



EL SALVADOR: SEISMIC SWARM

*Final Report for
DREF Bulletin
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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

Period covered by this Final Report: 27 December 2006 to 27 February 2007.

History of this Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF)-funded operation:

- On 27 December 2006 CHF 60,000 (USD 49,710 or EUR 37,712) was allocated from the Federation's DREF to respond to the needs of this operation.
- This operation was expected to be implemented in 2 months, and completed by 27 February 2007. In line with Federation reporting standards, the DREF Bulletin Final Report (narrative and financial) was due 90 days after the end of the operation (by 27 May 2007).

[Click here to go directly to the attached Final Financial report](#)

The International Federation undertakes activities that are aligned with its 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.

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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 Summary

A seismic swarm became active on Sunday, 17 December at approximately 9:58 a.m. in the northern Department of Ahuachapán. The initial tremor had a magnitude was 3.3 on the Richter Scale with a depth of 5.4 km (intensity level III)¹. Between 17 December and 15 January, a total of 1,039 quakes have been registered in the department of Ahuachapán, of which approximately 157 were felt in the regions of Atiquizaya, Turín, San Lorenzo, Apaneca, Juayúa, among others. The strongest quake during this time period was registered on 20 December at 11:06 a.m. and was felt in Atiquizaya and Turín at a magnitude of 4.6 on the Richter Scale with an intensity level between VI – VII ².

The quakes felt on 20 and 21 December caused the worst damage in terms of infrastructure; the final numbers presented by the Ministry of Housing showed that in the eight affected Municipalities 3,294 homes were damaged of which 1,496 were severely damaged (left uninhabitable), 938 were moderately damaged and 815 suffered minor damage. The affected population by this series of events stands at around 16,470 people.

Final data of damaged houses ³

Type of damage	Minor damage	Moderate damage	Severe damage	Total
Village	Families	Families	Families	Families
Ahuachapán	266	398	266	930
Apaneca	0	1	0	1
Atiquizaya	240	188	310	738
Chalchuapa	0	2	1	3
El Refugio	45	71	75	191
San Lorenzo	218	230	409	857
San Pedro Puxtla	1	0	0	1
Turín	45	93	435	573
TOTAL	815	983	1,496	3,294

The origin of this seismic cluster was attributed to the activation of local fault and was therefore not related to the recent activity of the Ilamatepec volcano or with the recent thermal activity in Ahuachapán.

Seismic swarms have been reported previously in this area, the most recent being in Turín and Atiquizaya on 7 - 13 of April 2005, registering 183 tremors of which 24 were felt by the population.

On December 22, 2006 a state of emergency was declared by the president of El Salvador for five municipalities: Atiquizaya, Ahuachapán, El Refugio, Turín and San Lorenzo; seeking to ensure emergency measures to improve the situation of thousands of affected persons in this zone. Following the reactivation of the swarm, Civil Protection

¹ Intensity level III- The tremor is noticed by some people inside buildings and only in some circumstances outside them, the vibration felt is similar to that caused when a light lorry passes. Very observant people may notice objects swing slightly.

² Intensity level VII- difficulty maintaining standing position, is felt by drivers of moving vehicles, furniture breaks, visible and serious damage to building structures, waves in standing water.

³ Source: Ministry of housing

declared a yellow alert in the five affected municipalities, which activated all national emergency response entities under the Civil Protection System.

Coordination

The Salvadorean Red Cross Society (SRCS) is part of the National Commission of Civil Protection and Disaster Mitigation (Comisión Nacional de Protección Civil y Mitigación de Desastres) which, amongst other things, coordinates all disaster response activities on behalf of the Salvadorean government in order to save lives and improve the wellbeing of those directly affected by disasters. Coordination took place at national, departmental, municipal and community level with Commissions of Civil Defence, community leaders, and other present organizations.

From the onset of the disaster, the SRCS liaised with PADRU, which supported the National Society with the request of the Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF) allocation and with technical and logistics resources.

Coordination meetings took place with the Departmental Branch of Ahuachapán and with the local government from Atiquizaya. At the same time, coordination meetings were held with the local Commission of Civil Protection of Atiquizaya, San Lorenzo and Turín. These Commissions assisted the SRCS with the selection of suitable distribution points for the relief items. A coordination officer was assigned to oversee all activities related to the emergency to ensure appropriate and effective distribution to those affected.

Furthermore, coordination meetings were organized with the Departmental Branch of Ahuachapán and with the local government from Atiquizaya to determine the logistic needs and to select suitable distribution points. In the same line, coordination meetings took place with Local Commissions for Civil Protection (Comisiones Municipales de Protección Civil) from Atiquizaya, San Lorenzo and Turín in order to select beneficiaries for the distribution of relief items.

