

DREF operation update



International Federation
of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

Chile: Volcanic Eruption

DREF operation n° MDRCL003
GLIDE No. VO-2008-000056-CHL
Update No.1
10 July, 2008

The International Federation's Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF) is a source of un-earmarked money created by the Federation in 1985 to ensure that immediate financial support is available for Red Cross and Red Crescent response to emergencies. The DREF is a vital part of the International Federation's disaster response system and increases the ability of national societies to respond to disasters.

Period covered by this update:
14 May to 22 June, 2008.

Summary: CHF 75,000 (USD 72,115 or EUR 46,439) has been allocated from the Federation's Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF) to support the national society in delivering immediate assistance to some 5,000 beneficiaries.

On 2 May, 2008 a red alert was declared for the community of Chaitén and its surrounding areas in the southern region of Chile due to the extreme volcanic activity of the Chaitén volcano. The volcano entered an eruptive phase after having been inactive for many years. Local authorities from Chaitén and Futaleufú evacuated approximately 8,000 people to other regions.



The affected people cleaning the ashes in Futaleufú.
Source: International Federation

This DREF operation update no.1 provides information on the progress achieved so far within the DREF funded operation, including the procurement of the cleaning kits and psychosocial support to the most affected.

This operation is expected to be implemented in two months, and will therefore be completed by 13 July, 2008; a Final Report will be made available three months after the end of the operation (by 13 October, 2008).

[<click here to view contact details>](#)

The situation

The Chaitén volcano, located 760 miles south of the Chilean capital Santiago, started to erupt on 2 May 2008, spewing molten rock and ash after being dormant for 173 years, according to the National Service of Geology and Mining. The event forced people within a 30 mile radius to evacuate from their homes. According to the National Emergency Office (Oficina Nacional de Emergencia – ONEMI), 8,000 people from the affected areas were evacuated to Puerto Montt, Ancud and Castro. Some people in the areas of Palena and Futaleufu could not be evacuated by air initially, due to the ash clouds. The Chilean government leased several houses in Puerto Montt to provide housing for the evacuees until these could return to their homes. The people from Futaleufu have returned home in buses rented by the government and have started to clean the ashes from their homes. However, the quality of water has been affected by the eruption, since the volcano is still emitting ashes. The government installed water treatment plants in the area in order to provide water to the affected people.



Beneficiaries in Futaleufu receiving their cleaning kits.
Source: International Federation

The government declared the affected area of Chaitén as zone of exclusion, not allowing anyone to return until security conditions improve. As of 28 May, most people of Chaitén have found shelter with friends and family, and the rest is living in hostels and cabanas rented by the government.

The government is providing the affected people with cash vouchers for food and house leases, winter clothes, beds, bed sheets, personal hygiene products and suspension of debt payments that were acquired before the disaster struck.

Coordination and partnerships

Since the onset of the emergency the CRC coordinated all relief actions with the government, State Institutions (ONEMI) and non-governmental agencies (NGO's) present in the field. Private companies like Colgate/Palmolive Co. donated hygiene items for 1,000 families in the affected areas.

The CRC is a member of the National Commission of Civil Protection (Comisión Nacional de Protección Civil) and coordinates activities with the Civil Protection Provincial Committee (Comité Provincial de Protección Civil) headed by the governor of the disaster area.

Coordination meetings were held between the Emergency Regional Committee headed by the Chilean President, the Ministry of Defence, the National Director from ONEMI and regional authorities.

The International Federation through the Pan American Disaster Response Unit (PADRU) and the Regional Representation for South America has been closely monitoring the events and is coordinating all response activities with the Chilean Red Cross (CRC). A Regional Intervention Team (RIT) member was deployed to support and coordinate assessment and relief activities in the area of Lincantén along with the CRC.

Red Cross and Red Crescent action

At the beginning of the emergency, the **Chilean Red Cross (CRC)** activated several local branches and mobilized 50 volunteers from the local branches of Los Rios, Los Lagos and Aysen to provide psychosocial support to 1,000 people in the shelters in Puerto Montt and Castro. There were eight volunteers from the

CRC that distributed 6,000 litres of water and 500 hygiene kits to 500 families in Futaleufu and provided psychosocial support to an additional 400 families.



