CATEGORY	QUANTITY	UNIT	VALUE CHF	DATE	COMMENT
COOPERATIVA AGRICOLA MIXTA				3,250	21.08.03	BILATERAL, YERBA
PRODUCTOS DE AGUA SA				5,000	21.08.03	BILATERAL, MINERAL WATER

# Argentina - floods

ANNEX 1

APPEAL No. 10/2003

## PLEDGES RECEIVED

17/12/2003

DONOR	CATEGORY	QUANTITY	UNIT	VALUE CHF	DATE	COMMENT
DANONE SA				7,500	21.08.03	BILATERAL, YOGURT
KIMBERLEY-CLARK				11,250	21.08.03	BILATERAL, DIAPERS
CARREFOUR				5,600	21.08.03	BILATERAL, MILK & MINERAL WATER
PROCTER & GAMBLE				75,000	21.08.03	BILATERAL, DIAPERS
SATLER & CIE				3,820	21.08.03	BILATERAL, GRUPO ELECTROGENO
OXFAM		102,195	ARS	50,790	21.08.03	BILATERAL, WATSAN EQUIPMENT
PERFUGROUP/MOLINOS		29,965	ARS	14,892	21.08.03	BILATERAL, FOOD ITEMS
SUB/TOTAL RECEIVED				177,102	CHF	

# Project Summary Financial Statement by Appeal

All Donors.

Period: January through October of 2003

Appeal: 10/03 - ARGENTINA: FLOODS (06/05/2003 - 31/10/2003)

Project	Opening	INCOME					EXPENDITURE									Closing
		Voluntary Contributions.		Transfers	Other Income	Total Income	Supplies	Capital	Transport	PS	Personnel	General Expenditure	Transfers	Provisions	Total Expenditure	
		Selected Donors	Others													
PAR503 - Argentina Floods 2003	0	299,722	0	0	0	299,722	25,712	907	9,872	18,683	46,670	47,857	0	137,727	287,428	12,294
<b>10/03</b>	0	299,722	0	0	0	299,722	25,712	907	9,872	18,683	46,670	47,857	0	137,727	287,428	12,294
<b>Grand Totals</b>	0	299,722	0	0	0	299,722	25,712	907	9,872	18,683	46,670	47,857	0	137,727	287,428	12,294

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