Analysis of the operation – achievements and impact

Since the onset of this situation, the SRCS mobilized National Intervention Team (NIT) members and volunteers from the local Branches in Atiquizaya and Santa Ana, with an aim to provide initial response to the emergency situation by supporting activities such as needs assessments, provision of immediate relief items and monitoring the situation.

The participation of volunteers was fundamental in this operation, therefore Red Cross relief members and Red Cross youth volunteers of the local branches in Atiquizaya, Ahuachapán and Santa Ana were mobilized to assist. The SRCS provided support to the local Branches in matters of logistics and finance (purchases, transportation, warehousing and others).

In preparation for the distributions, a training workshop about adequate humanitarian aid was carried out for 30 Red Cross volunteers, addressing the following topics: Fundamental Principles, Code of Conduct and SPHERE standards, as well as pre-distribution formats and the basic standards for distribution of humanitarian aid.

Based on the results from the needs assessment, 628 families (3,096 persons) were targeted as the most affected by the seismic swarm in the municipalities of San Lorenzo, Atiquizaya and Ahuachapán. The criteria for the selection of beneficiaries focused on losses which families incurred, and/or the degree of difficulty to cope and recover from the situation. Pre-distribution visits were conducted by the Salvadorean Red Cross Society to ensure accountability and transparency of distributions.

Objective 1: 500 families (2,500 beneficiaries) affected by the seismic swarm in the area of Ahuachapán benefit from the distribution of humanitarian aid, psychosocial support and disaster preparedness activities.

Humanitarian relief

The following relief items were distributed to the affected communities according to their specific needs:

DISTRIBUTION TABLE

Municipality	Canton	Villages	People	Families	Hygiene kit	Blankets	Tarpaulins
Atiquizaya	Urban zone	Various	88	21	21	0	21
	Lomas de Alarcón	Kilo 5	135	26	26	76	26
		Los Nayolas	31	8	8	20	8
		El Estero	79	15	15	45	15
		Joya de Venado	159	25	25	73	25
		Las Bromas	226	42	45	119	45
		El Copinol	47	13	13	41	13
		La Escuela	140	25	25	70	25
		Los Rivas	75	15	15	44	15
		El Salitre	317	73	73	209	73
	Zunca	Los Lemus II	55	11	11	35	11
		Jicaro Grande	93	17	17	78	17
	Sub total		1,445	291	294	810	294
San Lorenzo	Urban zone	Albergue CE A. Cárcamo	216	45	45	0	0
	El Portillo	El Portillo	172	36	30	93	30
	Las Posas	Los Peñates 2	79	19	19	75	19
		La Capilla	84	21	21	79	21
		San Felipe	51	9	9	38	9
		San José	51	12	12	44	12
	Jicaral	Los Chinchillas	62	15	15	54	15
	Guascota	Los Peñate	148	29	28	80	28
	Sub total		863	186	179	463	134
Ahuachapán	Rio Frio	San Roque Obrajuelo	529	103	103	437	103
		Las Pampas	259	48	46	140	46
	Sub total		788	151	149	577	149
TOTAL DISTRIBUTION			3,096	628	622	1,850	577

Due to use of pre-stocked supplies, the SRCS was able to provide a first and immediate distribution of relief items to the affected families, shortly followed by distributions of relief items sent by truck from the Pan American Disaster Response Unit (PADRU), based in Panama. Through these pre-stocked supplies and available private resources the National Society was able to assist an additional 128 families. In total 628 families (3,096 beneficiaries) received hygiene kits, blankets and tarpaulins. As distributions were made according to the actual needs within each family, the total items distributed were: 622 family hygiene kits, 1,850 blankets and 577 tarpaulins.

The hygiene kits contained the following items:

Hygiene kit	
Product	Amount

100 % cotton towel, 70x30 cm	5
Soap 250 gr	5
Shampoo 250 ml	5
Tooth brush	5
Tooth paste, 100 gr	5
Toilet paper, roll	5
Sanitary towel, box 10 units	12
Deodorant roll on	2
Disposable shaver	5
Comb man	1
Comb woman	2
Calculated for a family of five members, a period of 30 days	

Psychosocial support and disaster preparedness activities.

According to the National Society's Plan of Action, the distribution process was accompanied by educational materials such as the family guide for emergencies and educational activities. These activities were developed and carried out under the supervision of the Community Health Department of the SRCS and with support of the volunteers specialized in risk reduction.