CRC volunteers packing the cleaning kits.
Source: International Federation

In Futaleufu, the CRC has distributed 250 boxes of drinking water, 47 boxes of clorox (24 units per box), 50 boxes of diapers and 500 hygiene kits. Meetings have been held between the CRC and community representatives from Futaleufu in order to coordinate the distribution of humanitarian aid to the most affected. The local branches of Puerto Montt, Ancud and Castro have been providing humanitarian aid to many of the displaced people.

The CRC has elaborated educational and awareness-raising material with safety recommendations on how to clean volcanic ashes from homes. This has been distributed to residents.

Progress towards objectives

Relief distributions (food and basic non-food items)

Objective: 1,000 families (5,000 beneficiaries) of the most affected people in Chaitén and Futaleufú will benefit from cleaning kits in order to maintain adequate sanitation standards.

Activities planned:

- Conduct rapid emergency needs and capacity assessments.
- Develop beneficiary targeting strategy and registration system to deliver intended assistance.
- Distribute relief supplies and control supply movements from point of dispatch to end user.
- Monitor and evaluate the relief activities and report on the progress.
- Develop an exit strategy.

Progress and impact:

Since the Chilean government had supplied the affected people with hygiene kits, the CRC adjusted its plan of action (as outlined in the previous DREF bulletin) to distribute household cleaning kits. The items for the 1,000 cleaning kits were procured locally and followed the International Federation's procurement standards. 700 cleaning kits were distributed among the most affected families in Futaleufu and 300 cleaning kits were distributed in Puerto Montt, Castro and Ancud where the evacuees from Chaitén were housed.

Challenges:

The main challenge identified within this objective is difficulty of access due to the lack of open roads to reach Futaleufu. The CRC had to obtain a permit from the Argentinean consulate since the only road to reach Futaleufu was through Argentina therefore delaying the process. Additionally, the supplier was late in delivering the items; the CRC was nevertheless able to complete the objective reaching 5,000 beneficiaries with cleaning kits.

Emergency Health

Objective: 1,000 families (5,000 beneficiaries) will have access to psychosocial support (PSP) in order to assist them in recovering from the effects of the emergency.

Activities planned:

- Training of the volunteers and psychologists in First Psychosocial Support on community level.
- Provision of psychosocial support to the vulnerable communities and affected population.
- Monitoring and evaluation of the psychosocial support activities and reporting on the progress.

Progress and impact:

Seven CRC volunteers were trained in psychosocial support by five expert psychologists from the Catholic Pontific University of Chile. Once the volunteers were prepared in emergency psychology they were deployed to Puerto Montt with a mentor, to provide psychosocial support to people living in the public shelters. The majority of the people in Puerto Montt came from Chaitén, the most affected area. Volunteers also provided psychosocial support in the zones of Ancud and Castro by visiting the houses of the relatives where affected people had found refuge. In total, 150 families benefited from psychosocial support in the areas of Puerto Montt, Ancud, Castro and Chaiten.

The affected people demonstrated the following symptoms: anguish, depression, hopelessness and insomnia among others. These symptoms were heightened when they were forced to leave their homes. The psychosocial support received from the CRC volunteers aided the affected in coping with these symptoms caused by the disaster.

Challenges:

There are no challenges identified within this objective.

How we work

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.

The International Federation's activities 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.

Contact information

For further information specifically related to this operation please contact:

- In Chile: Cristian Ramírez, Relief Director, Red Cross Society of Chile; phone: (56) 977 714 069; email: socorro@cruzroja.cl.
- In Panama: Jean Pierre Taschereau, Disaster Management Delegate of the Pan American Disaster Response Unit; phone: (507) 316 1001; Fax: (507) 316 1082; email: jp.taschereau@ifrc.org.
- In Peru: Giorgio Ferrario, Regional Representative of Regional Representation for South America; phone: (511) 221 8151; fax: (+511) 441 3607; email: giorgio.ferrario@ifrc.org.
- In Panama: Maria Alcazar, Resource Mobilization Coordinator; phone: (507) 380 0250; fax: (507) 317 1304; email: maria.alcazar@ifrc.org.
- In Geneva: Linda Stops, Acting Operations Coordinator for the Americas; email linda.stops@ifrc.org; phone: (41) 79 2173376; fax: (41) 22 730 4300.

[<click here to return to the title page>](#)