Educational material about risk reduction was disseminated within the communities and schools in order to provide the affected communities with knowledge of the appropriate steps during the three phases of an earthquake: before, during and after. These materials were also distributed to staff of local branches and to volunteers who assisted in the assessments and distributions, who, in their turn shared this knowledge and material within their communities.

During the operation, symptoms of extreme stress as a result of the disaster and the response efforts were identified in some of the volunteers from the local branches of Ahuachapán, Atiquizaya as well as in some people evacuated to the temporary shelter of San Lorenzo. The SRCS therefore determined the need to carry out an initiative lasting at least 3 months in which the following activities would be developed:

- Strengthening of the local branches of Ahuachapán and Atiquizaya by training volunteers and local staff in providing psychosocial support within communities.
- Development of a psychosocial baseline to generate a community diagnosis.
- Strengthening the affected communities through the formation of psychosocial support teams within the municipalities of San Lorenzo and Ahuachapán.
- Establishment of a community epidemic-monitoring plan which identifies risk factors of emotional instability to make sure that the right assistance is provided in a timely manner. This initiative was supported by the Ministry of Public Health and Social Assistance (Ministerio de Salud Pública y Asistencia Social: MSPAS).
- Establishment of a network of psychosocial support that strengthens interventions and guarantees the sustainability of the psychosocial activities with the support of volunteers from the local branches in Ahuachapán and Atiquizaya.

The National Society hopes to carry out these psychosocial support activities outside of this DREF operation, but as a complement to it.

Education kits.

Needs assessments determined that there was a need to provide 250 school children within the affected department of Ahuachapán with education kits, which was not foreseen in the initial Plan of Action. Therefore, it was decided to expand the Plan utilizing remaining funds from the DREF allocation (CHF 3,355 was used for the education kits, the remaining amount was returned to DREF). The contents of these kits were determined based on the educational material requirements listed by the Ministry of Education.



The education kits contained the following items:

School package	
Items	Amount
Knapsack	1
Plain notebooks	4
Notebooks with gridlines	1
Geometry materials	1
Box of 12 crayons	1
Pencil	1
Large eraser	1
Ball point pens (blue, black and red)	3
Glue	1
Small scissor	1
Bound notebook	1

Capacity building

The active and dynamic contribution of the volunteers of the local branches in Atiquizaya, Santa Ana and Ahuachapán was of vital importance for the successful completion of the operation. In order to increase visibility and at the same time provide volunteers with appropriate resources, official Red Cross t-shirts, caps, and vests with the Red Cross logo and appropriate boots and jeans were distributed to the 42 Red Cross volunteers who supported the distribution of humanitarian assistance.

The following items were distributed to the volunteers involved in the operation:

Materials for each volunteer	
Product	Amount
Boots	1 pair
Uniform trousers	1
T-shirts with official Red Cross logo	3
Caps with official Red Cross logo	2

Vest with official Red Cross logo	1
Leather gloves	1 pair
Industrial helmet	1
Hand lamp with batteries	1
Clipboard	1
Whistle	1
Pen	1

Impact

- During the emergency operation a total of 628 families (3,096 beneficiaries) saw their basic needs met through the timely distribution of relief items. Due to the pre-positioned stock in its warehouses, the SRCS was able to provide a first and immediate distribution of relief items to the affected families, shortly followed by distributions of relief items sent by truck from PADRU. Activities within the Plan of Action had a significantly wider reach thanks to pre-positioned stock in the SRCS warehouses and available private donations. The timing of the distributions was coordinated in order to ensure that goods were provided when people needed them the most.
- 250 school children in the affected department of Ahuachapán were able to return to school with the appropriate materials through the distribution of the education kits.
- Besides increased visibility and improved safety and security, the items provided to volunteers also boosted their motivation.

Constraints

- Initial determination of the amount of affected families and actual needs was somewhat constrained due to lack of organization and leadership in certain communities. The same lack of organization and leadership was disadvantageous for the timely and immediate distribution of humanitarian aid in those communities.

Lessons learned

- Previous coordination with local authorities ensured a greater participation of volunteers in the activities of the operation.
- Pre-distribution visits to the communities increased the effectiveness of the distributions, as well as the safety and comfort level of the staff.
- The assistance of volunteers improves the visibility and image of the Red Cross Movement within the communities.
- Having pre-stocked humanitarian relief items in NS warehouses is crucial for the immediate, timely and efficient distribution.
- Coordination between the Red Cross, the communities and the local authorities during an operation is crucial to identify and prioritize the humanitarian assistance and to avoid duplication of efforts.
- Training about adequate humanitarian aid, addressing the topics of Fundamental Principles, Code of Conduct and SPHERE standards, as well as pre-distribution formats and the basic standards for distribution of humanitarian aid, improves the knowledge of the volunteers about the Federation and allows them to provide humanitarian aid with respect for diversity and human dignity.
- Effective operational efforts by National Intervention Team (NIT) members and local volunteers allows for early situation assessments. During this operation, one was available within the first 24 of hours.
- Early awareness-raising initiatives within communities ensure a better understanding of the intervention.
- Close contact and coordination with community leaders improves the institutional relations and allows the Red Cross to formulate a better approach.
- The establishment of communication networks extends the coverage of operations.
- The implementation of support activities increases the availability of human and financial resources.
- Volunteers' performance based on the fundamental principles enhances image of the Red Cross Movement amongst the communities and local authorities
- The implementation of risk reduction activities within these communities increases the resilience for this type of phenomena.

Communications – Advocacy and Public information

Continued public and media relations sought to accomplish a better understanding of the mission of the Salvadorean Red Cross Society and the activities the organization undertakes in serving affected communities. For this purpose several press releases were issued and distributed to national and local media and interviews were given to local and national television. As a member of the International Federation, the SRCS seeks to promote the Fundamental Principles in all activities. In order to increase visibility, official Red Cross t-shirts, caps, and vests with the Red Cross logo and appropriate boots and jeans were distributed to the 42 Red Cross volunteers who supported the distribution of humanitarian assistance.

[Final financial report below;](#)
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International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

MDRSV001 - El Salvador Seismic Swarm

Final Financial Report

Selected Parameters	
Reporting Timeframe	2006/1-2008/04
Budget Timeframe	2006/1-2007/12
Appeal	MDRSV001
Budget	APPEAL

All figures are in Swiss Francs (CHF)

I. Consolidated Response to Appeal

	Health & Care	Disaster Management	Humanitarian Values	Organisational Development	Coordination & Implementation	TOTAL
A. Budget		60,001				60,001
B. Opening Balance		0				0
Income						
Cash contributions						
<i>DREF</i>		55,018				55,018
C1. Cash contributions		55,018				55,018
C. Total Income = SUM(C1..C5)		55,018				55,018
D. Total Funding = B + C		55,018				55,018
Appeal Coverage		92%				92%

II. Balance of Funds

	Health & Care	Disaster Management	Humanitarian Values	Organisational Development	Coordination & Implementation	TOTAL
B. Opening Balance		0				0
C. Income		55,018				55,018
E. Expenditure		-55,018				-55,018
F. Closing Balance = (B + C + E)		0				0

International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

MDRSV001 - El Salvador Seismic Swarm

Final Financial Report

Selected Parameters	
Reporting Timeframe	2006/1-2008/04
Budget Timeframe	2006/1-2007/12
Appeal	MDRSV001
Budget	APPEAL

All figures are in Swiss Francs (CHF)

III. Budget Analysis / Breakdown of Expenditure

Account Groups	Budget	Expenditure					TOTAL	Variance
		Health & Care	Disaster Management	Humanitarian Values	Organisational Development	Coordination & Implementation		
A		B					A - B	
BUDGET (C)			60,001				60,001	
Supplies								
Shelter - Relief	7,335		7,332				7,332	3
Construction Materials			219				219	-219
Clothing & textiles	10,800		14,302				14,302	-3,502
Teaching Materials			2,968				2,968	-2,968
Other Supplies & Services	11,315		11,455				11,455	-140
Total Supplies	29,450		36,276				36,276	-6,826
Transport & Storage								
Storage			71				71	-71
Distribution & Monitoring			3,925				3,925	-3,925
Transport & Vehicle Costs	4,600		990				990	3,610
Total Transport & Storage	4,600		4,986				4,986	-386
Personnel								
National Staff			450				450	-450
National Society Staff	12,200		4,280				4,280	7,920
Total Personnel	12,200		4,730				4,730	7,470
General Expenditure								
Travel	7,930		50				50	7,880
Information & Public Relation			2,335				2,335	-2,335
Office Costs			1,181				1,181	-1,181
Communications	115		374				374	-259
Professional Fees			1,407				1,407	-1,407
Financial Charges	1,806		102				102	1,704
Total General Expenditure	9,851		5,449				5,449	4,401
Programme Support								
Program Support	3,900		3,576				3,576	324
Total Programme Support	3,900		3,576				3,576	324
TOTAL EXPENDITURE (D)	60,001		55,018				55,018	4,983
VARIANCE (C - D)			4,983				4,983	